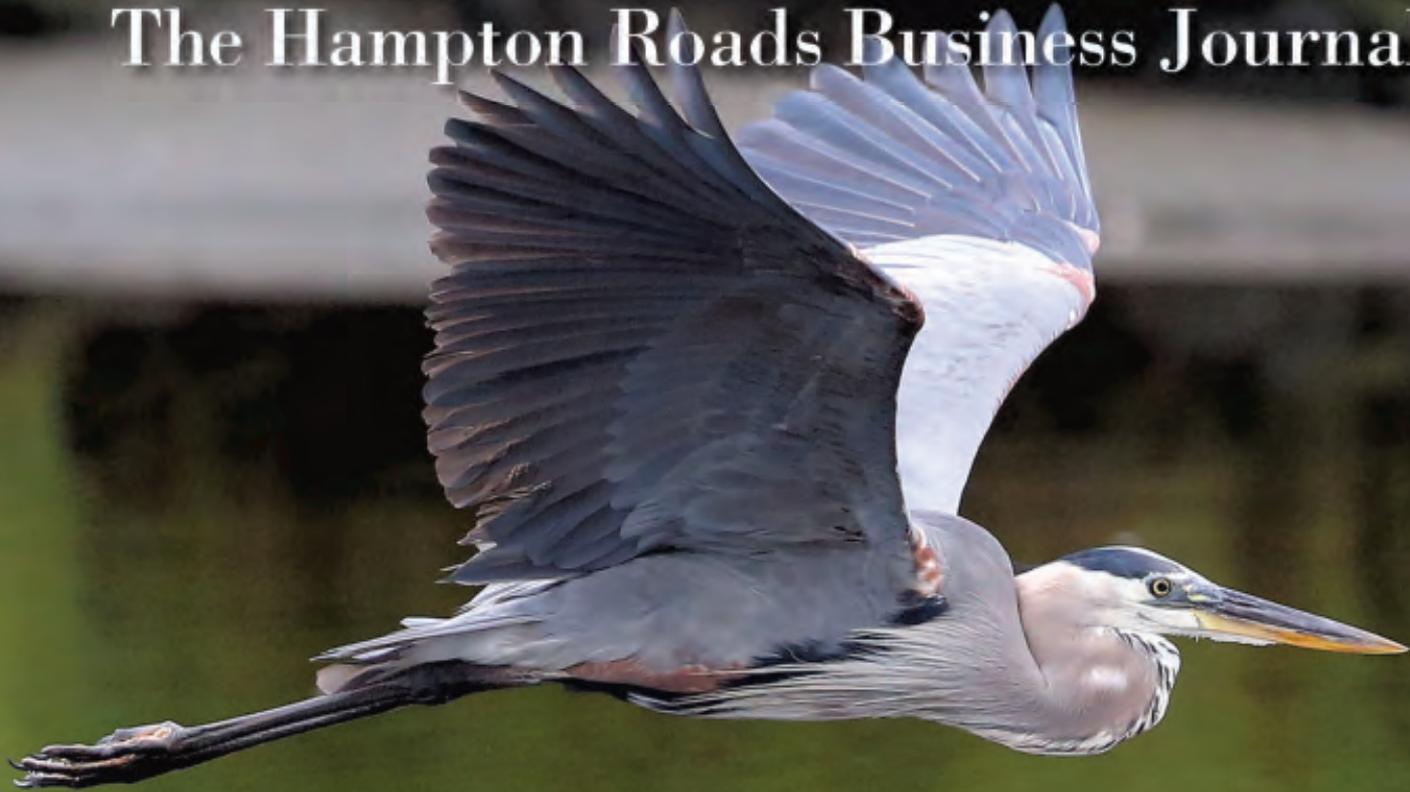


Inside Business

The Hampton Roads Business Journal



Saluting the
**FINEST
ENVIRONMENTAL
STEWARDS**
on the
ELIZABETH 2022

Elizabeth River  Project
River Star Businesses

PHOTO CREDIT: DAVE GIBSON

SPONSORS

MEDIA (\$10,000+)

Inside Business
The Hampton Roads Business Journal

PLANTINUM (\$5,000)

BAE SYSTEMS
INSPIRED WORK

enviva

GENERAL DYNAMICS
NASSCO-Norfolk

HRSD



NS
NORFOLK SOUTHERN

GOLD (\$2,500)

BUCKEYE PARTNERS, L.P.

COX

vhb

WM
WASTE MANAGEMENT

SILVER (\$1,000)

- Accurate Marine Environmental
- Bay Environmental, Inc.
- Pender & Coward, P.C.
- The Port of Virginia
- Vandeventer Black, LLP

BRONZE (\$500)

- Bay Power Solutions
- Coastal Virginia Unitarian Universalists
- Luck Stone
- Smartmouth Brewing Co.
- Tidewater Staffing
- Vulcan Materials Company
- Wickers Crab Pot Seafood

The River Stars program made possible by

Chesapeake Bay Innovative Nutrient & Sediment Reduction Grant and Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Implementation Grant, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation; HRSD; City of Norfolk; City of Virginia Beach and generous donors to Elizabeth River Project.

Congratulations, River Stars!

The Elizabeth River Project launched River Star Businesses for organizational partners in 1997. Since then, River Star Businesses have become the finest environmental stewards on the Elizabeth.

- Pollution reduced: 370 million pounds.
- Wildlife habitat restored, conserved: 2,485 acres.
- Other materials reduced, recycled or reused: More than a billion pounds.



Business partners “doin’ right by the river”

You too can be a star

Because the Elizabeth River is one of the mightiest military and industrial ports in the world, restoring this urban river to health depends on leadership from the business and government facilities that line its shore.

Thank you to the 143 facilities who, unstoppable through a long pandemic, continued to exemplify environmental stewardship as the business standard on the Elizabeth. The non-profit Elizabeth River Project salutes these business and government facilities for reducing pollution voluntarily by 370 million pounds since the program started in 1997. Each year a committee of business peers recognizes new efforts documented for their review. Often the company achieves additional benefits while reducing pollution or restoring wildlife habitat. This year’s prime example: HRSD created extra storage for wastewater while constructing a skatepark with the City of Virginia Beach at Woodstock Park, reducing risk of sewer overflows in storms.

Free for any facility in the Elizabeth River area, River Star participation is most successful where it can make the most difference. That’s usually with sites presenting large opportunities to reduce toxic pollution or restore and conserve wildlife habitat. If this sounds like you, there’s a starring role for you in the restoration of your home river.

Among typical projects, our River Star facilities may help bring back the native oyster while addressing erosion with “living shorelines,” or add stormwater controls, or perhaps switch to pollution reducing technologies. Others improve energy efficiency, restore native plants and much more. In return, River Stars often discover cost savings, reduced liability, improved worker safety and morale. And then as you’re seeing here, there’s the positive publicity awarded by publications like Inside Business, which each year sponsors this special report and a Hall of Fame award to the top participant.

Recognition is just part of the program. Elizabeth River Project also provides free assistance to help you identify and carry out projects, with technical staff and peer mentors at the ready.

Find out if your company is right for River Star Businesses. Contact Pam Boatwright, River Stars Businesses Program Manager, Elizabeth River Project: 757-399-7487, pboatwright@elizabethriver.org. Find out more at www.RiverStarBusinesses.org.

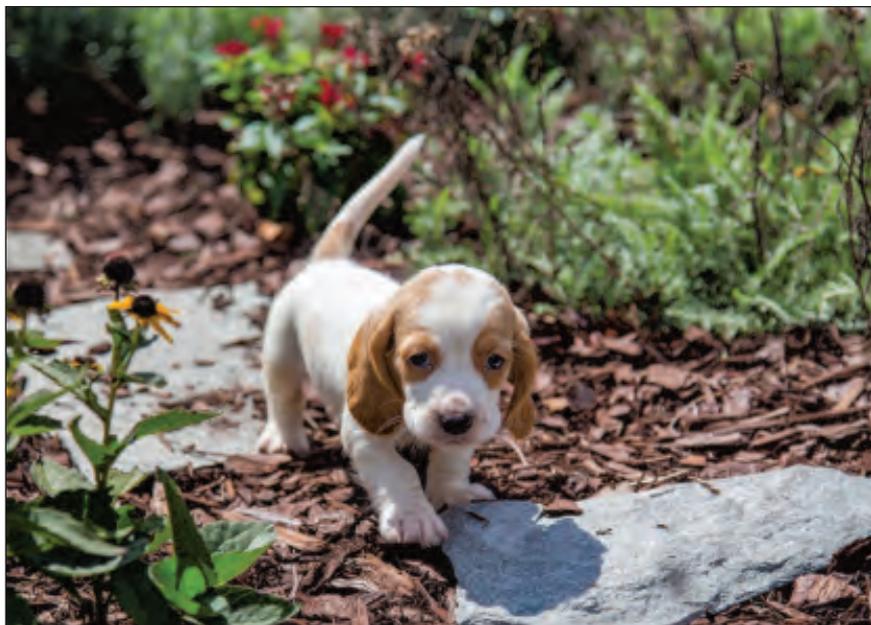
This year’s River Star Business Recognition Event was held virtually on Jan. 20, 2022. Watch it here – Tinyurl.com/RSBAwards

What’s Inside

Best of the Best – Model Level	3
Well-Rounded – Achievement level	4
Start-up - Commitment Level	5
Sustained Distinguished Performance	6, 7
Inside Business Hall of Fame	8

ADVANCING TO MODEL LEVEL 2022

This year's best of the best... These River Star facilities lead the community in environmental stewardship through exceptional results in pollution prevention and wildlife habitat - and mentor others.



The Chesapeake Humane Society demonstrates its environmental ethic throughout operations. A pup visits the pollinator garden. **Courtesy Chesapeake Humane Society.**

Chesapeake Humane Society

This animal welfare group really walks the talk in environmental stewardship, achieving a cumulative impact through many small steps. These started with a No Poop Left Behind campaign and gained momentum with a pollinator tribute garden, bird houses, no mow zone and avoidance of

fertilizers. Inside are many energy efficiency and water saving measures such as high efficiency toilets and an air filter to remove toxic fumes during animal surgery. Lacy Shirey, Executive Director, is a community leader for environmental causes and encourages staff to follow green practices.

Norfolk State University

The historically black university is engaging in river restoration at all levels, from the biology department carrying out both river monitoring and on-the-ground restoration projects, to art professors engaging in telling the river story, to the university's president hosting fellow

members of Elizabeth River Project's board to increase its focus on equity. Student projects in 2021 ranged from growing native plants from seeds to installing experimental oyster habitats. Students presented extensive river research in symposiums. Key buildings are LEED certified.

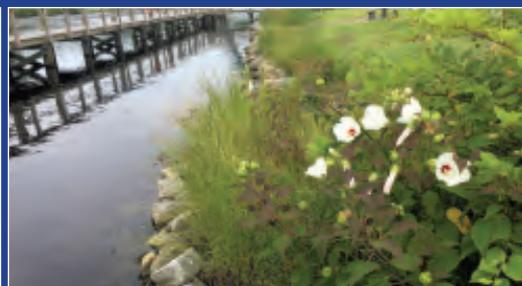


Students from Norfolk State University help install experimental oyster habitat. The university has taken the river to heart at all levels. **Courtesy of Elizabeth River Project.**

Great Bridge Battlefield & Waterways History Foundation



Before – The shore of Battlefield Park was eroding.



After – Partners restored a lush natural shoreline. **Courtesy of Elizabeth River Project.**

Here was fought one of the first major battles of the Revolution, over who had access to the Elizabeth for supplies. The foundation just opened a museum about the river in history and conservation. That tops off years of improvements to the shore as a beautiful, diverse habitat with trails, natural erosion control and stormwater treatments. The group restored the river's iconic Atlantic White Cedar as part of a planting of nearly 5,000 trees and shrubs. Partners helped install a freshwater "living shoreline." Master gardeners installed a native tree trail.

ADVANCING TO ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL 2022

Achievement Level River Stars document significant results in both pollution prevention and wildlife habitat.



The new Waitzer Hall meets Virginia's Energy and Environmental Standards. **Courtesy of EVMS.**

Eastern Virginia Medical School

The school's new Waitzer Hall just met Virginia's new Energy and Environmental Standards certification with efforts such as 5,495 native plants and energy efficiencies including state-of-the-art lighting sensors that dim after you walk by. Physicians lead walks at Paradise Creek Nature Park and other sites for a "Prescribe-a-trail" program.

Wickers Crab Pot Seafood

A fourth generation waterman on the Elizabeth, Ray Wickers sponsors cages to grow oysters on the Elizabeth River Project's Learning Barge and stops by with first-hand lessons about his daily catch. When he refurbished his restaurant, he added efficiencies such as solar lights on the patio.



Ray Wickers, left, pauses alongside the Elizabeth River Project's Dominion Energy Learning Barge to teach the next generation about river life. **Courtesy of Larry I'Anson.**

ForKids, Inc.

The 60,000 sq. ft. new headquarters was built with sustainability in mind for this provider of homeless services for families. Energy efficiency includes lighting that dims if sunlight is available. A Green Team led a "trash audit" to improve recycling. Habitat includes 400 edible trees and shrubs and a rooftop garden.



Kids enjoy the rooftop garden at ForKids' new green headquarters. **Courtesy of ForKids.**

Tidewater Staffing

At this temp service for shipyards, all company cars are electric and all five locations offer EV charging. For habitat, the staff participated in an astounding 15 cleanups and service projects last year alone. The company provides water bottle fill stations and is phasing in LED lighting.



Tidewater Staffing participated in 15 cleanups and service projects last year. **Courtesy of Tidewater Staffing.**

ENTERING AT COMMITMENT LEVEL 2022

Commitment Level River Stars documented significant results in either pollution prevention or wildlife habitat.



Volunteers install native landscaping at Chesapeake Care Clinic. **Courtesy of Botanical Buddies of Chesapeake.**

Chesapeake Care Clinic

Non-native, overgrown landscaping had created a safety hazard for this clinic for low-income residents. Botanical Buddies of Chesapeake helped install nearly 200 native plants with 30 volunteers.

CJ's Catered Greatness

Chef CJ runs her catering business from her River Star Home, now also a River Star Business, thanks to rain harvesting, composting, growing produce and adopting two blocks for litter pickup.



Chef CJ harvests rain and practices sustainability with her catering business. **Courtesy of Elizabeth River Project.**

Habitat for Humanity of South Hampton Roads

Frank Hruska, Executive Director, spent a week on this non-profit's roof to raise funds for solar panels there – just part of its growing energy efficiency efforts. The site features permeable paving.



Frank Hruska (left) and Rainham Rowe atop the roof at Habitat for Humanity of South Hampton Roads. Hruska spent a week on the roof raising funds to add solar power. **Courtesy of Elizabeth River Project.**

Cox Communications

The telecom company installed solar panels on its regional HQ and is advancing towards carbon-neutral by 2034 and zero waste to landfills by 2024. The Greenbrier campus sources 100% green energy.



Cox Communications installed these solar panels towards its goal of carbon neutral by 2034. **Courtesy of Cox Communications.**

Elation Brewing Company

When it opened, this new brewpub needed no new furniture since it refurbished old wood from a Suffolk peanut factory to build bars and tables. Spent grain becomes cattle feed and dog treats. Steam condensate is reused for gray water needs.



David Pincus, Events Coordinator, Elation Brewing Company, pauses at one of the brewpub's refurbished tables. **Courtesy of Elizabeth River Project.**

Portsmouth Humane Society recently created an environmentally-friendly dog run. Here, prospective adopters meet Shiner. **Courtesy of Portsmouth Humane Society.**



Portsmouth Humane Society

The animal welfare site has an increased focus on environmental stewardship. The site includes an environmentally friendly dog run and a new filter sock protects a storm-water pond.

St. Julien's Creek Annex

The military base this year enhanced ballfields with 20 native trees and added six oyster cages along its Southern Branch shore. Staff helped with area cleanups and plantings.



Hayley Becker, left, and Zachary Clarke help plant trees at ballfields at St. Julien's Creek Annex. **Courtesy of Daniel De Angelis, Norfolk Naval Shipyard.**



Gordon Holley co-owns Westside Produce, where most foods come from within 100 miles. **Courtesy of Elizabeth River Project.**

Westside Produce & Provisions

The family-owned grocer focuses on fresh foods from local producers, most within 100 miles. Westside has a garden on site and minimizes plastic, reusing boxes for customer orders.

SUSTAINED DISTINGUISHED PERFORMANCE 2022

Sustained Distinguished Performance is awarded when a River Star completes a significant new initiative with no change in recognition level. The stars reflect their level in the program.

★★★ **BAE Systems Norfolk Ship Repair** – The inaugural River Star Hall of Fame winner avoided nearly a million pounds of air emissions through energy sustainability projects.

★ **Bay Power Solutions** – The engine and generator company added a public EV charging station and purchased its first electric vehicle.

★★ **Cape Henry Audubon Society Wyanoke Wildlife Sanctuary** – Volunteers removed invasive species and replaced them with native trees and pollinators.

★★★ **Chesapeake Parks, Recreation & Tourism** – The city progressed with connecting and expanding trails, opening its first section of the Seaboard Trail and a new segment of Western Branch Trail.

★★★ **Chesapeake Sheriff's Office** – The jail created a horticulture program for inmates to groom participants for work when released.

★ **Church of St. Therese of Lisieux** – The faith community installed solar panels and LED lighting to offset 82% of energy needs.

★★ **Coastal Virginia Unitarian Universalists** –



The new skate park at Woodstock Park doubles as wastewater storage for HRSD. **Courtesy HRSD.**

The church added native and pollinator plants and a forestry plan to ensure tree stewardship.

★★★ **Friends of Indian River** – The group worked with Chesapeake to strengthen plans to improve Indian River; completed a native tree

planting and started a high school environmental scholarship.

★★★ **Hampton Roads Transit** – The transit authority added six electric buses with zero emissions, enhanced and expanded key routes and

added bus shelters with solar lighting.

★★★ **Hermitage Museum & Gardens** – The site established a new woodland trail and tackled invasive species in target areas.

★★★ **HRSD** – The former Hall of Fame winner documented 112,000 lbs. over permit requirements for pollution reductions from treatment plant upgrades and built an innovative wastewater storage facility that doubles as a skate park.

★★★ **Keep Norfolk Beautiful/ Norfolk Environmental Commission** – The department launched Green Bucket Brigade, a litter kit adoption program to tackle increased littering since the pandemic.

★★ **Lady Fern's Native Plants** – The nursery increased rain harvesting to 1,000 gallons and added parking lot planters to reduce impervious surface.

★★★ **Lafayette Wetlands Partnership** – The volunteer group continued restoration of Granby Willow Wood Park with the addition of native plants.

★ **Living River Trust** – The non-profit has a contract and funds to conserve 90 acres of forested shore as a Chesapeake public park. The Trust also put five acres of undisturbed

residential waterfront in permanent conservation.

★★★ **Lyon Shipyard** – The yard added six oyster cages to grow oysters for sanctuary reefs.

★ **Monumental United Methodist Church** – The church continued green restoration after a steep fire, adding more LED lighting and more “cool” roofing.

★★★ **Nauticus** – The site featured National Geographic's “Planet or Plastic” exhibit to reduce single-use plastics and related special events.

★★★ **Naval Station Norfolk** – The former Hall of Fame winner reduced energy and water usage and developed a purchase program that increased EPA designated Safer Choice products available to sailors by 300%.

★★ **Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads** – The command HQ conducted environmental education by social media and engaged 100 volunteers for Clean the Bay Day.

★★★ **Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads Lafayette River Annex** – Base volunteers planted 126 native trees and grasses to beautify the base and discourage geese.

★★ **Norfolk City Planning** – The city funded a recent wetland restoration on Knitting Mill Creek, added

tree canopy protections and regularly promoted living shorelines and other resilience efforts.

★★★ **Norfolk Environmental Storm Water Management** – This city department converted Lake Taylor, a former drinking reservoir, to a stormwater retention pond and stabilized 2,522 linear feet of shoreline with wetlands along Barraud Avenue.

★★★ **Norfolk Naval Shipyard** – The former Hall of Fame winner raked up new efficiency and water conservation achievements, reducing water by 90% in a closed loop system to test pumps. A new coat blast booth saves energy and materials.

★★★ **Norfolk Southern Corp., Lamberts Point** – The terminal enhanced sustainability goals across departments and added oyster gardening to complement last year's shoreline restoration.

★★ **Oaklette United Methodist Church** – This church planted 14 trees in partnership with Chesapeake Environmental Improvement Council.

★★★ **Old Dominion University** – This former Hall of Fame winner completed a new LEED certified green building with native landscaping. Facilities staff constructed more rain gardens



Planting native trees and grasses to beautify Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads Lafayette River Annex. **Courtesy of Elizabeth River Project.**

to alleviate flooding.

★★ **Pender & Coward** – This law firm launched a series of free environmental webinars while continuing its culture of community service.

★★ **People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals** – This animal rights non-profit established a wildfowl area and safely separated it from its dog park.

★★★ **The Port of Virginia** – The former Hall of Fame winner recently established a goal to achieve zero emissions on cargo handling equipment by 2040 and added 20 new

hybrid shuttle trucks towards that goal.

★★★ **US Coast Guard Base Portsmouth** – The base installed new “tree box filters” to improve stormwater runoff and added 10 more acres of no mow zone to its vegetated buffer.

★★★ **VA Dept of Environmental Quality** – Tidewater Regional Office – The state agency continued comprehensive reduction of single-use plastics, while also continuing to reduce energy and water usage.

Recertifying 2022

These River Stars “recertified” achievements documented three years ago by peer review. The stars reflect their level in the program.

- ★ 120 Atlantic Street
- ★★ Culpepper Landing
- ★ East Coast Bicycles
- ★★ Historic South Norfolk Community Garden
- ★★★ Luck Stone Gilmerton
- ★ Oldcastle APG Mid-Atlantic

- ★★ Savior Martial Arts/Sk8 Dojo Roller Rink
- ★ Taylor Bend Family YMCA
- ★ South Norfolk Jordan Bridge
- ★ Waterside Marina
- ★★ Welligent, Inc.

INSIDE BUSINESS | RIVER STAR HALL OF FAME

The Inside Business River Star Hall of Fame recognizes one business each year that best exemplifies the spirit of the River Star business program. Results of “doin’ right by the river” can be cumulative.

Norfolk Environmental Storm Water Management



Newly restored wetlands along Lindenwood are part of Norfolk Environmental Storm Water Management's commitment to create resilient shores. **Courtesy of City of Norfolk.**

The new wetland grasses go on for miles, protecting the shore during rising seas, filtering runoff, giving refuge to fish. That's thanks to Norfolk's Environmental Storm Water Management. The department doesn't just control runoff when it rains. This team is well on its way with recreating the natural ecosystem of the Elizabeth River.

Norfolk's leadership in wetland restoration has been gaining momentum for decades. In fact, “we've nearly fully restored the Lafayette as far as big sites,” says Justin Shafer, City project manager.

Working with the Elizabeth River Project, the City in 1997 pioneered the first voluntary wetland restoration in Virginia. Reclaiming a muddy field at Larchmont Library, Birdsong Wetland won an international Clearwater Award. The City kept going.

In the last five years alone, Norfolk has built more than six acres

of wetlands, recently recognizing their added value for sea level resilience. Additionally, Norfolk steadily pursues both large and small projects to treat stormwater runoff. Recent projects range from the large-scale retrofit of Lake Taylor, where wetland benches, forebays, aeration and more reduced pollutants by 65,661 lbs. per year; to the area's first environmentally friendly dog park, the Downtown Dog Run, featuring an underdrain.

Norfolk was the first city to partner with Elizabeth River Project to promote on-the-ground projects with River Star Homes, recognizing the value of homeowners doing their part. Having restored most public sites, “a lot of the remaining shoreline is private,” and will rely on partnerships with both homes and businesses, Shafer says. He hopes the City is setting a good example.

Inside Business River Star Hall of Fame

2011 Inaugural Winner – BAE Systems Norfolk Ship Repair

2012 Winner – The Port of Virginia

2013 Winner – Kinder Morgan/Elizabeth River Terminals

2014 Winner – Old Dominion University

2015 Winner – Wheelabrator Portsmouth

2016 Winner – HRSD

2017 Winner – Norfolk Naval Shipyard

2018 Winner – Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads Portsmouth Annex

2019 Winner – General Dynamics NASSCO-Norfolk

2020 Winner – Naval Station Norfolk

2021 Winner – Norfolk Southern Corp. Lambert's Point

2022 Winner – Norfolk Environmental Storm Water Management