

# Laura Barton O'Brien

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*Award-winning marketing and public relations freelance consultant with broad corporate and non-profit experience, demonstrated entrepreneurial acumen and a strong volunteer record.*

## Professional Experience

### 2001 - Present

**President**, Laura O'Brien PR & Marketing Communication, Glen Allen, VA.

Freelance multi-channel marketing, branding, event planning, community relations, internal communications, content management and media relations consulting. Clients:

- **Families Forward (statewide office for Prevent Child Abuse Virginia)**, non-profit. Projects on-going.
  - Developing website, branding and logo. Coordinating non-profit merger announcement and event.
- **VSC Fire & Security, Inc. (VSC)**, a privately held fire protection and alarm company in Ashland, VA, with 950 employees, 16 regional offices and \$160 million in annual sales. Managed all of VSC's marketing and public relations for 8 years.
  - Reported directly to Michael Martin, chief operating officer. Worked with human resource team, 16 district office managers, the sales team, the inspections department, the corporate safety manager and the IT team. Hired and supervised a freelance graphic designer and a website developer/SEO specialist.
  - Created the company's first comprehensive branding plan in 2009 and continually managed the evolution of the branding, content and graphics for ads, brochures, sales presentations, trade show displays, vehicle signage, etc., through 2016.
  - Wrote and produced *The Pipeline*, VSC's company newsletter, including case studies, employee features and President's Message for 8 years.
  - Coordinated company media relations including writing and pitching press releases.
  - Managed the company's digital marketing footprint including the creation of and ongoing evolution of the corporate website and 16 local websites. Key results:
    - Achieved 10 strategic keyword phrases listed within the top 5 positions for Google, Yahoo, AOL and Bing per a 2017 ranking report for VSC's corporate website.
    - Documented more than 100,000 unique website visitors and generated 90 verified sales leads for new inspection and installation jobs via all websites in 2016.
    - Created website — [www.betasystemsva.com](http://www.betasystemsva.com) — for Beta Systems of Virginia, a subsidiary of VSC in 2016.
    - Initiated and developed company branding and marketing integration on various platforms including Google Places and LinkedIn.
    - Created Steady Gig, an employee recruitment campaign targeting high school students. Strengthened digital recruitment on Indeed and ApplicantPro platforms. Optimized and edited job descriptions.
- **Richmond Symphony Orchestra League (RSOL)**, non-profit. Projects completed in 2014 and 2016.
  - Developed CMS website, branding, logo and content marketing for the RSOL organization.
  - Developed CMS website content, logo and graphics for the 2014 and 2016 Designer House, a major fundraising event. Integrated website with and developed content for Eventbrite, Twitter and Facebook.

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- **Virginia Department of Education.** Provided services from 2007 to 2011.
  - Created two comprehensive recruitment campaigns: *Teachers Rock*, a campaign to promote the teaching profession, and *Become One*, a campaign to promote careers in special education. Channels included: PSAs, posters, ads, direct mail, marketing collateral, website, video production, seminars, presentations and tradeshow exhibits.
  - Served as campaign spokesperson at tradeshows and featured speaker in statewide professional development seminars for teachers for 4 years.

## 1989 - 2001

**President & Co-Owner,** Amann & Associates Public Relations, Inc., Glen Allen, VA.  
Full-service marketing communications firm with \$3 million in annual sales and 8 staff members.  
Sold the agency to BCF in Virginia Beach, VA, in 2001.

Managed new business development, strategic planning, team recruitment and training and account coordination and execution. Awarded the Public Relations Society of America's highest national award — the *Silver Anvil Best in Show* — for work celebrating the 50th anniversary of Reynolds Wrap Aluminum Foil.

Provided multi-channel marketing communications and media relations programs for leading consumer and B2B brands. Major clients included:

- **Dominion Energy, Inc.** (Virginia Power)
- **Hamilton Beach**
- **Harrison & Bates Commercial Real Estate**
- **The Home Depot**
- **Reynolds Aluminum Recycling Company**
- **Reynolds Metals Company, Consumer Products Division** (Reynolds Wrap)
- **Tetra** (aquarium brands including TetraMin)
- **White House Foods** (apple sauce)

## Education

1988	James Madison University	Harrisonburg, VA
	Bachelor of Science	Communications
1984	St. Catherine's School	Richmond, VA

## Community Leadership

2015 - Present	<b>Board Member,</b> Maggie L. Walker Governor's School Foundation.
2003 - Present	<b>President,</b> Shady Grove Estates & Westfield Neighborhood Association.
2016	<b>Volunteer,</b> Conexus, non-profit dedicated to correcting vision problems for children.
2013 - 2016	<b>Vice Chair,</b> Henrico County Public Schools Gifted Advisory Council.
2006 - 2016	<b>Board Member,</b> Richmond House, a non-profit organization and group home serving teens and adults with autism. Richmond House merged with Commonwealth Autism in 2016.
2013 - 2016	<b>Advocacy Co-Chair,</b> Maggie L. Walker Governor's School Parent Teacher Student Association. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planned and executed ongoing development of the statewide advocacy plan targeting budget decision makers for the Commonwealth of Virginia.</li><li>• Awarded:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Volunteer of the Year, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School PTSA, 2015.</li><li>○ National PTA Advocacy Award, best national PTA chapter advocacy campaign, 2014.</li><li>○ Exemplary Service Award, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School Regional School Board, 2016.</li></ul></li></ul>

