

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

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Six Inductees Selected for Virginia Communications Hall of Fame

RICHMOND, Va. (March 3, 2010) – The 2010 class of inductees into the Virginia Communications Hall of Fame includes an accomplished photographer, an influential newspaper editor, two innovative former television executives, a pioneering female photojournalist and an award-winning business journal editor.

The inductees are **Bob Jones, Jr.**, freelance photographer and documentary producer; **Edward Jones**, editor of The Free Lance-Star; the late **Bea Kopp**, former photo manager for the Daily Press and Times-Herald; **Bob Lee**, former president and general manager of WDBJ-7; **Dan Smith**, former editor of the Blue Ridge Business Journal; and the late **Harold Soldinger**, former vice president of WTAR-TV and WAVY-TV. They will be inducted in a ceremony on April 1 at the Country Club of Virginia. The [Virginia Commonwealth University School of Mass Communications](#) will host the ceremony. Professionals with significant ties to Virginia who have had exceptional careers in journalism, public relations, advertising, and other media fields are eligible for selection to the Virginia Communications Hall of Fame. The newest class of inductees increases the hall's membership to 118.

"This year's class of inductees is particularly representative of the communications talent in Virginia, including individuals from around the state who have left their mark on newspaper journalism, broadcast journalism, in magazine publishing, in advertising and in photojournalism," said Judy VanSlyke Turk, director of VCU's School of Mass Communications and chair of the Hall of Fame Selection Committee. "Our celebration of their accomplishments on April 1 will remind us once again of the many ways Virginians have contributed to excellence in the media and communications industries."

Bob Jones began his career as a Navy aerial photographer during the Cuban Missile Crisis and later worked for Richmond Newspapers Inc., where he received the "Virginia News Photographer of the Year" award five times. He became a freelance photographer, working for major publications, corporations and advertising agencies and received more than 200 awards and several grants for his work in Virginia. He published six books, filmed a documentary on erosion control in Haiti and has photographed impoverished children to support Child Fund International, formerly the Christian Children's Fund.

Edward Jones began his long career with The Free Lance-Star as a high school intern in 1965. After considering a law career, Jones became a reporter in 1973. He was later promoted to editorial page editor and managing editor and was named editor in 1997. Under his leadership, the newspaper has won journalism awards from the Virginia Press Association and national groups. Jones is active in the VPA and served as its president from 1997 to 1998. He is a former board member and president of the Associated Press

Managing Editors and former president of the National Conference of Editorial Writers.

Bea Kopp, who died in 1992, was the second woman in Virginia to become a photojournalist when she joined the Richmond Newspapers in 1940. She joined the Daily Press and the now-defunct Times-Herald of Newport News four years later and became the first female photo manager for a state daily newspaper. Kopp was recognized for her work in a male-dominated specialty within a male-dominated profession. The National Federation of Press Women honored her as one of the top 10 photographers in the U.S. Kopp was a charter member and past president of what is today the Virginia News Photographers Association.

Bob Lee became the president and general manager of Roanoke's WDBJ Television, Inc., in 1989 and led the station through great changes in the industry. Lee advocated having local stations available on satellite providers and was an early supporter of digital television. He served as director of government affairs for WDBJ's parent corporation, Schurz Communications, before his retirement in 2007. He was a member and former president of the Virginia Association of Broadcasters and served on the National Association of Broadcasters television board for five years.

Dan Smith is the founder of the Roanoke Regional Writer's Conference, one of the largest writers' conferences of its kind in Virginia, and recently co-founded Valley Business FRONT, an award-winning glossy magazine. He became editor of the Blue Ridge Business Journal in Roanoke in 1988. Smith has been an essayist for National Public Radio and WVTF. He was named Virginia's Journalist of the Year in 2005 by the Small Business Administration and has won awards from the Clean Valley Council, the Better Business Bureau, the Arts Council of the Blue Ridge and the Virginia Press Association.



Harold Soldinger, who died in 1996, began his career in the late 1930s as an animator for Warner Brothers Studio in Hollywood. After working at RKO, he moved to Virginia in 1951 and worked for WTAR in Norfolk, where he brought the hit syndicated children's show "Romper Room" and developed the first local newscast. In 1969, Soldinger became vice president of WAVY-TV, which became Virginia's first station to switch to full color, add editorials and replace film with video tape. Soldinger hired Virginia's first female news anchor, first African American anchor, first female weather anchor and first female sports anchor.

The reception for the induction ceremony starts at 6:30 p.m. with dinner and the ceremony to follow. Tickets are \$125 each and can be reserved by calling (804) 827-3761. Proceeds benefit the Hall of Fame permanent exhibit and scholarship fund.

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About VCU and the VCU Medical Center: Virginia Commonwealth University is a major, urban public research university with national and international rankings in sponsored research. Located on two downtown campuses in Richmond, VCU enrolls more than 32,000 students in 211 certificate and degree programs in the arts, sciences and humanities. Sixty-nine of the programs are unique in Virginia, many of them crossing the disciplines of VCU's 13 schools and one college. MCV Hospitals and the health sciences schools of Virginia Commonwealth University compose the VCU Medical Center, one of the nation's leading academic medical centers. For more, see www.vcu.edu.