

Invest in your future

Community Outreach Tips and Event Ideas

- Consider attending an affordable housing fair in your area.
- Check out local events – such as college career days, housing events, your local county fair, or business related events and see if you can set up a VIDA booth! VIDA booth materials are available for rent in Richmond for free by calling Sabrina Blackett at (804) 371-7058.
- See if you can hang up VIDA posters and fliers in your local grocery store or pharmacy!
- Ask your local store owner about the possibility of stuffing VIDA leaflets in grocery bags, or having volunteers post leaflets on cars in the parking lot.
- As tax time approaches, talk to your local tax preparation shops, like H&R block, about promoting VIDA as a way for EITC recipients to “invest in their future.” Ask about providing them with leaflets or materials to provide to EITC recipients.
- Ask local employers with minimum or near minimum-wage workers if you can post VIDA posters or materials in their break rooms.
- *Outreach to other groups* - Try to get your VIDA posters in the offices or waiting areas of local organizations or agencies.

Additionally, send these groups stock newsletter stories for their newsletters or bulletins – *and* also send them stock “touts” for their Web sites.

Here are some examples of groups to research:

- Social services agencies;
- Nonprofit social service agencies (The Salvation Army, etc.);
- Local churches with newsletters or bulletins;
- Religious organizations such as Commonwealth Catholic Charities;
- Head Start agencies;
- Libraries;
- Employment commissions;



- Redevelopment and housing authorities;
 - Nonprofit housing production organizations;
 - CDBG housing production grantees;
 - PTA's;
 - Community colleges, universities and educational institutions;
 - Real estate organizations;
 - Small business groups;
 - Down payment assistance sites;
 - SPARC groups;
 - Homeownership clubs;
 - Virginia Housing Counseling organizations;
 - Mortgage banks;
 - Tax preparation companies, such as H*R Block; and more.
- Consider bus advertising – if you have the funds VIDA can provide the artwork! Just call Sabrina Blackett at (804) 371-7058.
 - Start a speaker's bureau! Have your agency VIDA spokesperson scheduled at local PTA meetings, adult education centers, or other groups where potential VIDA savers may be found to talk about the program.
 - Consider contacting your local radio or television station to schedule an on-air interview. Most radio stations may have availability during the morning commute – especially if this station caters to potential VIDA savers. Television stations may have time during the morning or noon newscasts.

Events

- Consider an event for your organization's milestones – your first graduate for each of the three VIDA goals may provide an excellent opportunity. After ensuring the graduate is comfortable speaking with reporters – and is well spoken – arrange a celebration event at a new homeowner's home, and invite the media using the stock event release form in this kit.

You might also consider an event at the establishment of a new business owner. For education savers, you may consider inviting a reporter to interview them about their experience. Also consider repeating these events as you reach your tenth and other milestone numbers of saver graduates.
- You may also consider an "open house" night. Send notice to local papers and news organizations, as well as other contacts you have made



advertise them to your local media using the stock event release form in this kit. On this evening, individuals interested in the VIDA program can come learn more. Think of scheduling a successful graduate or participant to speak.

- Think about events during Homeownership Month, Entrepreneurship Week, Financial Literacy Month, and more. Perhaps have additional open houses during these times, advertise them to your local media using the stock event release form in this kit, and use this as a time to provide a orientation to potential VIDA savers, or to those who are just looking for financial literacy counseling.



Virginia Department of Housing
and Community Development

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