

Development and Communications Plan 2015

The Alliance has established a foundation for development with a focus on regular communications, special events, and appeals at midyear and year end. Moreover, in June 2014, the Alliance hired Mary Angela Hardwick as our full-time Assistant Director of Communications and Development to work with Laura Ricciardelli, our part time Director of Communications and Development. Together we are focused on growing engagement with the Alliance's diverse audiences throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Our Goals

In 2014, the communications and development team honed a simple, clear and dynamic message to define and brand the Alliance's mission and its work. Our goal in 2015 is to amplify this message to increase awareness and substantially bolster support from our audiences. We will focus on our centers of opportunity by maximizing our work with the Board to engage their contacts and to expand our outreach to members/corporate partners/sponsors and VIPs. Our goal will be to increase recognition of the Alliance and its mission, expand engagement and maximize development dollars for our Bay restoration work.

Our Audiences

In 2015, we will stress targeted engagement, education, and activation of the diverse audiences with whom the Alliance must effectively communicate. These internal and external audiences include our new Honorary Directors, our Board, the Alliance staff, Alliance members, VIPs, corporate sponsors, local governments, businesses, environmental partners, community groups, program and project volunteers and Bay watershed residents.

Our Implementation

In 2015, our work to gain commitment from our audiences will focus on clarity of message delivered through diverse means including Alliance events hosted by state offices, expanded regular communications including our enewsletter, increased social media activity, program activities, quarterly mailings, media and press releases, special events hosted by our state offices and a new outreach campaign using a unique set of posters designed for the Alliance by local Annapolis artist Joe Barsin.

Internal audiences will also be a stronger focus in 2015 with regular communications with staff, Board members and our Honorary Directors to maximize the potential and strengths of these Alliance spokespeople.

In addition, we will create a new series of tools including an Annual Report, a new Alliance brochure, Fact Sheets and Program Summary Sheets, and the outreach posters designed by Joe Barsin. Specifically, the Barsin poster campaign will promote a simple call to action: *Join the Alliance!* The posters will illustrate different components of the Alliance's work as the foremost Bay organization focused on the restoration in all six watershed states to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay. The posters will help to put a face on the Alliance and our work. This call to action will take on a tailored format for each of our audiences. The first poster will be used in a large postcard format as our First Quarter mass mailing and in our marketing of the Alliance and our PCS program at the Environmental Showcase of the Annapolis Film Festival.

(Please see the 2015 Development Timeline for details.)

Our Opportunities

In 2015, as we focus on consistent branding and messaging, increased visibility, dynamic engagement and maximizing opportunities for communications and development, our opportunities will include:

With our Board and Honorary Directors

- Expanded engagement of our Board through regular monthly communications
- Outreach with our Honorary Directors
- Strong collaboration with our Development Committee of the Board of Directors
- Increase the number of Taste sponsors

With the Alliance Staff

- Broadcasting our "*Join the Alliance*" message to our expanded direct mail address list
- Supporting program grant-writing and sponsorship efforts
- Expanding our member email list
- Providing communications support to staff in all our state offices and increasing promotion of Alliance work through new marketing materials, press releases and media relations
- Increasing the number of events hosted by our state offices to raise awareness of the Alliance work and promote programs and membership

Within our Communities

- Participation as the Chesapeake Bay restoration expert with the City of Annapolis in the Chinese tourism initiative and as a moderator for the Annapolis Film Festival
- Expanded engagement opportunities with business communities throughout the watershed through B4B and future events in MD/DC/PA

With our Members and Supporters

- Expansion and clearer definition of member benefits
- Expansion of outreach to VIPs, including former Board members and private foundations
- Daily social media communication

Other

- Website Revision
- Publication of our Annual Report
- Increased prospect research – individual, corporate, and foundations – for major sponsors, major gifts, and matching gift opportunities
- Development of a planned giving program