

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## Recap: Leadership Arlington's Annual Legislative Breakfast

**Arlington, VA** - Leadership Arlington held its third annual Legislative Breakfast at The Westin Arlington Gateway on Friday, March 28 from 7:30am until 9:30am. State legislators joined an audience of 150 to share the valuable leadership lessons they learned during this year's Virginia General Assembly legislative session.

Legislators in attendance included Delegate Bob Brink (D-48th District), Senator Adam Ebbin (D-30th District), Delegate Patrick Hope (D-47th District), Delegate Rob Kupricka (D-45th District) and Delegate Alfonzo Lopez (D-49th District).

Taking lead from moderator Scott McCaffrey, Editor of the *Sun Gazette*, the legislators each spoke about valuable leadership lessons they learned from the legislative session.

The main topics discussed at the 2014 legislative session included ethics, mental health and the expansion of Medicaid.

Legislators who touched on the ethics reform explained it may not be perfect, but it is progress. "I'm afraid it wasn't enough," Senator Ebbin said. "I think what's important is we strengthened public confidence [through the ethics reform]." Delegate Hope elaborated, "It did fall short. We solved some problems, but we still have some of the weakest ethics laws in the nation." That being said, all legislators seemed optimistic about the direction in which the ethics reform is moving.



*From left to right: Scott McCaffrey, Senator Ebbin, Delegate Kupricka, Delegate Brink, Delegate Lopez, Delegate Hope.*



*Delegate Hope touched on mental health reform.*

In discussing the mental health system, Delegate Hope was a key advocate for improvements. He shared, "97% of the time, the current mental health law works, but you have to strike a balance between detaining someone against their will and making sure they get the help they need." The new mental health reform extends a patient's stay by eight hours and improves the capability of finding a bed for patients through a shared electronic database. "I'm confident with this outcome," said Delegate Hope.

Touching on the expansion of Medicaid, Delegate Brink described the expansion as "the 800 pound gorilla in the room." They are working on a budget, but nothing solid has been settled upon at this point. "I can guarantee Virginia will expand Medicaid at some point, the question is when," reassured Delegate Hope.

The panel discussion ended with a question and answer period using previously submitted questions from the audience. For the final question, the legislators shared a guiding leadership principal they follow. Here is what each legislator shared:

- Delegate Brink - Accepting hard work to gain results
- Senator Ebbin - Continuing to fight for what you believe
- Delegate Hope - Admitting mistakes
- Delegate Kupricka - Keeping people from being boxed in
- Delegate Lopez - Cultivating relationships

In conclusion, Delegate Lopez applauded the audience for being active citizens in the community. "You appreciate having a government. You appreciate being engaged," he told them. He also encouraged them to share this passion. "Everyone needs to be engaged in these issues that matter. We need to have people engaged in state politics, or we will be stuck. Get yourself and others to advocate for things that matter."



*Legislators addressed the 150 attendees at this sold out Legislative Breakfast event.*

For pictures from the event, please visit our [Facebook page](#) or [website photo album](#).

Thank you to our event sponsors: [Dominion](#), [Verizon](#) and [Arlington Economic Development](#); and table sponsors: [Bean, Kinney & Korman, PC](#), [Boehringer Ingelheim](#), [Chain Bridge Bank](#), [McGuireWoods LLP](#), [Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority](#), [Northern Virginia Community College](#), [Washington Gas](#).

### About Leadership Arlington

The mission of Leadership Arlington is to enlighten, inspire and connect leaders to strengthen the community. The vision of Leadership Arlington is a prepared, inspired and inclusive leadership who together embrace responsibility for the common good. For more information, visit [www.leadershiparlington.org](http://www.leadershiparlington.org) or call 703-528-2522.