



**Some roads end. Some you leave on purpose.  
Either way, the goodbye is real.**

This month, two longtime Richmond nonprofits announced their closure.

[ART 180](#), after 27 years of youth arts programming, will wind down on August 28. [CCHASM](#) (Chesterfield-Colonial Heights Alliance for Social Ministry), which has coordinated food assistance and emergency utility help across the southern part of our region for decades, will conclude operations June 30.

Both boards made hard, deliberate decisions. Both organizations are closing with care, finishing programs, supporting staff, and communicating openly.

These are tremendous losses for our community. And it's a moment for the rest of us to pay attention.

**what we can learn**



**Strategic planning isn't a luxury.**

ART 180 named this directly. The organization operated for six years without a formal strategic plan. By the time one was completed in early 2026, the structural footing wasn't there to weather what came next. Strategic plans aren't documents that sit on shelves. They're how you see a curve in the road before you're already in it.

**Financial pressure compounds.**

Both organizations named the same forces, including a decline in individual giving, an increasingly competitive grant landscape, the end of pandemic-era funding, and federal funding shakeups hitting nonprofits across the country. ART 180 had been operating in the red for more than three years by the time those pressures converged. Each piece on its own might have been survivable. Together, they weren't.

**"Doing more with less" has a ceiling.**

CCHASM operated for years with two full-time staff. Their CEO was running the organization, writing and managing grants, leading their Thanksgiving program, managing staff, volunteers, and the board, and handling Spanish-language intake. Organizations don't run this thin because they want to. They run this thin because funders rarely pay for the rest. This is a sector problem, not just an org problem.

**Closing well is leadership.**

Both organizations are doing this right. Programs are finishing, staff are being supported, partners are being notified, and communities are being thanked. If your organization is ever in this position, this is the model.

**This isn't only a lesson for nonprofits.**

Right now, the community is mourning these losses and scrambling to figure out who fills the gaps for the kids who came to ART 180 and the families who relied on CCHASM's food pantry and utility assistance. There are lessons here for all of us:

**For donors**

Give what you can to the organizations still standing, and don't restrict the gift. Operations are the mission.

**For funders**

Fund operations. Make grants less of an administrative burden. Multi-year, unrestricted dollars keep organizations alive long enough to be strategic.

**For all of us**

When a nonprofit closes, the need doesn't close with it. Show up for the organizations and people doing the work that remains.

**None of this is theoretical. These are the conversations that need to happen in rooms with other leaders who get it.**

**this is exactly why we gather**



Nonprofits are out here doing the work, and too often, no one hears about it. At the same time, local reporters are looking for stories that matter to their communities.

And that disconnect is costing both sides.

At the next session of [The Current](#), sponsored by the [Virginia Local News Project](#), we're bringing journalists and nonprofit leaders together for a candid conversation about how to build stronger relationships.

**What:** [Who's Telling Your Story?](#) Local News, Nonprofits, and the Communities that Need You Both

**When:** Thursday, May 21, 2026 | 3:00 - 4:30 PM

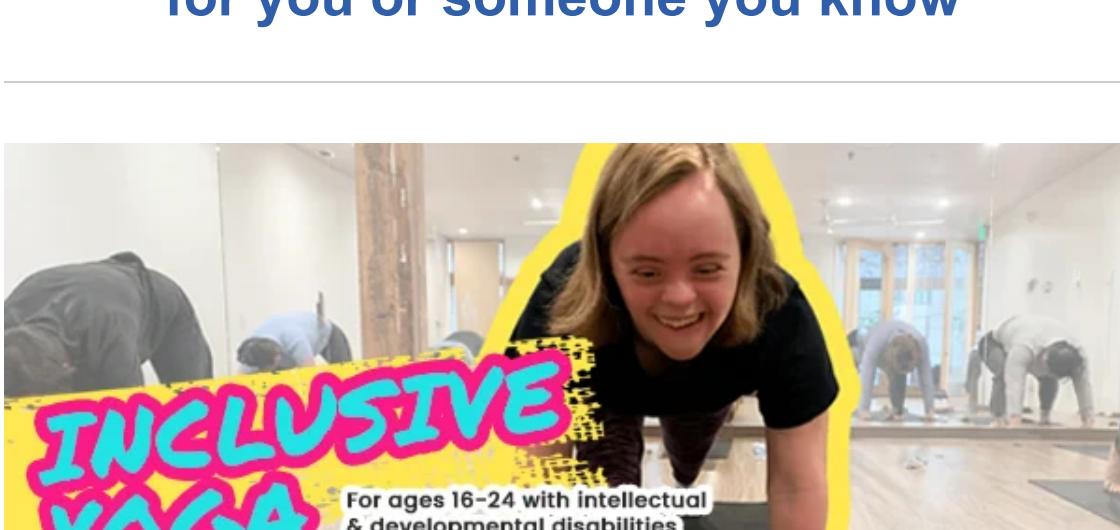
**Where:** Libbie Mill Library

[quit leaving stories on the table >>](#)

P.S. In case you missed it...

If nonprofit compliance lives on your "I'll get to it" list, [start here to cover your assets](#).

**for you or someone you know**



[My Voice, My Choice Inclusive Yoga](#) for individuals age 16–24 with intellectual and developmental disabilities:

Tuesdays & Thursdays | June 23–July 30 | at Broad Yoga

Sessions combine breathing, mindfulness, and accessible yoga with real-life skills like understanding boundaries and making confident choices.

[save your spot >>](#)

**what's in the net?**

**Listening:** Goodbye Yellow Brick Road, obviously. Elton John's 1973 double LP holds up.

**Doing:** Spring cleaning. The literal kind, the metaphorical kind, the open-the-windows-and-throw-something-out kind. We're doing it all.

**That's it for April. On to what's around the next corner.**