

BBB serving Central Virginia
BBB Foundation of Virginia

Annual Report 2009



Dear Friends of the BBB,

Ten years ago American businesses faced the distinct threat of disruption because of a computer-programming glitch that we collectively labeled Y2K. Our fears had been unwarranted. Nothing of any consequence happened.

Ironically, by the close of the decade, those very businesses that emerged unscathed from Y2K would ultimately face disruption of another kind. This time the threat didn't come from a computer glitch but from an avalanche of human glitches. Human failures, failures of trust, unleashed the worse recession since the Great Depression.

It's entirely appropriate, then, that BBB and its accredited businesses concentrate on restoring that trust as we begin to emerge from the depths of this recession. Trust has long been the centerpiece of the BBB's purpose and being. In fact, our recently adopted slogan says it all --"Start With Trust."

Your BBB isn't immune to the effects of this recession. During the past year, our total BBB accredited businesses in Central Virginia dropped by nearly five percent. This shouldn't be surprising since many of our accredited businesses are tied to the construction and trades industries, the professions hardest hit by the recession.

Despite the recent decline, however, BBB nevertheless enjoyed a robust decade. On Jan. 1, 2000, our membership was at 2204. Ten years later, those numbers nearly doubled to 4,177.

Your BBB continues to monitor and investigate complaints of consumer fraud. The nature of such fraud changed markedly over the past decade. Ten years ago, there was a face behind many of the scams in Central Virginia, perpetrated mostly by door-to-door

con artists intent on making a fast buck. Today, those con artists are hiding in the realms of cyberspace. They don't necessarily want to steal a fast buck; they want to steal something far more valuable - your identity.

BBB faces an ongoing challenge to warn consumers about this and other types of fraud in the marketplace. Funds received by the BBB Foundation of Virginia help us do just that.

Last year our non-profit Foundation received a generous grant of \$10,000 from the Cameron Foundation to conduct seminars on consumer fraud in the Tri-Cities area. We are doubling our efforts in 2010 to generate additional contributions to the Foundation so that we can expand these valuable classes to other parts of Central Virginia.

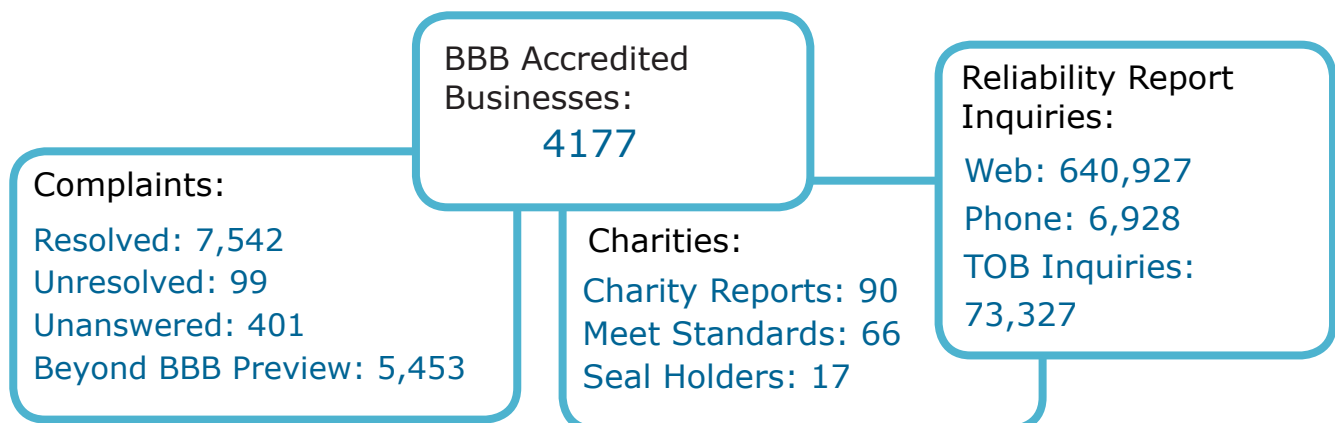
As we move into 2010, your BBB board of directors will continue to re-shape our strategic plan that we developed three years ago. We have already identified three overriding goals: Restore the number of accredited businesses to 2007 levels; continue to serve as the vital site for consumers making pre-purchase buying decisions; and continue to be a vital business partner to all accredited businesses.

We have every confidence that BBB will reach these goals and that trust and prosperity will return to the marketplace. 2010 offers tremendous promise for all of us. We're excited about the year ahead!

Sincerely,



Thomas J. Gallagher
President & CEO



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*As of January 1, 2009

Our Mission:

BBB's mission is to be the leader in advancing marketplace trust. BBB accomplishes this mission by creating a community of trustworthy businesses; setting standards for marketplace trust; encouraging and supporting best practices; celebrating marketplace role models; and denouncing substandard marketplace behavior.

BBB Standards for Trust

Build Trust

Establish and maintain a positive track record in the marketplace.

Advertise Honestly

Adhere to established standards of advertising and selling.

Tell the Truth

Honestly represent products and services, including clear and adequate disclosures of all material terms.

Be Transparent

Openly identify the nature, location, and ownership of the business, and clearly disclose all policies, guarantees and procedures that bear on a customer's decision to buy.

Honor Promises

Abide by all written agreements and verbal representations.

Be Responsive

Address marketplace disputes quickly, professionally, and in good faith.

Safeguard Privacy

Protect any data collected against mishandling and fraud, collect personal information only as needed, and respect the preferences of consumers regarding the use of their information.

Embody Integrity

Approach all business dealings, marketplace transactions and commitments with integrity.

BBB Accreditation in 2009:

Denied: 36

Revoked: 20

Approved: 1032

BBB serving Central Virginia BBB Foundation of Virginia

720 Moorefield Park Drive, Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23236
www.richmond.bbb.org
info@richmondbbb.org

Accredited Business Hotline:

804.648.0030
888.648.0030 (toll free)
Fax: 804.320.0248

24-Hour Report Lines:

804.648.0016 (Richmond)
434.971.3707 (Charlottesville)
540.373.9872 (Fredericksburg)
804.648.0016 (Tri-Cities)

Senior Fraud Hotline:

804.780.2222

Program Service Accomplishments in 2009

Public Outreach & Education

- **Social Media**
BBB's new Face book Fan Page already has more than 100 friends and a Twitter account with over 100 followers
- **Vocus**
New software for our media outreach. BBB was referenced more that 160 times last year
- **Scam Jam**
Annual event partnering with Virginia Attorney General's Office and the Central Virginia Triad. In 2009, 350 attendees heard and saw presentations on current scams, identity theft, contractor selections and wills & trusts
- **Protect Your ID Day**
Semi annual event partnering with NAID, The Document Termination Company, National Federation for Credit Counseling and Main Line Broadcasting to provide on site free document destruction and information regarding identity theft and credit counseling.
- **Senior Fraud**
An ongoing consumer awareness and education program partnering with The Cameron Foundation and BBB Accredited Businesses to serve the senior population.
In 2009 our Senior Fraud Program Managers participated in or hosted 62 events that reached 4095 senior citizens.

Accreditation Benefits

- **BizNotes e-newsletter**
Bi-Weekly local e-newsletter with the latest scams, local BBB news and much more.
- **BBB TrustBrief e-newsletter**
Weekly national e-newsletter with business tips and economic news
- **AB Webpage Creation**
Single page website for all of our accredited businesses at no extra charge
- **BBBOnline**
Use of the BBB logo on your company's website is included in your accreditation
- **URX Prescription Card**
Prescription discount card for accredited businesses, employees and family members
- **Video Sponsorship on bbb.org**
Exclusive accredited business only opportunity to sponsor a consumer educational video on bbb.org
- **Buyers Guide**
Annual BBB Yellow Page publication listing all BBB accredited businesses
- **Free Seminars**
Educational seminars for accredited businesses
- **Networking Luncheons**
Opportunity to meet and network with other BBB accredited businesses
- **e-Quote**
Consumers can request quotes from Accredited Businesses through BBB's website

10 Most Inquired About TOBs

• HOME IMPROVEMENTS	43,015
• CONSTRUCTION & REMODELING SERVICES	34,039
• HOME BUILDERS	25,922
• HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING	23,983
• AUTO DEALERS-NEW & USED CARS	23,202
• CONTRACTORS-ROOFING	23,019
• CONTRACTORS - GENERAL	20,687
• CONTRACTORS-SIDING	18,853
• AUTO REPAIR & SERVICE	18,691
• WINDOWS - INSTALLATION/SERVICE	17,450