

# THE VOICE

Volume 25 Number 3 A Publication of the Veritas Society, Bellarmine University: The Next Great Learning Experience Spring 2021

*The Veritas Voice newsletter is again publishing online. Because of COVID-19 related production issues, we cannot do a printed edition to mail out.*

## VERITAS GOES VIRTUAL AGAIN FOR SPRING TERM

With a lineup of 20 courses to choose from, Veritas members will be glued to their Zoom screens during the upcoming spring term when they can delve into the serious side of life – think Plato and the Supreme Court – or enjoy the lighter side, with comedians and musicals leading the way.

The hard work of our Curriculum Committee resulted in another impressive lineup of courses and presenters, all the while embracing our new virtual world that's part of coping with the pandemic.

The spring term will begin March 1 and end April 9. Course catalogs will be emailed Jan. 20. Registration will open at 9 a.m., February 3, and close February 19. Be sure to check the course times; some are starting at 10:30 a.m., which is a little earlier than last term, or at 4 p.m., which is later than usual.

The registration fee will be \$30, and the fee for each course remains at \$15.

Veritas always offers a wide variety of topics, and this term is no exception.

In the current events lineup, there will be courses on everything from challenging issues in a turbulent world, a study of constitutional issues and controversies, financial realities of climate change, and an introspective look at how to combat racism and change the world. Another course will explore America's changing response to child abuse and neglect.

History courses will offer insights into six American founders, overlooked heroes of World War II, and

the lost tale of the Underground Railroad involving an enslaved Kentucky couple. Another course will cover the year 1066 – “the year that changed everything.” And another will delve into the history of the U.S. Supreme Court.

One Literature course will cover Shakespeare's *King Lear* and *As You Like It*, a study of powerful people “tossed into the wilderness.” Another course will explore Pluto's “The Republic,” a well-known work on political theory.

Courses with a spiritual bent will include mindfulness and meditation; discussions of closing the gap between religion and science; and a wide-ranging look at the life and beliefs of Kentucky author Wendell Berry.

The recorded presentations from the annual summer Chautauqua Institution Assembly in western New York will cover diverse topics. And the Friday Speaker Series (formerly known as Lunch and Learn) will feature local speakers, several of whom will talk about how their organizations are coping with the impact of the pandemic and COVID-19 crisis. Presenters also will talk on distilleries in Jefferson County and issues affecting Appalachia's coal country.

And in the entertainment arena, there will be courses on Broadway musicals and the stories behind them, as well as the golden era of comedians over the last 50 years. The Friday afternoon film series will be movies of Charles Dickens stories adapted for the screen.

# JOIN THE VERITAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

By Gay Ellison

This spring eight of the Veritas Board's 18 directors will be elected for a two-year term, running from June 2021 through May 2023. All board meetings are currently being held virtually via Zoom. Benefits of board membership include making new friends and having a healthy sense of accomplishment derived from activities such as helping design and implement virtual Veritas programs, recruiting course presenters, or writing for the Veritas Voice.

If you'd like to get on the ballot -- which will be emailed to members in the middle of March -- contact Rebecca Beyerle, board vice-president, at [beyerler@gmail.com](mailto:beyerler@gmail.com) by March 1. It's recommended you attend a virtual board meeting prior to seeking election to help you assess whether your skills and interests can be used to further build and strengthen the organization. The next board meeting is February 19. And remember, you must have paid membership fees for at least one term within the last academic year to be eligible to run.

Board members attend about four meetings a year, each lasting two hours. Members also serve on standing committees, including: Curriculum, Membership, Special Events, Production, Friday Speaker Series, Field Trips, Finance, Newsletter, Summer Program, and Volunteers. Standing committees also hold meetings, yet time commitments remain reasonable - even for busy retirees. Because standing committees do not require board membership, you might join one to gauge your interest in running for election to the full board.

You can request a Zoom link to a board meeting through the Veritas office at [veritas@bellarmine.edu](mailto:veritas@bellarmine.edu). Lastly, since newcomers are frequently elected to the board, consider enhancing your visibility and improving your chances of winning a seat by writing an article for the newsletter, attending a virtual interest group meeting or a virtual field trip, attending the free lecture series, or joining a standing committee.

## BIG EFFORT BEHIND THAT HOLIDAY SURPRISE

In mid-December, a holiday surprise arrived at your home, thanks to the collective effort of volunteers and staff. We hope you're still enjoying your Veritas Society coaster with the Bellarmine seal! Here's how this rather complicated effort to deliver nearly 600 of them played out.

We couldn't meet for our annual holiday banquet because of the pandemic, so Bellarmine's Veritas Coordinator Abigail Walsh suggested to the board of directors at its November 2020 meeting that the society deliver a small gift to each member in the holiday spirit of giving and remembrance. The board heartily approved.



Abigail selected the handsome coaster made by Louisville-based Chelle Belles Creations, and ordered 600 of them. (The company specializes in custom-made home décor and has many Bellarmine connections. Check out their website at [www.chellebellescreations.com](http://www.chellebellescreations.com).) Meanwhile, Veritas volunteer committee chair Keith Clements reached out via email to round up volunteers willing to hand deliver them. Recipients would be those who had been members in the last year, as well as frequent and recent presenters.

Then Operation Coaster Delivery – all 591 coasters! – was launched. Abigail and Chelsea McCarty, Veritas enrollment coordinator, divided members by zip codes. Then Abigail spent hours mapping out the most efficient routes for the volunteers and printed out route instructions. Staff and volunteers prepared the gift bags for delivery. On delivery day, 28 volunteers, plus Abigail and Chelsea, fanned out over the Louisville metro area to deliver each coaster. (Those that couldn't be delivered were mailed.) They delivered between 10 and 30 coasters each. That's a lot of driving!

The response was heartwarming. "How nice you organized a bright spot in the day for all of us," one member wrote in to the office. "When I reached outside my door this morning for my newspapers, I was elated to receive the beautiful coasters from Veritas!" someone else wrote. "They will be a constant reminder of the joy of learning even throughout the pandemic this year!"

# A MESSAGE OF THANKS FROM THE VERITAS PRESIDENT

By Dennis Wiseman  
Veritas Board President

This has been one tumultuous year! Little did we know when we started the spring 2020 session that we would be cancelling it just two weeks in because of COVID-19. I would like to personally thank some folks that have worked to keep Veritas vibrant during the pandemic. First of all, you, our members, thank you for bearing with us while we learned how to pull off virtual learning that was relevant and interesting. The “attendance” in our virtual classes was wonderful. We had great numbers in all of the classes and the numbers held steady throughout the six weeks. So, thank you!

The next group of folks stepped up to the plate and, as far as I’m concerned, hit home runs. That is our group of outstanding presenters. This group of Veritas presenters is awesome! The way they embraced virtual instruction was fantastic! Thank you for presenting during this trying time!

Next, I would like to thank the Production Team. Going into this, most of the team had barely heard of Zoom. But like the presenters, they stepped up, learned by trial and error, and managed to work with the presenters to pull off a fantastic session. Thank you for being willing to try this “new” way of doing things.

I saved the most deserving people for last, Abigail Walsh and Chelsea McCarty, Bellarmine staff in the Continuing Education Office who keep Veritas humming. These two ladies have worked tirelessly to get the logistics in place for all of the things we have done since we shut down the spring term in March. They planned and carried out the Lecture Series that we did during March and April. They have scheduled all the Zoom “meetings” for our sessions, sent out all the e-mails, and fielded your questions and concerns. Thank you both!!!

## COPING WITH THE PANDEMIC – STORIES FROM THE HOMEFRONT

*We’ve not met in person since Veritas went online in the spring of 2020. As we’ve hunkered down at home and the pandemic drags on, we’ve found different ways to cope with our new reality. Sometimes we struggled. Sometimes we delighted in an achievement. Sometimes we created. Sometimes we conquered new technology and found it could be our friend. We learned to stay connected in new ways. And we learned how very important the Veritas community is to our lives.*

*The Voice reached out to some members and asked them to write about their experiences in 2020. Here’s what they had to say.*

### JERRY HUBBS: A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE - GETTING PUBLISHED

I have always had an interest in history and genealogy and have presented classes to Veritas on these subjects. Well, having time in the shut-down months I wrote an article on family connections to the steamboat era mainly for my family that I have done research on over the years. I thought The Filson (historical society) might be interested, but they passed on it. I then submitted it to a periodical, S&D Reflector, Son and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen, and they published my article in the June 2020 issue.

I submitted another article on our family-related connection to General Lafayette’s United States tour in 1825 and the sinking of the steamboat he was on in the Ohio River near Cannelton, Ind., southwest of Louisville, and it was published in September. I am now working on another article for possible future publication about steamboat and railroad locomotive boilers. A lot of research but a lot of fun to fill the time!

## JONATHAN SMITH: *SELF-DISCIPLINE HAS ITS REWARDS*

I recall Tuesday, March 10, when my Veritas class met in person for the last time. Sports events were already starting to shut down, and by that afternoon the Bellarmine campus was closed, or at least closed to us. In class we had discussed the possibility of moving online, and I learned from my daughter, an elementary schoolteacher who was about to start teaching from home, that Zoom was what I needed in my future. Was that ever true! Soon my daily routine no longer included live meetings, tennis, or shopping inside stores; these had been replaced by trail-clearing or walks in the woods, solitary golf at sunrise, curbside pickup, and Zoom, Zoom, Zoom!

As a teacher, I would much rather be in the classroom, but I have to acknowledge the many gifts of Zoom. My 55<sup>th</sup> high school reunion was this spring, and of course we missed being back on campus, sharing beer and bull sessions; but on the up side, many people came to the Zoom reunion that I had not seen in 55 years, plus we could resume the conversation a few weeks later. My wife reunited

with a group of college friends in a weekly session that has been so rewarding that it will surely continue when the pandemic has ended. A friend with a lot of family on the west coast said he had seen and conversed with more family members on Thanksgiving Day than ever before. And of course, like most Veritas members, I have taken many more courses, or had other experiences, than I could do in person.

The virus imposes a discipline on us, but it also rewards us for self-discipline. Normal life beckons if we just lower our guard and reach for it; but like cloistered religious men and women, or boot-camp trainees, we need to maintain focus over a prolonged time. And frankly, we have it a lot easier than those folks, since we don't have to give up most of our material comforts. Yes, we are missing the hugs and the other close human contact, but even that serves to remind us how much we value one another, and how important it is to make it to the other side.

## ROZ SHAFFER: *LEARNING TO LOVE ZOOM*

I was never one to spend much time in front of the computer. Oh, I checked my emails on a daily basis and used the Internet to look up information, but I basically was content to read and enjoy holding a book or newspaper in my hand. Also, I was never into social engagement on the Internet. My idea of socializing was to interact with family and friends in person. I liked going out to lunch, attending concerts, movies, and lectures, taking classes, and volunteering. But then, along came the pandemic.

It did not take me long to realize that in order to keep my sanity and stay connected, I would have to be dependent upon the Internet and learn to use Zoom.

Mission accomplished! I now Zoom meet with my children and grandchildren. Just to be able to see them gives me comfort. Through Zoom, I have taken a writing class from Long Beach, Calif., a music appreciation class from Miami Beach, attended lectures and concerts from all over, toured many of the presidential libraries, joined a writing group from Lexington, Ky., met with my book club, attended religious services, and much more. I am more than grateful for Zoom.



Thank you Bellarmine University, Veritas and all the presenters for the Zoom classes and lectures. Being able to see the faces of my fellow classmates is truly joyful. Through Zoom, I can still attend the Veritas Movie and Ethnic Lunch groups. We can't taste the food, but we have fun talking about it. I look forward to the time when I can return to the Bellarmine campus. I will feel the breeze as I walk the path to class. I will smile when one of the young students wants to open the door for me. I will be delighted to see my classmates in person. Until then, I will Zoom along.

## **CHERI POWELL: *FINDING BEAUTY AND STRENGTH***

It's not just COVID. It's wildfires in California. It's empty shelves at Kroger. It's unrest in the streets. It's a deeply divided country. It's hurricanes. It's not hugging friends or family. It's canceling travel plans. It's being home all day, every day. It's a nail-biting election. It's a Thanksgiving dinner alone. Christmas alone. It's Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. It's the loss of a dear friend and being unable to attend her funeral.

My stomach is in knots. I want to crawl into bed, pull the covers over my head and not come out until some later date when this nightmare is over. I can't concentrate. I can't watch the news. I can't not watch the news.



I sit on my front porch and watch the cascade of yellow, red, orange, brown leaves, like an early snowfall that blankets my yard. I watch a mother hawk, high in the tallest neighborhood tree, teach a young hawk to hunt. I work in my backyard garden, cutting away the dying plants and marveling at the new growth already claiming space in this world. I gather seeds from my dying annuals, carefully placing them in paper bags for spring. I leave the coneflower and black-eyed Susan seed heads for chickadees, wrens and sparrows. Sometimes, I cut off the seed heads and throw them to the ground, hoping a foraging dove might find a tasty treat. Or maybe I'll have a new plant in the spring. I walk

around my neighborhood, waving to others enjoying their own private connection to nature. I don't know their names. Only their faces. I breathe deeply, letting the crisp air fill me. Intuitively, I know I'll get through this.

## **LINDA MILLER: *VERITAS, THE PANDEMIC, AND ME***

At the end of February, I returned from Florida eagerly looking forward to Veritas and our spring term. Even though I had read about COVID-19 in the news, it seemed far away to me and not all that consequential.

Veritas classes began on March 2. By March 12 all in-person Veritas classes were cancelled. This date marked the beginning of when I personally began to grapple with the implications of this pandemic.

I live alone. My local family cautions me to remain "healthy at home."

Almost immediately Veritas stepped in offering help if I needed it, communicating often and beginning to plan ways for us to cope and stay connected. Board members organized a group of volunteers to call and check on members.

By April, Veritas offered us three consecutive sessions of "Distance Dialogs" to not only educate but also to keep us connected.

Of course, we ALL needed to tackle online Zoom technology and become much more familiar with our computer. Two of my favorite sessions were Marilyn Schorin's trip to Bhutan and the presentation about Knights Pantry and Bellarmine students who struggle with food insecurity.

Veritas staff and the board made it possible for some of our interest groups to use the Veritas Zoom account to continue interest groups. When I attend more intimate face-to-face meetings of Mystery Book Club, Ethnic Lunch, or Movie Discussion I feel real joy at seeing and talking to friends. We joke and catch each other up on our pandemic lives. Members share recent good books, TV shows, and streaming programs. This connection is a satisfying isolation antidote.

Because of the Veritas staff, our Board of Directors, and Veritas members, I have gained a lot of knowledge in nine months. I like being able to write events on my calendar. I savor the opportunity to dress up a little and wear some make-up and jewelry. I look forward to seeing and talking to old friends and new ones on Zoom.

The Veritas Society has been here for me and I am thankful.



## MARILYN SCHORIN: *ESCAPE FROM PANDEMIC GROUNDHOG DAY*

When I awoke this morning, darkness peeked under the window shade. My mind strangely dull, I wondered if it was Day 200, 250, or 300 PE (Pandemic Era). I groggily track the seasons, but months no longer matter, as they hold a sameness. Days of the week are punctuated by Veritas classes. Those punctuation marks anchor my mental health. I need not mourn the loss of freedom; I can rejoice in the here-and-now.

PP (pre-Pandemic) I prized Veritas for the breadth of classes and knowledge of instructors, but also the sense that I *belonged*. I loved the classes, interest groups, lunch in the cafeteria with my peers amid a host of young people (Bellarmine students). I loved the diverse backgrounds of fellow Veritas members (*are we Veritasians?*).



What I didn't love was the Battle of the Parking Space. Each class day I drove to Bellarmine determined to time my arrival for the moment students poured from the classrooms to their cars so I could scout my prey as students exited and I could claim a Parking Place Prize. Some days I lost the battle and was relegated to the back overflow lot.

Sometime in the future, I hope I will see you in class or even fighting for parking. Vaccinated, we will regroup to learn, to watch movies, and to eat together in restaurants. We may even return to the New York theater scene. I believe in that future. In one of my favorite films, *Groundhog Day*, cynical TV weatherman Phil (Bill Murray) is forced to relive the same day again and again until he learns to turn the situation to his advantage. Were it not for Veritas (staff, board, instructors, production team, and, most of all, engaging members), I would be stuck in my own *Pandemic Ground Hog Day*.

## PAT BUSH: *A COVID CHRISTMAS CAROL*

On Christmas Day in this COVID year,  
Let's Zoom Zoom Zoom.  
There are other ways to spread the cheer.  
Let's Zoom Zoom Zoom.

Mailing cards and IOUs.  
Certificates for grub and booze.  
Another time to meet and schmooze.  
For now let's Zoom Zoom Zoom.

Presence and presents both can wait,  
'Til a later, safer date.  
Only then can we clean the plate.  
For now, Zoom Zoom Zoom.

Sing a carol, deck your halls,  
Post some pictures on your Platform walls,  
Use the phone and make some calls.  
Use Zoom Zoom Zoom.

Better days are on their way.  
Might be April, possibly May.  
Until they come, at home let's stay.  
Just Zoom Zoom Zoom.

Peace and blessings I send to you.  
Thanks for all you say and do.  
You took care so I say, "Woohoo!"  
Let's Zoom Zoom Zoom!!!!

# SEVERAL INTEREST GROUPS CONTINUE MEETING

## **Eating Lunch Group (formerly the Ethnic Lunch Group)**

Because the Ethnic Eating Group's members missed their camaraderie and fellowship, their meetings evolved into an occasional get together at lunch time via Zoom. The online gatherings provide an opportunity to socialize and share, but no set day or time has been established. If you are interested, please contact Mary Helen Thompson at [thompsonmaryhelen1@gmail.com](mailto:thompsonmaryhelen1@gmail.com).

## **Movie Discussion Group (formerly Movie-Dinner Group)**

This group no longer includes dinner, but it meets via Zoom on the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m, with each meeting lasting about an hour. The group boasts a membership of 35, with 12 to 15 typically meeting to discuss movies that are available on PBS or Kanopy, the library's free streaming service. For more information on the next movie, please contact Linda Miller at [linda.loves.walking@gmail.com](mailto:linda.loves.walking@gmail.com) or (502) 216-4075.

## **Mystery Book Group**

The group meets via Zoom on the first Tuesday of the month at 1 p.m. It enjoys between 12 - 20 members and always welcomes new members. Contact Rebecca Beyerle by email at [beyerler@gmail.com](mailto:beyerler@gmail.com) to receive notices of future book choices. Meetings at the Highlands-Shelby Park library branch will resume when the libraries reopen.

## **Thomas Merton Interest Group**

The group reads Thomas Merton's books and discusses his philosophy and life. The group meets via Zoom on the first Friday of the month from 10 to 11:30 AM. For more information and/or to be added to the mailing list, contact the Merton Interest Group at [MertonInterestGroup@yahoo.com](mailto:MertonInterestGroup@yahoo.com).

## **The interest groups listed below have suspended meeting until further notice:**

The Moveable Feast Literature Discussion Group - Amy King, leader

The Hiking Group - Rebecca Beyerle, leader

The Healthy Eating Group - Marilyn Schorin, leader

The Eat/Talk Group - Dennis Wiseman, leader

The Deal the Cards & Play Games Group - Dennis Wiseman, leader

# A LOOK AT VERITAS FOR NUMBER LOVERS

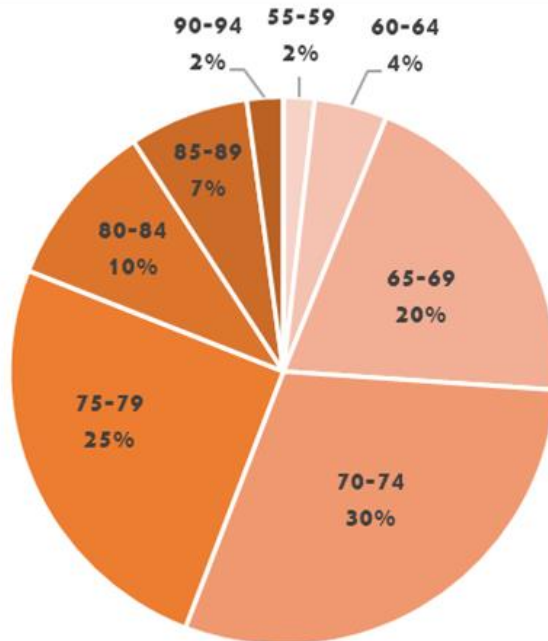
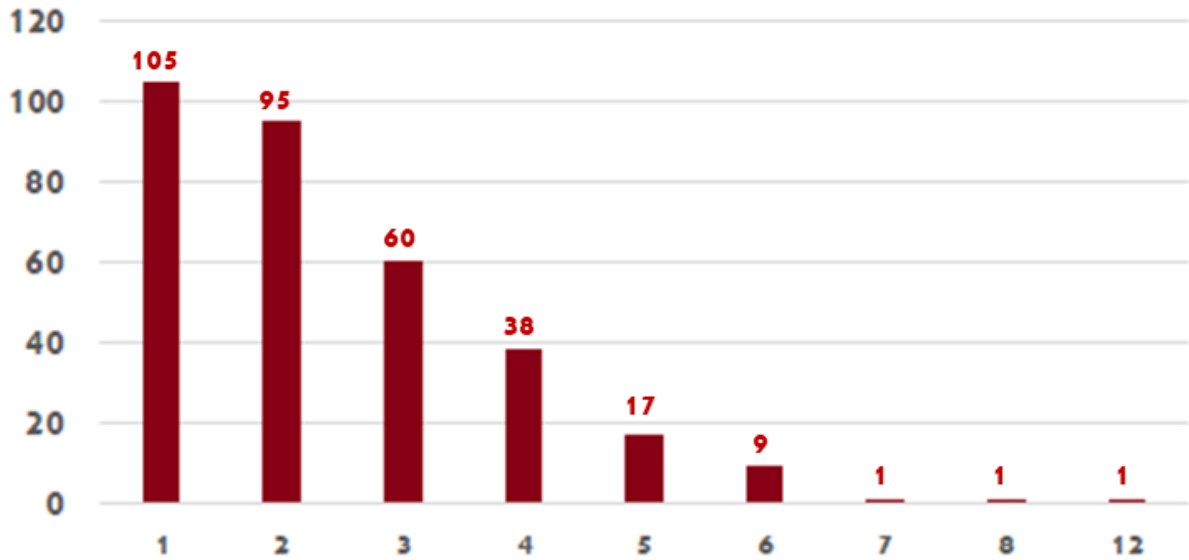
Maybe we don't see each other on campus these days or gather for interest groups. But the thriving Veritas community of 330 members who registered for the fall 2020 term still has a virtual identity. Our thanks to Veritas enrollment coordinator Chelsea McCarty for pulling together some stats for us from last fall.

Some intriguing changes happened last term. A greater percentage of people took three or more classes – 39 percent compared to 25 percent in the fall 2018. We theorize it's easier to take more courses when you don't have to drive in to campus. And it was easier to take more courses because there were no per course enrollment limits dictated by classroom size when classes are on campus. Online programs also opened the door to members joining from outside Kentucky – 17 in Indiana, and one each in Arizona, Tennessee, South Carolina, and New York.

There was another slight change – the percentage of members who are female increased to 77% in 2020, up from 71 % in fall 2018. Why? The Voice has no clue; open to speculation!

Below is a statistical look at Veritas for the fall 2020 term:

## Number of Courses Taken By Individual Members



Percentage of Member Representation by Age

55-59 60-64 65-69 70-74 75-79 80-84 85-89 90-94 95-100

## SEX OF MEMBERS

Male 63 (25%)  
 Female 257 (77%)



## TOP 10 ZIP CODES WITH 48 ZIP CODES REPRESENTED

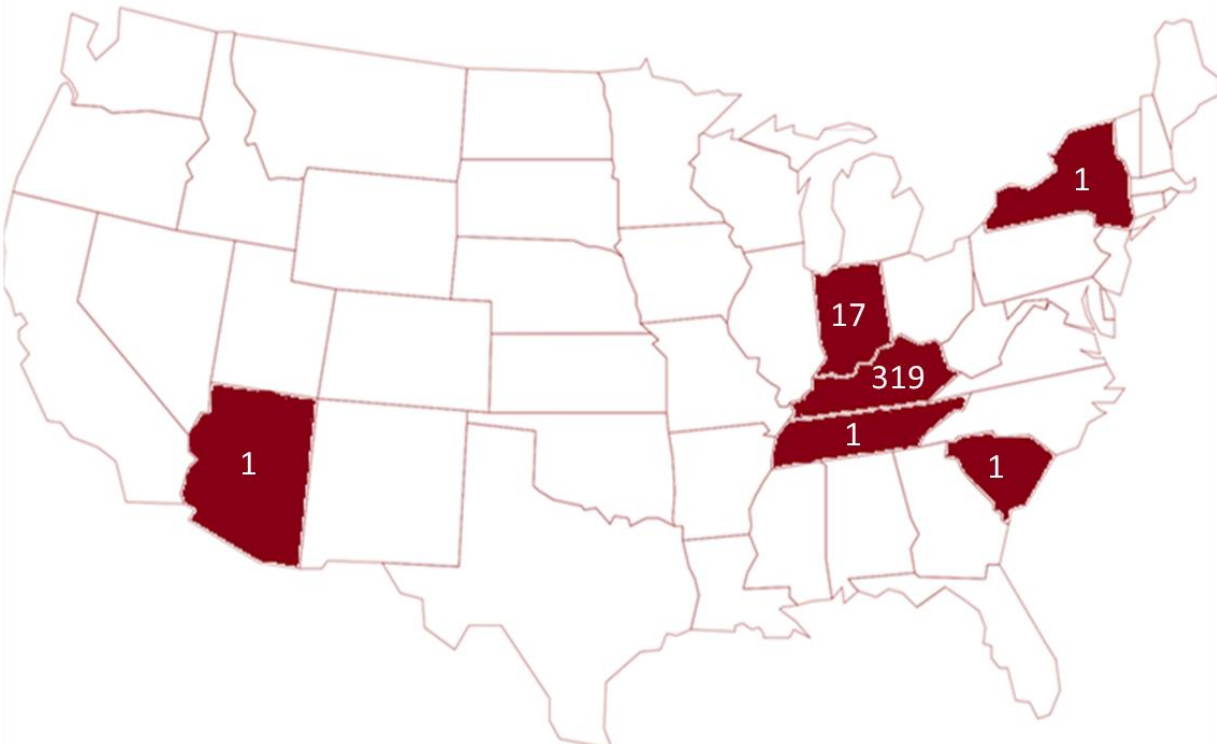
zip code	# of members
40205	61
40207	37
40241	28
40220	23
40204	19
40222	17
40059	15
40041	14
40206	14
40299	13

## MEMBERSHIP BY YEAR THEY JOINED VERITAS

Year Joined Veritas	# of Members
1995-1999	6
2000-2004	28
2005-2009	42
2010-2014	57
2015-2019	126
2020	71

**Fall 2020**

## Veritas Representation By State



Which state will you help us fill in next?

Send email addresses of new prospective members to [veritas@bellarmine.edu](mailto:veritas@bellarmine.edu)