
IMPACT Award Application 2017



Proudly submitted to the Greater Richmond Chamber by:



Submitted by:

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1- Please provide a brief overview of your business.

Imagine purchasing a home, wading through the cumbersome process of financing, inspections, and real estate legalese. Now, multiply that home by five hundred units spread across thirty acres, add federal accessibility requirements and potential environmental concerns such as lead-based paint or asbestos containing materials to the equation, and, to apply even greater pressure, throw in a limited window of time for completion of this real estate transaction so the optimal interest rate can be secured to preserve much needed affordable housing. You need an industry expert you can trust who is experienced with the ever-changing mixed financing requirements to guide you through the process to ensure there will be no unwelcome surprises before or after closing on this purchase. That, in a nutshell, is what Dominion Due Diligence Group (D3G), formally known as Dominion Environmental Group, Inc., has provided tens of thousands of times since it was established in 1994 by Robert E. Hazelton. D3G was the original third party due diligence consultant to concentrate on the Department of Housing and Urban Development–Federal Housing Act mortgage insurance industry, and our solid reputation, earned by our dedication to our core values of integrity, quality, innovation, and teamwork, has allowed the firm to grow from one employee in a basement office into a full-service Environmental, Engineering, and Energy real estate due diligence company focusing on the nation's housing and healthcare markets that currently employs 115 people, 97 of which are located in our Richmond office.

In an ever-changing and fluid market, D3G has not only adapted to new requirements but is recognized as an industry leader providing positive impact on the standards for the housing and healthcare due diligence industry. We have been repeatedly called upon by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to develop and pilot various initiatives to help expedite the federal mortgage insurance industry. A few of the programs D3G has spearheaded include the HUD 4128 Form, Environmental Justice Analyses, Architectural Cost Review Reports, Green Property Needs Assessments, Tax Credit Pilot Programs, and Intrusive Studies, just to name a few. D3G is working closely with the innovative Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), a Federal initiative to transform public housing in this country. These programs register with the general public and Richmond's market rate and affordable multi-family housing community by serving as models of how our clients can effectively purchase or refinance properties and how the residents of these properties can be assured of properly maintained, safe, and affordable housing. We are a proud local company, in that we not only have a strong impact on our Richmond community, but that this home town company's services and reputation have a nation-wide impact as well.

2- Community Impact: How has your company had an impact on community in the Richmond region?

D3G is committed to assisting the community where we live, work, play and do business. Our staff sustains a culture of caring, giving and outreach. We support many charitable organizations, focusing our philanthropy on children, families and the environment. Our strong corporate sponsorship aids the following local organizations:

Greater Richmond ARC – Rob and Elizabeth Hazelton, parents of a special needs child, have been longstanding financial supporters of this wonderful community organization; most recently having been a primary sponsor of the ARC Park, an accessible park for families. For more information regarding D3G's impact on the Greater Richmond ARC's operations, please contact either John Walker or Kim Watson at 804-358-1874.



RVAccess – In memory of their daughter Gracie, Rob and Elizabeth and their sons Ben and Erich, spearheaded the creation of RVAccess, a cost-free program designed to offer children, ages 4-19, with physical and mental disabilities the opportunity to experience the gratification and excitement of soccer.



Virginia Supportive Housing – Virginia Supportive Housing joined forces with Arts on Wheels to upcycle doors from VSH homeless housing projects and turned the doors into works of art and installed them throughout the Richmond area (public parks, favorite landmarks, etc.). At the end of the campaign the doors were auctioned off to raise money for Arts on Wheels, Virginia Supportive Housing and most importantly the folks that they were housing, their clients.



James River Association – Dominion Due Diligence has been a strong supporter of the James River Association (JRA) since 2007, first as an advocate for the preservation efforts of our Founding River, then evolving into a proud tent sponsor of the Westover Lawn Party, the organization's capstone event. As a founding member, Dominion Due Diligence has reached into the business community to grow this council and empower it to proudly do more on behalf of a city that Outside magazine calls "America's Best River Town Ever."

"JRA is truly grateful to benefit from Dominion Due Diligence's vision and passion for our environment and has definitely felt the impact of their ongoing commitment." – Bill Street, Chief Executive Officer



VHDA – D3G has actively supported Virginia Housing Development Authority's (VHDA's) efforts to champion affordable housing in our community, contributing to the \$1.5 million federal funding provided to this deserving Virginia housing organization since 1993.



US Armed Services – D3G is a strong supporter of the military as exemplified by our recruiting and retention of veterans and members of Virginia's National Guard. In fact, we are a V3 (Virginia Values Veterans) certified employer by the Commonwealth's Department of Veteran Services, in addition to having veterans and active Virginia National Guard employees on staff.



Affordable Housing – Our firm supports affordable housing initiatives, and in the Greater Richmond area alone we have facilitated more than 12,300 units of workforce housing. From development of historic structures in Shockoe Bottom to the preservation of rural USDA housing, we have been an integral part, a cog in the wheel you may say, to the successes of many wonderful Richmond based organizations, for example Community Housing Partners (CHP), Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA), Richmond Metropolitan Habitat for Humanity, and Virginia Community Development Corporation (VCDC). And in 2016, D3G was selected by the Richmond Redevelopment Housing Authority (RRHA) to assist with conversion of public housing projects to the HUD private investment Rental Assistance Demonstration platform, allowing for access to capital for much needed improvements to just under 4,000 units of some of the most important housing stock in our region. D3G performed site inspections, physical needs assessments, and energy audits for the entire RRHA housing portfolio. The scope of work served two purposes; the primary purpose was to fulfill RRHA's reporting requirements for HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing Annual Capital Contribution Fund, and secondarily to provide reporting that simultaneously fulfilled many of the due diligence requirements of the HUD Rental Assistance Demonstration.



Internships – Every summer we offer paid internships to local college and high school students who have expressed a desire to pursue careers in environmental, construction, or energy engineering. Many of these summer internships have led to full- time employment with D3G upon the interns’ graduation.

While D3G has donated over \$360,000 to local causes we also believe in a “boots on the ground” approach to giving back to our community, as evidenced by our employee charitable match program and fostering of volunteerism. Our employees mentor students in local County Public Schools, assist with the Henrico County Christmas Mother program, donate blood at in-house drives for Virginia Blood Services, and participate in runs for local charities. In addition, D3G continuously supports The Central Virginia Food Bank, Habitat for Humanity, the Ronald McDonald House, Volunteers of America, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, and the Massey Cancer Center.



3- Employee Impact: How has your company had an impact on the lives of its employees?

D3G offers its full-time employees a competitive benefits package, including:

- Monthly profit sharing bonuses (in FY 2016 bonuses equaled 13% of gross pay)
- 401K Program with employer matching contributions
- Low-deductible health, dental, and vision insurance (100% coverage for employees, 33% for dependents)
- Life Insurance
- Short and Long Term Disability Insurance
- Tuition reimbursement and opportunities for professional accreditation paid for by D3G

As stated above, teamwork is one of our core values; however, we do not sacrifice our employees’ individuality or creativity to achieve this goal. Some of our greatest innovations have come from the recommendations of our employees. We are firm believers that fostering and encouraging a sense of freedom and individuality in the office, rather than an environment of overbearing politically correctness, allows our employees to be more comfortable and, therefore, more engaged. As Rob Hazelton often states, *“Work is a dirty 4-letter word, so it is my job to make it more enjoyable.”* On a visit to the office, one may find a D3G employee zipping by on a scooter, utilizing the office gym, or chilling in the TV lounge. It is also not unusual to see an employee’s child playing on a scooter or in their parent’s work area since we have a liberal policy regarding children in the workplace.

D3G understands the delicate balance between work and personal time, especially since the vast majority of our employees travel on a regular basis. We offer flexible work hours so our employees can attend their children's events or tend to other personal business. Our company is particularly sensitive to family time and personal struggles, much of which stems from our company's President caring for a special needs child who died in August 2012. The company has been known to provide unlimited time off, typically with full pay, when a staff member experiences a family crisis. After all, we like to think of ourselves as one large family. D3G has even implemented a formal Flex Work policy to be a viable alternative work arrangement in cases where individual, job, supervisor characteristics and job duties/responsibilities are best suited to such an arrangement. Flex working allows employees to work at home, on the road or in a satellite location for part or all of their regular workweek. Our policy includes flexing starting and ending times for the day, performing all responsibilities away from the office, working from home one to four days per week, working a compressed week (e.g., four 10-hour days) and job sharing.

Furthermore, we at D3G love what we do! We are committed to the highest quality of work; however, to maintain that constant focus the firm must provide an environment to blow off a little steam. That is why we work hard as a team but also have fun as a team. D3G is known for our year round recreational adventures, which include the following fun events: Summer outdoor events utilizing Virginia's state park systems, cookouts at work, Halloween and Thanksgiving celebrations, and fun events like Oktoberfest, Cinco de Mayo, Bagel Fridays, and airplane contests.



4- Economic Impact: How has your company had an economic impact on the Richmond region:

Rob Hazelton founded Dominion Environmental Group, Inc. in 1994 working out of a one room, windowless basement office in a building subsequently razed to make room for Willow Lawn's expansion. For the first two years it was a one man show, but in a little over 20 years he increased his staff to over 100 through smart growth and cutting edge market knowledge.

Beginning in 2016 and completing in January, 2017, D3G moved their company headquarters, and nearly 100 local employees across town from a rented 2nd floor office space in Innsbrook, to a former roller skating rink in Midlothian, joining the growing number of businesses near Westchester Commons. D3G's President and Founder, Rob Hazelton, purchased the property and funded the complete gut rehabilitation of this building. This consisted of a total renovation and modernization of the existing space. Collaboratively working with Chesterfield County on multiple permits and certificates under a deadline was essential for the success of our move.

As part of the renovation process, D3G utilized a local construction company, designer, furniture supplier, sign company, and janitorial company, as well as donated extra furniture to a local church.



Company Headquarters; Pre Construction - Collaborative Area

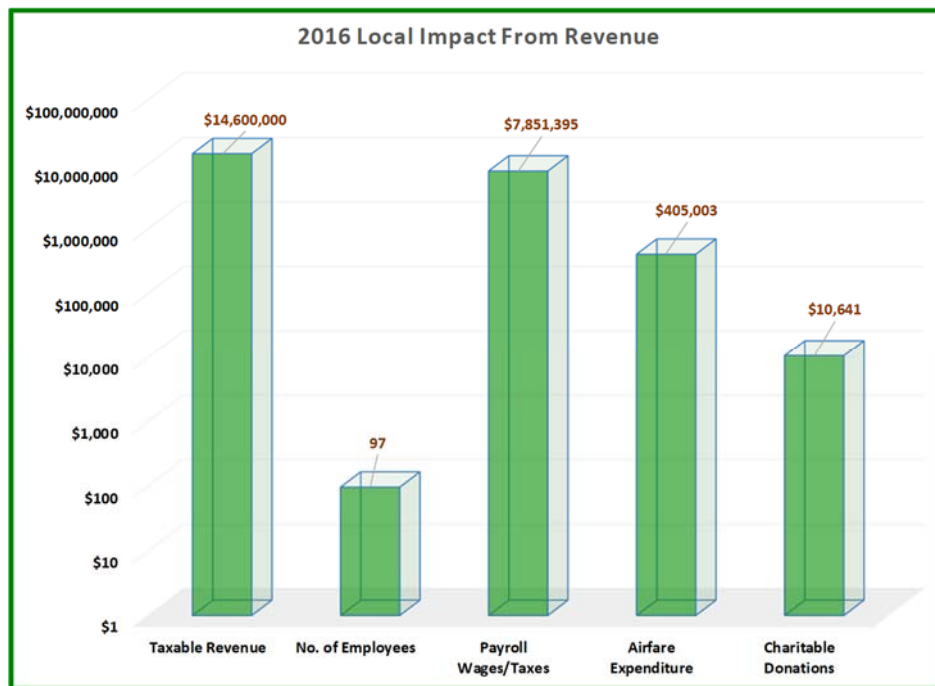


Company Headquarters; Post Construction - Collaborative Area

Moving into our new host County jointly benefits our community. Our influx helps invigorate our surroundings in the Somerville development and brings a stream of tax revenue. A company of our size normally would cause strain to an area's infrastructure, however, our green measures taken before moving lessens the load on the grid. This helps real estate investment opportunities, and coupled with other projects in our direct surroundings, we can become a catalyst for attracting new businesses/households to this up and coming area.

To further D3G's commitment to supporting and partnering with the local municipalities, we invited and hosted a Chesterfield County Chamber of Commerce leadership development event at our new Midlothian headquarters this past March 24th.

We currently employ 115 people and hope to increase 10-15% annually for the next 5 years. The 97 local employees' economic impact on the Richmond region is hard to quantify, but it's staggering if one takes the time to consider the number of purchases, from banal items such as groceries, clothing, or lunches to big ticket items like homes, cars, and college tuition. D3G's employees have made in the Richmond area since Rob hired his first employee in 1996. Moreover, we cast a large geographic net when recruiting potential employees and many employees relocate to the Richmond area to live and start families.



Furthermore, one has to consider the “trickle down” effect D3G’s employment of 97 people has had on the local service industries. In a time of fiscal austerity, our increased hiring and the generous benefits package we offer have had a great impact on local schools, doctors, dentists, insurance companies, and financial advisors.

D3G performs third party inspections from coast to coast and averages well over 100 inspections a month; therefore, our environmental and engineering inspectors utilize Richmond International Airport (RIC) on a daily basis. Just in the past year, we paid greater than \$405,003 in airfare alone! That figure, coupled with the \$14.6 million in taxable revenue D3G earned in FY2016, further reflects our impact on the local economy.

But the economic impact D3G contributes to the community goes beyond the dollars and enters the “sense.” We firmly believe in assisting other local small businesses and routinely hire companies and contractors headquartered in Richmond to perform lead, asbestos, soil, and groundwater testing. While we could employ large national chains at lesser rates, we know from personal experiences how important it is to work with other RVA firms for the betterment of our local economy.

5- Other Outstanding Accomplishments: Describe any other exceptional achievements.

Awards – D3G has received many accolades since its founding in 1994. Rob Hazelton won the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 2002, a listing on the “Virginia Fantastic Fifty,” and was a finalist for the Virginia Rising 25. Furthermore, D3G was nominated as a 2014 Top Workplace designation at the Sterling Workplace Awards by Greater Richmond SHRM. We were honored to be recognized as a 2014 Impact Award finalist, and most recently, we received the 2017 Best Sustainable Design Award from the Greater Richmond Association of Commercial Real Estate (GRACRE).



Training– D3G recognizes the importance of continued professional development and training to best advance the unique skills and credentials that our staff need to excel. In order to stay ahead of an extremely fast paced and ever evolving industry, D3G created a sister company known as D3G University (D3GU). D3GU is dedicated to the effort of professional development and training for all our employees. All new employees of D3G undergo onboard training through the University to learn from experienced subject matter experts within their fields the specific roles and responsibilities they will perform daily for the company. D3GU is most proud to be an approved training center for the Building Performance Institute (BPI) which publishes National ANSI Standards and awards Professional Certifications to credential individuals to stand above all others in the energy efficiency and performance of residential buildings industry. As a BPI training and testing center D3G has trained and certified hundreds of candidates, both internal staff and external clients. Being able to train and certify our staff in-house for professional certification has provided D3G with a huge advantage over the competition. This unique advantage allows D3G to maintain an average of over 50 professionally credentialed staff members at all times. This is a staggering number in the industry and one that far exceeds the number of any of our closest competitors. Our training goes well beyond our staff as D3G also is consistently contracted to provide training for external clients located in Richmond and throughout the mid-Atlantic region.

Corporate Wellness Program – We firmly believe in improving the health of our employees by offering numerous incentive-laden programs throughout the year. To support the mental and physical health of our staff, D3G held a highly competitive Biggest Loser competition with the winners receiving \$750 in cash and prizes, offered a training boot camp during work hours led by a certified personal trainer, created an office workout room, and formed training teams for charity runs such as the Corporate 4-Miler held in Innsbrook, the JRA's Splash and Dash, and most recently, the muddy Rugged Maniac race in Petersburg. Or, if employees wish to enjoy lower impact exercise, they can attend yoga sessions offered by our in-house yogi. Furthermore, D3G also encourages good old fashioned camaraderie by fielding a championship caliber competitive softball team.

