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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## What Does a Thriving Northern Virginia Look Like – And How Do We Get There?

*Amazon Veteran Paul Misener to Keynote Community Foundation for Northern Virginia's 2026 Shape of the Region Conference*

Fairfax, VA (March 9, 2026) – More than 300 leaders from business, government, philanthropy, and the nonprofit sector will come together at the **Community Foundation for Northern Virginia's (CFNOVA) 2026 Shape of the Region Conference** to examine how our region can thrive amid rapid change. This annual conference serves as a regional convening point for cross-sector collaboration and shared progress.

This year's event will feature keynote speaker, **Paul Misener**, former Amazon Global Vice President and native Northern Virginian, who will explore how innovation, talent, and regional pride as can fuel new approaches to both our abundant opportunities and most pressing challenges.

Held on **Tuesday, March 24, 2026**, the Conference will demonstrate how systems like health, housing, transportation, education, arts, and economic opportunity are interconnected – and how collective action across sectors can strengthen Northern Virginia's long-term resilience. Speakers will share bold ideas and practical solutions through lightning talks and facilitated discussions designed to drive shared takeaways and action.

**Drew Wilder of NBC4** returns as moderator and host, leading dynamic conversations with speakers, including: **Andrew Hanson**, Strada Education Foundation, **Ethan Heard**, Signature Theatre, **Elizabeth Kersey**, Transurban, **Dr. Garima Sharma**, Inova, and **Dr. Lisa Sturtevant**, Bright MLS.

The *Shape of the Region* conference will take place at the **Valo Park Auditorium in McLean, VA**, with breakfast and registration beginning at 7:30 am. An exclusive luncheon for professional advisors, including wealth managers, estate planners, attorneys, CPAs, and others, will follow, offering insights into philanthropy, federal tax policy, and cross-sector innovations will shape charitable giving. The luncheon is approved by the CFP Board for **2 CFP® continuing education credit hours**. **Join us to help shape Northern Virginia's future.** For more information or to register, please visit <https://www.cfnova.org/shape-region>.

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### **ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THE REGION CONFERENCE:**

The *Shape of the Region Conference* is an annual event hosted by the Community Foundation, designed to bring together hundreds of leaders from various sectors. This year's conference provides a platform for bold ideas and practical solutions that will define our region's future.

### **ABOUT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR NORTHERN VIRGINIA**

The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia is building a region that works for everyone by advancing equity through philanthropy and community leadership. Since 1978, we have united thousands of generous Northern Virginians with the causes they care about through donor-advised funds, permanent funds, giving circles, and charitable endowments. We cultivate enduring partnerships with nonprofits, foundations, government, businesses, and community members, maximizing impact to drive meaningful change. Through Insight Region®, our original research initiative, we deliver data-driven insights that reveal the trends and issues shaping Northern Virginia's future.

The Community Foundation proudly serves all Northern Virginians in Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William Counties and the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, and Manassas Park. Learn more at [cfnova.org](http://cfnova.org).