

Class project for Legislative Reporting – MASC 375

Instructions for students ❖ By Jeff South ❖ Feb. 1, 2000

Our project will focus on campaign contributions: Who are the biggest donors to members of the General Assembly? How much have they given, and why?

State legislators and candidates must report the campaign donations they receive to the State Board of Elections. A nonprofit group called the Virginia Public Access Project then computerizes this information and makes it available on the Internet. VPAP is funded by the state's major newspapers, along with The Washington Post, The Associated Press, the Virginia Press Association and other groups.

Here are the steps for our class project:

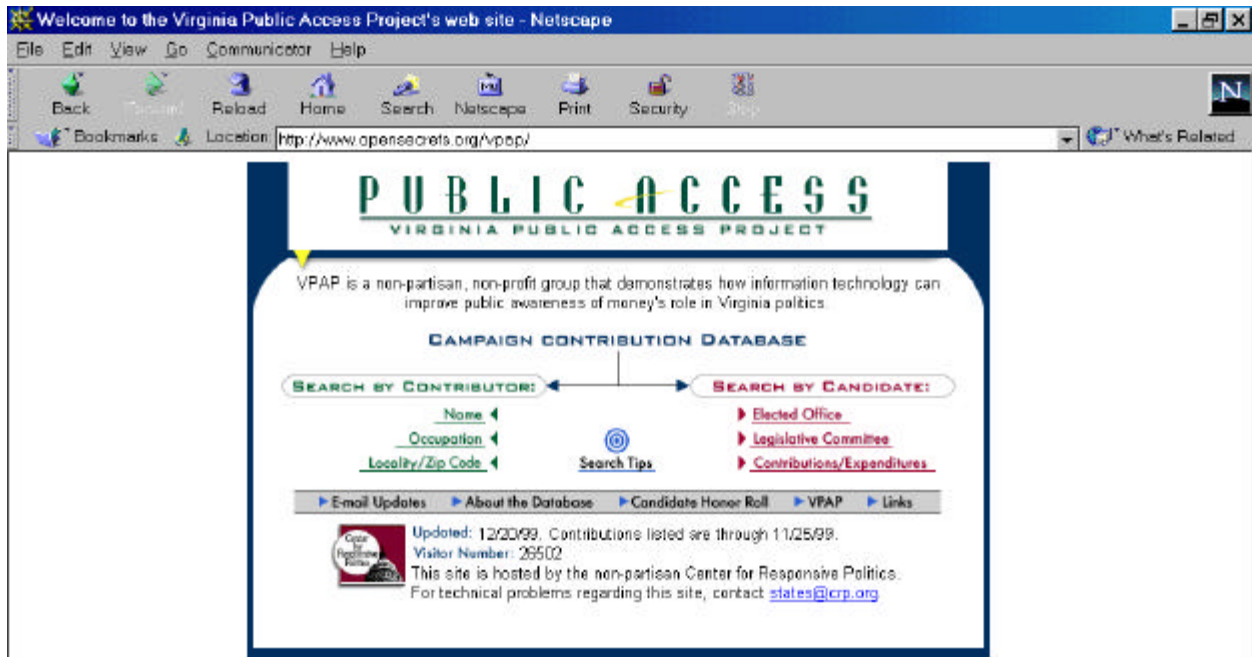
1. Get the data from the VPAP Web site. We'll have to download the data one legislator at a time. (The advantage of being a VPAP member, like the Richmond Times-Dispatch or The Virginian-Pilot, is that those papers get the raw data, with all the legislators and candidates in one huge file.)
2. Analyze the data with Microsoft Access, a database manager. We'll use Access to identify the top 100 or 200 donors.
3. Have each student do short articles on three of the top donors. I'll give you the campaign records for those donors. You'll analyze them with Microsoft Excel: Which legislators got the most money from a particular contributor? How much money did the donor give to Republicans and how much to Democrats? Did the contributor concentrate donations on a particular legislative committee? With that information and with interviews, you'll write your mini profiles.

In addition, two students will team up to write an overview story on campaign donations. They will crunch data to describe the top donors (What special interests do they represent? To whom did they give the most money?) and look at Virginia's campaign finance laws (the state has no limits on donations). These two students also will talk to experts like Larry Sabato and Bob Holzworth; groups like Common Cause and the Center for Responsive Politics; legislators; lobbyists and others. The result: We'll have a long story about the issue; a list of the 100 or 200 top donors, and shorter stories on about 25 of those donors.

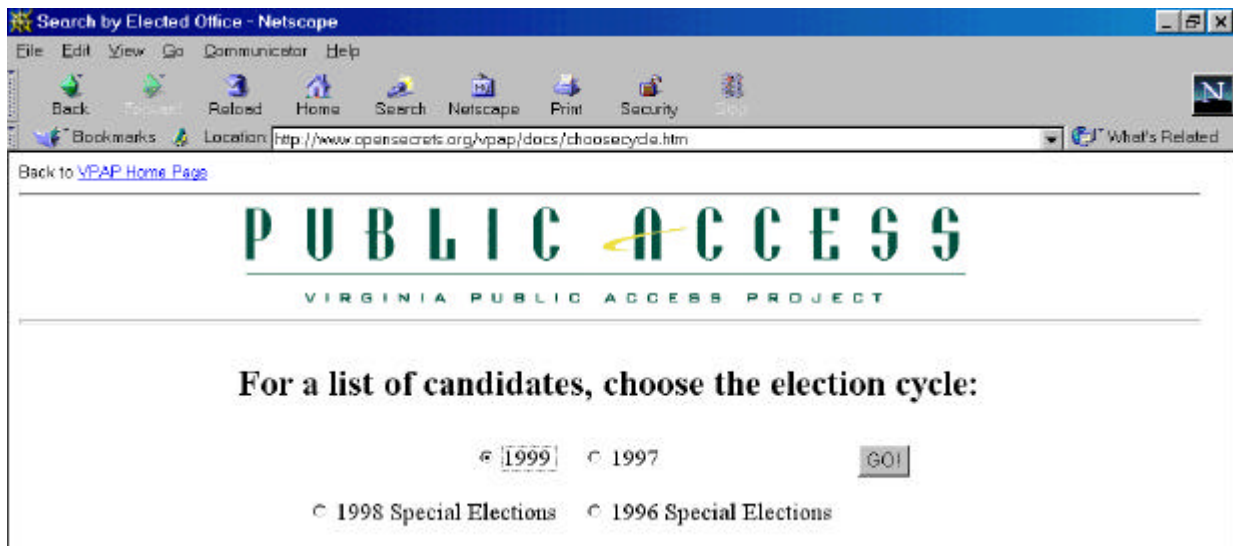
Our **first task** is to get the data from the VPAP Web site. So, go to:

<http://www.opensecrets.org/vpap/>

(MORE)



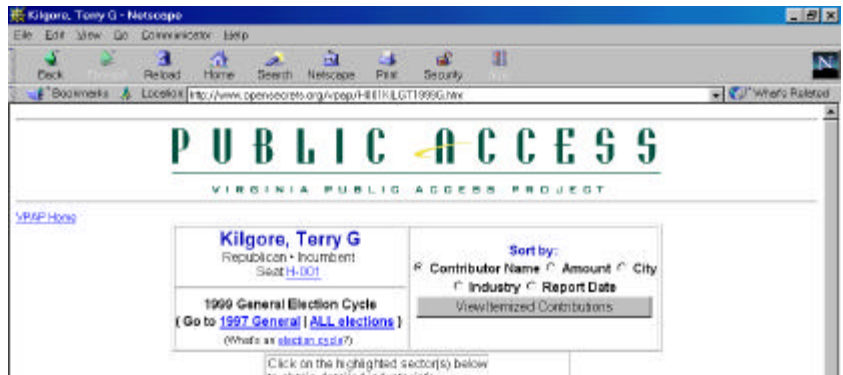
We want to do the "Search by Candidate: >Elected Office". And we want to search the 1999 election cycle:



When you click "Go!", you'll get a list of candidates (including the winning candidates – the current legislators) in the 1999 elections. I'll give each student a list of General Assembly members for whom you must get contributions data.



Suppose you're assigned to get the data for Delegate Terry Kilgore of House District 1. You'd click on the link from his name; that would take you to this page:

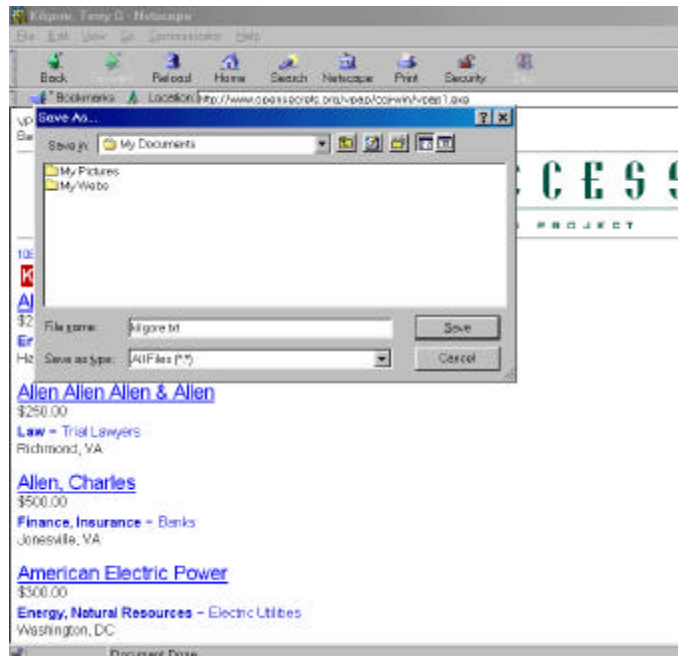


Look at the box that says "Sort by:". You want a list of Kilgore's donations, sorted by the contributor's name. So click "View Itemized Contributions," and you'll get this – a list of all the people and groups who donated to Kilgore during the 1999 election cycle:



Each record shows: the donor's name (Allegheny Power PAC); how much the donor gave (\$250); the donor's general category, or sector (Energy, Natural Resources); the donor's more specific description (Electric Utilities); and the donor's city and state (Hagerstown, MD).

We want to save this list. So, go to File/Save As... Now, here's where it gets tricky: First, you need to save the file as text. To do this, give the file a name and add ".txt". We'll call this list "kilgore.txt". Moreover, you must remember where you're saving it, so you can move the files later onto a disk and give them to me.



When you do this, we'll be able to open the text files with Word, Excel or Access.

Our **second task** is to combine all of the data for all of the legislators into one file and analyze it in Access. Once I get all the data from students, I'll do the combining, using a program called Monarch, which can take text files and turn them into a database. In Access, here's what the data will look like:

LEGISLATOR	DONOR	DESCRIPTION	SECTOR	CITY	ST/	AMOUNT
Kilgore, Terry G	Allegheny Power PAC	Electric Utilities	Energy, Natural Resourc	Hagerstown	MD	\$250.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Allen Allen Allen & Allen	Trial Lawyers	Law	Richmond	VA	\$250.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Allen, Charles	Banks	Finance, Insurance	Jonesville	VA	\$500.00
Kilgore, Terry G	American Electric Power	Electric Utilities	Energy, Natural Resourc	Washington	DC	\$300.00
Kilgore, Terry G	American Institute of Architects	Architectural Services/Su	Real Estate/Construction	Richmond	VA	\$200.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Appalachian Oil Co	Oil Companies/Refineries	Energy, Natural Resourc	Blountville	TN	\$1,500.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Appalachian Power Co	Electric Utilities	Energy, Natural Resourc	Roanoke	VA	\$500.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Arora, Vasu D	Physicians	Health Care	Grundy	VA	\$1,250.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Altride, Roy	Miscellaneous Transporta	Transportation	Richmond	VA	\$250.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Baker, Donald B	Local Government Employ	Public Employees	Clintwood	VA	\$1,500.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Baker, Jettie	Homemakers/Students/No	Undetermined	Clintwood	VA	\$500.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Barger, Gorman	Heavy Equipment Sales/L	Real Estate/Construction	Weber City	VA	\$1,000.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Barnette, Earl W	Service Stations/Conveni	Energy, Natural Resourc	Wise	VA	\$500.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Bell Atlantic Va State PAC	Telecommunications - Lo	Communication, Technol	Richmond	VA	\$825.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Botts, Robert E	Optometrists	Health Care	Big Stone Gap	VA	\$500.00
Kilgore, Terry G	BP Amoco	Oil Companies/Refineries	Energy, Natural Resourc	Towson	MD	\$250.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Bradshaw, William	Attorneys/Law Firms	Law	Big Stone Gap	VA	\$500.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Brown & Root USA, Inc	General Contractors	Real Estate/Construction	Houston	TX	\$500.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Browning-Ferris Industries	Waste Disposal/Landfills	Manufacturing	Richmond	VA	\$400.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Chadwell, Georgia	Retired	Miscellaneous	Ewing	VA	\$500.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Cline Adkins & Cline	Attorneys/Law Firms	Law	Norton	VA	\$220.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Columbia/HCA for Good Govern	Hospitals/Health Systems	Health Care	Richmond	VA	\$250.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Committee for Responsible Adve	Outdoor Advertising/Billbo	Business - Retail, Service	Norfolk	VA	\$150.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Concerned Friends for Tobacco	Tobacco Companies/Farr	Agriculture	Blairs	VA	\$200.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Consolidated Metals	Chemicals/Plastics	Manufacturing	Cedar Bluff	VA	\$500.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Consolidated Natural Gas Service	Natural Gas	Energy, Natural Resourc	Washington	DC	\$250.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Consulting Engineers Council of	Engineers/Engineering Fi	Real Estate/Construction	Richmond	VA	\$200.00
Kilgore, Terry G	Cumberland Energy/Resources	Coal Mining/Processing	Energy, Natural Resourc	Wise	VA	\$500.00

As you can see, Access displays each record on one line. (The first line is how much Allegheny Power gave to Terry Kilgore.) It's the same information you saw in your Web browser, but it's displayed differently.

Access is a powerful program for adding up and summarizing data. For starters, we can tell Access to sum up all of the contributions in our data:

SumOfAMOUNT
\$17,703,628.62

In other words: During the 1999 election cycle, the 140 current members of the General Assembly received a total of \$17,703,628.62 in donations.

We also can tell Access to show how much each legislator received. Don't worry right now about **how** to get Access to do this. The critical thing is simply knowing that it can: Access is the tool to use when you want to do a lot of totaling and subtotaling. In this case, we can pour this big bucket of contributions out into little buckets, one for each legislator, and do a total on each little bucket.

We can tell Access to put the results in order by district (House District 1, House District 2, etc.) or by the legislators' money total.

LEGISLATOR	SumOfAMOUNT
Kilgore, Terry G	\$59,511.00
Phillips, Clarence E	\$27,668.47
Stump, Jackie T	\$17,582.94
Johnson Jr, Joseph P	\$8,950.00
Tate Jr, John H	\$266,397.90
Jackson, Thomas M	\$41,650.00
Keister, Benny	\$289,080.00
Griffith, H Morgan	\$52,039.44
Dudley, Allen W	\$32,421.00
Day, Bamie	\$140,729.11
Armstrong, Ward L	\$47,797.11
Shuler, James M	\$65,765.22
Marshall, Robert G	\$63,486.87
Cranwell, C Richard	\$578,939.49
Louderback, Allen L	\$21,600.00
Woodrum, Clifton A	\$76,659.11
Thomas, A Victor	\$31,443.00
Deeds, R Creigh	\$103,644.00
Putney, Lacey E	\$36,100.00
Clement, Whit W	\$61,905.00
Wagner, Frank W	\$53,854.91
Byron, Kathy J	\$57,750.00
Bryant Jr, L Preston	\$53,546.60
Wilkins Jr, S Vance	\$166,905.22
Landes, R Steven	\$29,067.00
Weatherholtz, Glenn M	\$13,070.00
Nixon Jr, Samuel A	\$18,425.00
Howell, William J	\$47,591.33

LEGISLATOR	SumOfAMOUNT
Cranwell, C Richard	\$578,939.49
Diamonstein, Alan A	\$490,266.59
Edwards, John S	\$473,628.20
Pollard Jr, Albert	\$453,257.48
McDonnell, Robert F	\$434,915.15
Moss Jr, Thomas W	\$430,214.11
Stosch, Walter A	\$409,324.00
Norment Jr, Thomas K	\$381,379.00
Counic, Emily	\$373,758.96
Williams, Donald L	\$342,424.59
Saslaw, Richard L	\$325,910.31
Larrabee, Phil	\$308,361.45
Suit, Terrie	\$303,731.81
Byrne, Leslie L	\$292,760.57
Keister, Benny	\$289,080.00
Holland, Richard J	\$282,487.00
Williams, Martin E	\$274,260.46
Howel, Janet D	\$267,813.00
Tate Jr, John H	\$266,397.90
Rust Jr, John H	\$259,093.54
Amundson, Kristen	\$254,983.00
Broman, George	\$248,991.83
Rerras, D Nick	\$247,806.69
Puller, Linda T	\$245,964.00
Schrock, Edward L	\$241,049.00
Quayle, Frederick M	\$234,413.00
Callahan Jr, Vincent F	\$221,073.00
Devolites, Jeannemarie	\$219,201.25

Now, suppose we want to know which donors gave the most money. Well, we'd pour the donations out into buckets again – but this time, one for each **donor**. Then we'd sum up how much is in each donor's bucket. We'll want to put the contributors in order by how much they gave:

Here's what the results look like. The complete list shows 10,533 donors – that's how many individuals and organizations gave money to legislators during the last campaign.

DONOR	DESCRIPTION	SECTOR	CITY	STATE	SumOfAmount
Commonwealth Victory Fund	Democratic - State/National Committees	Political Parties/Candidates	Richmond	VA	\$931,058.36
New Majority Project PAC	Republican - Local/District Committees	Political Parties/Candidates	Richmond	VA	\$474,695.04
US Rep - National Rep Congress Comm (NRCC)	Republican - State/National Committees	Political Parties/Candidates	Washington	DC	\$270,500.00
Va Medical Society	Physicians	Health Care	Richmond	VA	\$227,732.78
Va Trial Lawyers Assn	Trial Lawyers	Law	Richmond	VA	\$220,900.00
Va Bankers Assn PAC	Banks	Finance, Insurance	Richmond	VA	\$175,470.00
Philip Morris	Tobacco Companies/Farmers	Agriculture	New York	NY	\$168,360.05
Va Auto Dealers Assn	Auto Dealers	Transportation	Richmond	VA	\$154,297.00
Va State AFL-CIO	Miscellaneous Labor	Organized Labor	Richmond	VA	\$150,825.00
Va Hospital Assn PAC	Hospitals/Health Systems	Health Care	Richmond	VA	\$148,360.65
Homebuilders PAC	Homebuilders	Real Estate/Construction	Richmond	VA	\$139,810.31
Newport News Shipbuilding	Shipbuilding/Repair	Defense	Newport News	VA	\$137,300.00
Commonwealth Council PAC	Republican - Local/District Committees	Political Parties/Candidates	Richmond	VA	\$132,000.00
Dominion Leadership Fund	Republican - Local/District Committees	Political Parties/Candidates	Amherst	VA	\$125,000.00
Va Optometric Assn	Optometrists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	\$124,225.00
Va Dem - State	Democratic - State/National Committees	Political Parties/Candidates	Richmond	VA	\$120,684.90
Va Rep - Joint Caucus	Republican - State/National Committees	Political Parties/Candidates	Richmond	VA	\$120,650.00
Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	\$118,650.00
Committee for Responsible Government	Electric Utilities	Energy, Natural Resources	Richmond	VA	\$115,050.00
Dominion Resources Inc	Electric Utilities	Energy, Natural Resources	Richmond	VA	\$106,795.14
Trigon Blue Cross Blue Shield	HMO's & Medical Plans	Health Care	Richmond	VA	\$104,250.00
Realtors PAC of Va	Realtors	Real Estate/Construction	Glen Allen	VA	\$102,366.97
McGuire Woods Battle & Boothe	Attorneys/Law Firms	Law	Richmond	VA	\$84,670.00
Bell Atlantic Va State PAC	Telecommunications - Local Carriers	Communication, Technology	Richmond	VA	\$83,947.79
GTE - Va State PAC	Telecommunications - Long Distance Carriers	Communication, Technology	Richmond	VA	\$82,616.02
Va Health Care Assn	Nursing Homes	Health Care	Richmond	VA	\$81,463.96
Va Beer Wholesalers Assn	Beer & Wine Distributors	Business - Retail, Services	Richmond	VA	\$88,804.00
Va Cable PAC	TV - Cable	Communication, Technology	Richmond	VA	\$86,905.00
Va Wine Wholesalers Assn PAC	Beer & Wine Distributors	Business - Retail, Services	Richmond	VA	\$86,469.48
Va Coal Assn	Coal Mining/Processing	Energy, Natural Resources	Richmond	VA	\$82,250.00
Hazel & Thomas PAC	Attorneys/Law Firms	Law	Alexandria	VA	\$82,007.00
Grayson, George W	Gen Assembly Members - Democrat	Political Parties/Candidates	Williamsburg	VA	\$80,800.00
Mays & Valentine	Attorneys/Law Firms	Law	Richmond	VA	\$80,584.77
Va Credit Union	Credit Unions	Finance, Insurance	Lynchburg	VA	\$75,875.00

Now, we want to focus on the top donors – but how do we define them? What’s our cutoff? Here’s where a reporter’s intuition and a lot of trial and error come in. Remember, the total amount of donations is \$17,703,628.62. We want to focus on the contributors who gave most of the money (meaning, more than \$8,851,814). So first, let’s total up how much the top 100 donors gave: \$8,342,852.86 – a little less than half. Then, try the top 200: \$10,255,235.29. But that would be a lot of contributors to list. So let’s try something in the middle – the top 150 donors. They gave a total of \$9,474,119.60. That’s 54 percent of all the money that legislators received.

To me, this would be the theme of our package: “Members of the Virginia General Assembly received more than half of their campaign donations from a relatively small pool of 150 contributors. Here’s who they are and why they gave.”

Our **third task** is to take some of these donors and examine whom they gave money to. This is where you will use your computer skills. When I assign you a contributor to write about, I’ll also give you a list of that contributor’s donations. You will analyze this list with Excel, a spreadsheet program.

For example, suppose I assign you to do a story on Donor No. 20, the Virginia Dental PAC. (PAC stands for political action committee.) This group gave \$118,550 in donations. I would give you a spreadsheet that looks like this:

DISTRICT	LEGISLATOR	PARTY	DONOR	DESCRIPTION	SECTOR	CITY	STATE	AMOUNT
H001	Kilgore, Terry G	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500
H002	Phillips, Clarence E	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H003	Stump, Jackie T	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250
H004	Johnson Jr, Joseph P	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500
H005	Tate Jr, John H	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500
H006	Jackson, Thomas M	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500
H008	Griffith, H Morgan	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250
H009	Dudley, Allen W	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250
H010	Day, Bernie	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500
H011	Armstrong, Ward L	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500
H012	Shuler, James M	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1800
H013	Marshall, Robert G	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250
H014	Cranwell, C Richard	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500
H015	Lauderback, Allen L	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500
H016	Woodrum, Clifton A	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000
H017	Thomas, A Victor	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H018	Deeds, R Deigh	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000
H019	Putney, Lacey E	I	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H020	Clement, Whit W	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500
H021	Wagner, Frank W	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250
H022	Byron, Kathy J	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500
H023	Bryant Jr, L Preston	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H024	Wilkins Jr, S Vance	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250
H025	Landles, R Steven	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500
H026	Weatherholtz, Glenn M	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250
H027	Nixon Jr, Samuel A	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500
H028	Howell, William J	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H029	Sherwood, Beverly J	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250
H030	Bromen, George	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1750
H031	Kolzen, Jay K	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500
H032	Black, Richard	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H033	May, Joe T	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500
H034	Colohan Jr, Vincent F	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500

Your job is to make sense of the numbers:

- ✓ How many legislators got money from the Virginia Dental PAC? (It's easy to count, because each line is one legislator.) Did the dentists spread their money around, or did they focus on a handful of lawmakers?
- ✓ Who got the biggest donations from the Virginia Dental PAC? To find out, sort the list by AMOUNT. Here's how: Click anywhere in the AMOUNT column, then click on the Z-A button (the "Sort Descending" button) on your toolbar. Excel will grab your data, flip it around and put the largest contributions on top.

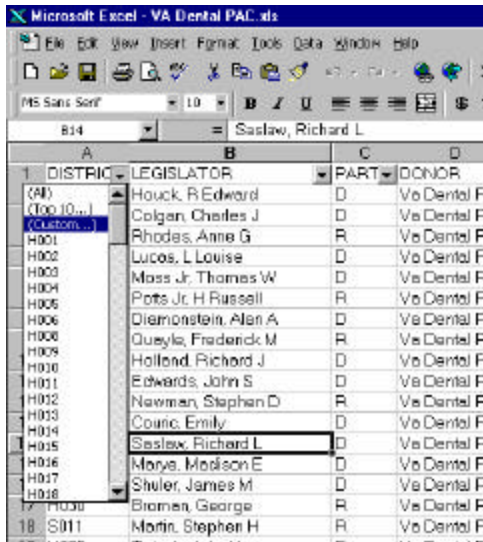
Do the legislators at the top of the list hold key leadership positions? Are they on committees that control legislation in which the Virginia Dental PAC would be interested? (When you do this, keep handy a list of the current committee assignments. You should check last year's assignments, too – because that was the lineup when these donations were made.)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	DISTRICT	LEGISLATOR	PARTY	DONOR	DESCRIPTION	SECTOR	CITY	STATE	AMOUNT				
2	S017	Houck, R Edward	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	3000				
3	S029	Colgan, Charles J	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	3000				
4	H068	Rhodes, Anne G	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2750				
5	S018	Lucas, L Louise	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2750				
6	H088	Moss Jr, Thomas W	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2500				
7	S027	Portz Jr, H Russell	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2500				
8	H094	Diamondstein, Alon A	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2000				
9	S013	Quisyle, Frederick M	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2000				
10	S015	Holland, Richard J	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2000				
11	S021	Edwards, John S	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2000				
12	S023	Newman, Stephen D	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2000				
13	S025	Counic, Emily	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2000				
14	S035	Soslaw, Richard L	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2000				
15	S039	Mayne, Madison E	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2000				
16	H012	Stuler, James M	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1800				
17	H030	Bromon, George	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1750				
18	S011	Martin, Stephen H	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1750				
19	H005	Tots Jr, John H	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500				
20	H014	Cranwell, C Richard	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500				
21	H022	Byron, Kathy J	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500				
22	H034	Collahan Jr, Vincent F	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500				
23	S001	Williams, Martin E	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500				
24	S007	Schrock, Edward L	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500				
25	S010	Watkins, John C	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500				
26	S036	Puller, Linda T	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500				
27	S038	Puckett, Phillip	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500				
28	S040	Wompler Jr, William C	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500				
29	H024	Wilkins Jr, S Vance	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250				
30	H038	Plum, Kenneth R	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250				
31	H037	Rust Jr, John H	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250				
32	H041	Dillard II, James H	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250				
33	H069	Hall, Franklin P	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250				
34	H090	Robinson, William P	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250				

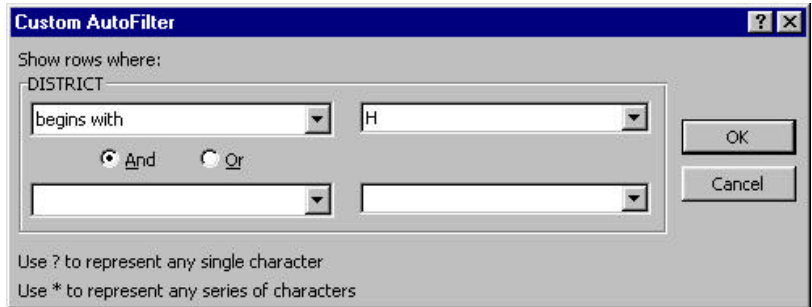
It might be helpful to filter the list – to look first at the House members, then at the senators. Excel has a handy feature for doing this. Make sure your cursor is somewhere on your list (not off to the side). Then, on your toolbar, click on Data | Filter | AutoFilter. That will put an arrow on each of your column headings:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	DISTRICT	LEGISLATOR	PARTY	DONOR	DESCRIPTION	SECTOR	CITY	STATE	AMOUNT				
2	S017	Houck, R Edward	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	3000				
3	S029	Colgan, Charles J	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	3000				

You want to filter by the DISTRICT column – because all of the House members have districts that begin with H, and all of the senators have districts that begin with S. So click on the arrow on the DISTRICT heading, and choose “Custom...”:



That will give you the Custom AutoFilter box. You want the rows where DISTRICT begins with H:



That will give you this list:

DISTRICT	LEGISLATOR	PART	DONOR	DESCRIPTION	SECTOR	CITY	STATE	AMOUNT
H068	Rhodes, Anne G	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2750
H088	Moss Jr, Thomas W	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2500
H094	Diamondstein, Alan A	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2000
H012	Shuler, James M	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1800
H030	Broman, George	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1750
H005	Tate Jr, John H	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500
H014	Cronwell, C Richard	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500
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H024	Wilkins Jr, S Vance	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250
H036	Plum, Kenneth R	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250
H037	Rust Jr, John H	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250
H041	Dillard II, James H	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250
H069	Hall, Franklin P	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250
H090	Robinson, William P	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1250
H016	Woodrum, Clifton A	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000
H018	Deeds, R Ceigh	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000
H035	Devolites, Jeanmarie	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000
H039	Watts, Vivion E	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000
H053	Scott, James M	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000
H056	Dickinson, V Earl	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000
H063	DeBoer, Jay W	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000
H082	Parkey, Harry R	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000
H093	Hamilton, Phillip A	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000
H002	Phillips, Clarence E	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H017	Thomas, A Victor	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H019	Putney, Lacey E	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H023	Bryant Jr, L Preston	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H028	Howell, William J	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H032	Block, Richard	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H044	Amundson, Kristen	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H048	Brink, Robert H	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
H050	Pomish, Henry J	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750

Now, only the House members are displayed. This will make it easier to see if, for example, the Virginia Dental PAC gave to a lot of members of the House committees that deal with health, insurance and the like.

What's the total of the PAC's donations to House members? Scroll to the bottom of your filtered list. Click in the first blank cell in the AMOUNT column. Then find the sigma – the

Greek letter – on your toolbar. This is the AutoSum button. Click it, hit your Enter key and Excel automatically will add up everything in that column.

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with columns A through M. The formula bar at the top displays $=SUBTOTAL(9, I2:I129)$. The data in the spreadsheet is as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
114	H009	Dudley, Allen W	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
115	H013	Marshall, Robert G	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
116	H021	Wagner, Frank W	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
117	H026	Weatherholtz, Glenn M	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
118	H029	Sherwood, Beverly J	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
119	H052	Rollison III, J A	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
120	H059	Abbitt Jr, Watkins M	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
121	H066	Cox, M Kirkland	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
122	H072	Raid, John S	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
123	H073	Canter, Eric I	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
124	H074	McEochin, A Donald	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
125	H075	Council Jr, J Paul	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
126	H084	McDonnell, Robert F	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
127	H092	Christian, Mary T	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
128	H095	Crittenden, Flora D	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
129	H097	Greysen, George W	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250				
130									65300				
131													
132													

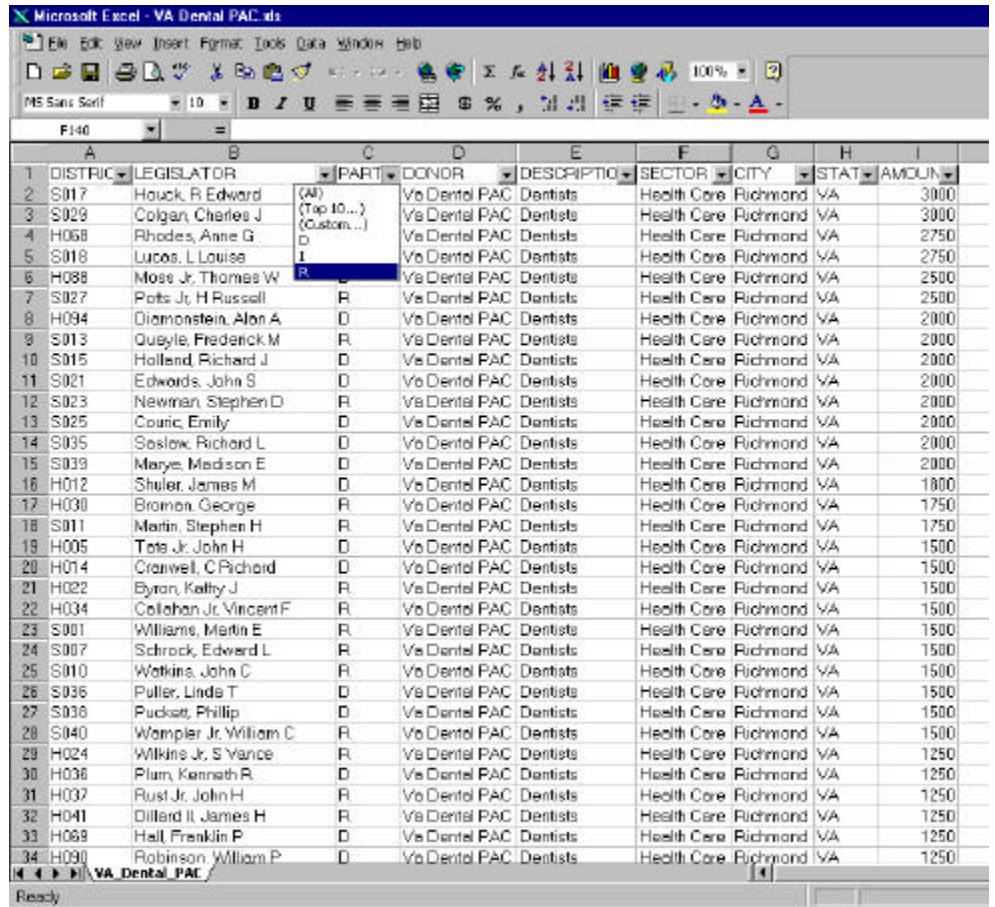
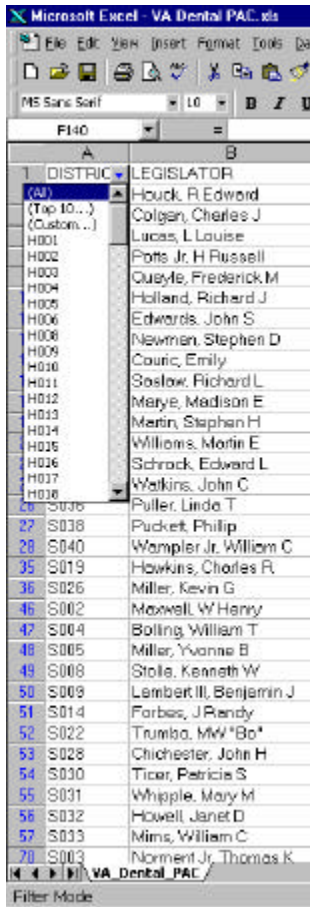
So, you’ve just discovered that the Virginia Dental PAC gave House members \$65,300. How much money went to senators? Go to the top of your spreadsheet, click on the arrow next to DISTRICT again, select “Custom ...” and filter for the rows that begin with S. Return to the bottom of your spreadsheet (row 130), and the AutoSum now shows that the PAC gave \$53,250 to senators:

The screenshot shows the same Excel spreadsheet, but filtered to show only rows starting with 'S'. The formula bar still displays $=SUBTOTAL(9, I2:I129)$. The data in the spreadsheet is as follows:

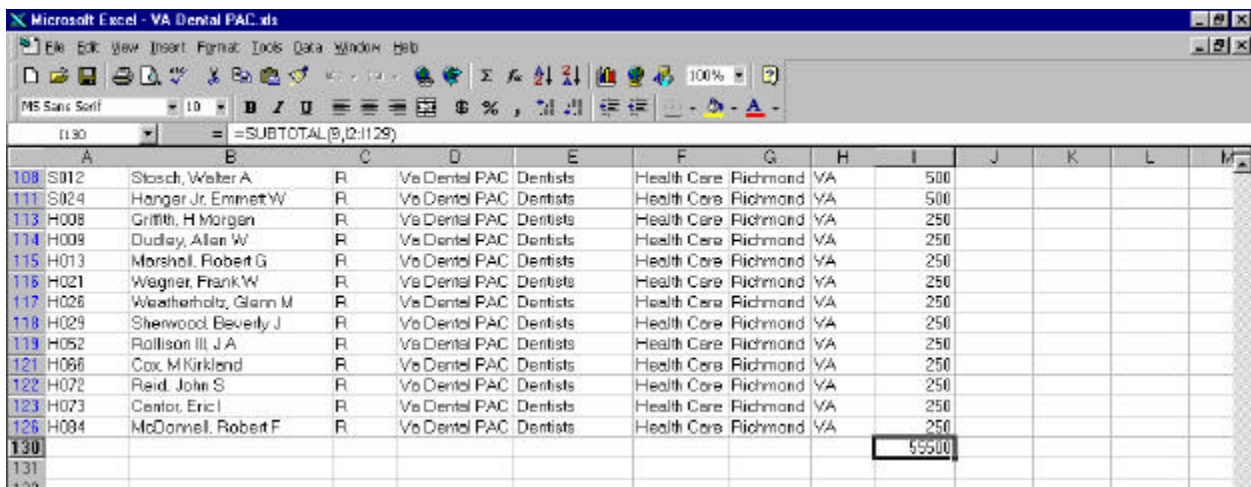
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
47	S004	Bolling, William T	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000				
48	S005	Miller, Yvonne B	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000				
49	S008	Stolle, Kenneth W	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000				
50	S009	Lambert III, Benjamin J	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000				
51	S014	Forbes, J Randy	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000				
52	S022	Tumbo, MW "Bo"	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000				
53	S028	Chichester, John H	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000				
54	S030	Ticer, Patricia S	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000				
55	S031	Whipple, Mary M	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000				
56	S032	Howell, Janet D	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000				
57	S033	Mims, William C	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1000				
70	S003	Norment Jr, Thomas K	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750				
108	S012	Stasch, Walter A	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500				
109	S016	Marsh II, Henry L	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500				
110	S020	Reynolds, W Roscoe	D	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500				
111	S024	Hanger Jr, Emmet W	R	Va Dental PAC	Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	500				
130									53250				
131													
132													

(That adds up: \$65,300 to House members plus \$53,250 to senators equals the \$118,550 total that the Virginia Dental PAC gave overall.)

Now let’s see how much the PAC gave to Republicans vs. Democrats. In this case, we don’t want to filter by the DISTRICT column; we want to filter by the PARTY column. So go to the top of your spreadsheet, click on the arrow next to DISTRICT and select “All”. (When you do this, you’re “turning off” the filter on the DISTRICT column.) Then, click on the arrow next to PARTY, and choose only the rows where the PARTY is R.



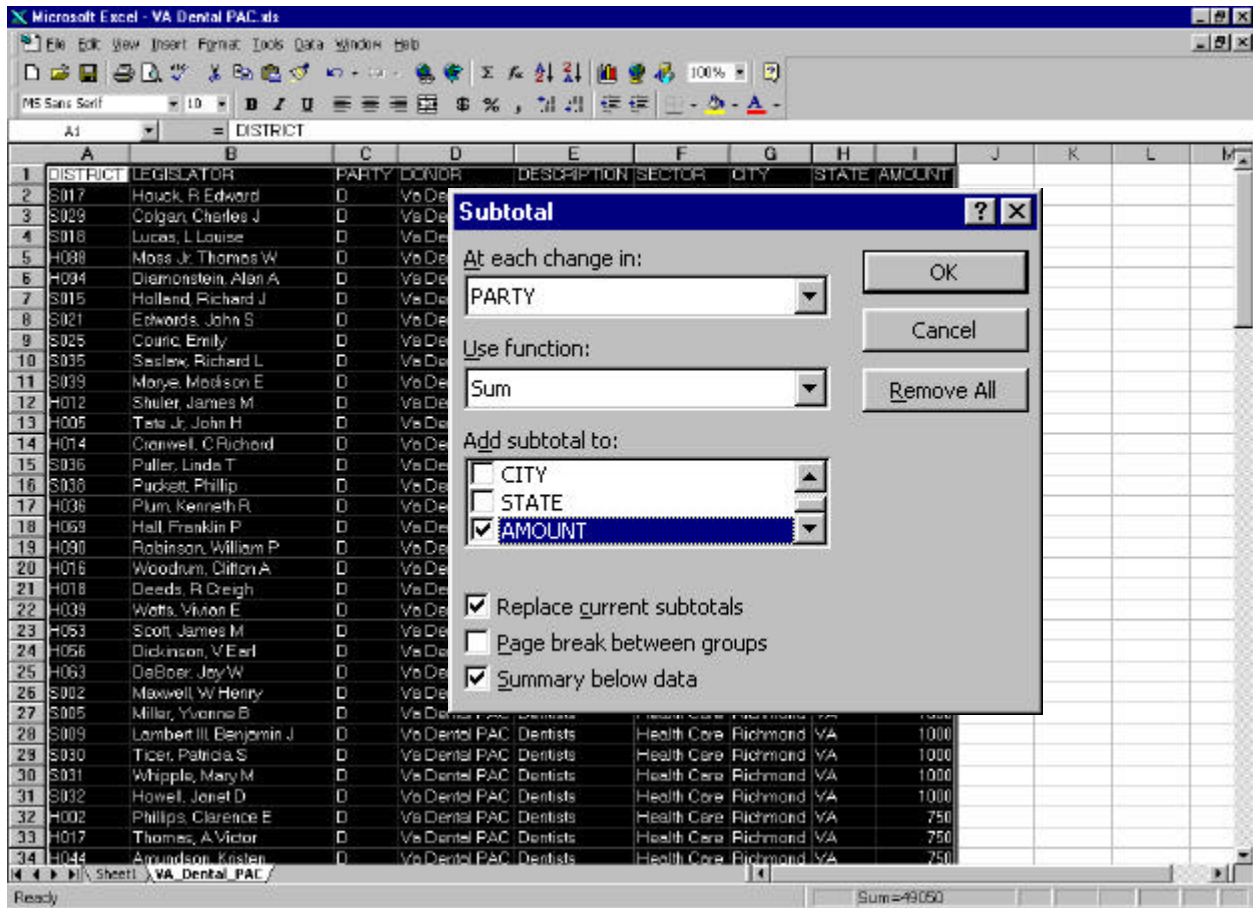
This will give a list of only Republican legislators. At the bottom of your spreadsheet, your AutoSum cell will show how much they got from the Virginia Dental PAC:



Change your PARTY filter from R to D, and then to I (for independent), and you'll get the whole scorecard: The dentists gave \$55,500 to Republicans, \$62,300 to Democrats and \$750 to the one independent legislator.

When you're finished filtering the list, turn off the AutoFilter the same way you turned it on: Go to Data | Filter | AutoFilter.

Excel has other ways of getting totals by party. Here’s an option: First, put your list in order by the PARTY column. (Click in the PARTY column, then click the A-Z button.) Then click on Data | Subtotals. Tell Excel that at each change in PARTY, do a sum of the AMOUNT:



The results will look like this:

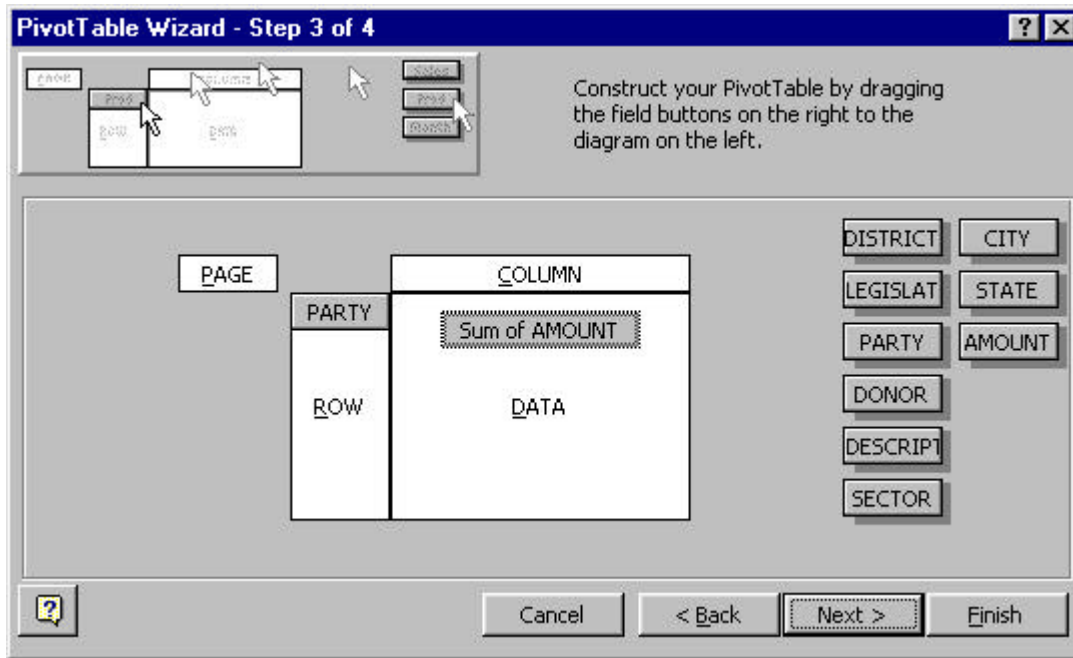
The screenshot shows the results of the subtotal operation in Microsoft Excel. The spreadsheet is sorted by party, and subtotals are shown for each party: D Total (\$62,300), I Total (\$750), and R Total (\$2,750). The data is as follows:

DISTRICT	LEGISLATOR	PARTY	CONDOR	DESCRIPTION	SECTOR	CITY	STATE	AMOUNT
61	H092	Christian, Mary T	D	Vo Dental PAC Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250
62	H095	Crittenden, Flora D	D	Vo Dental PAC Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250
63	H097	Groynson, George W	D	Vo Dental PAC Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	250
64		D Total						62300
65	H019	Putney, Lacey E	I	Vo Dental PAC Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	750
66		I Total						750
67	H068	Rhodes, Anne G	R	Vo Dental PAC Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2750
68	S027	Potts Jr, H Russell	R	Vo Dental PAC Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2500
69	S013	Quayle, Frederick M	R	Vo Dental PAC Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2000
70	S023	Newman, Stephen D	R	Vo Dental PAC Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	2000
71	H030	Broman, George	R	Vo Dental PAC Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1750
72	S011	Martin, Stephen H	R	Vo Dental PAC Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1750
73	H022	Evron, Kathv J	R	Vo Dental PAC Dentists	Health Care	Richmond	VA	1500

In other words, Excel has listed all the Democrats, then added a “D Total” row (\$62,300, the same number we got before); all the Independents, followed by an “I Total” row; and all the Republicans, followed by an “R Total” row.

To get rid of the subtotals, go to Data | Subtotals | Remove All.

Excel has yet another way to flip around the data and summarize it by PARTY (or any other column). You can do a “pivot table” – but before you do, your list must be very clean: no totals at the bottom, no subtotals, no filters. You’ll find this feature under Data | PivotTable Report. Excel will try to find your data (in this case, from cell A1 to cell I129) and ask what you want your report to show. The key dialogue box asks what you want displayed in the rows of your report (you want PARTY) and what you want in the DATA section of your report (you want the sum of the AMOUNT column).



Click through to Finish, and you’ll get a new worksheet that summarizes your data by PARTY. Don’t worry about your original list of contributions: It’s still there.

After you’ve sorted and analyzed the data for a particular donor, call a spokesperson or lobbyist for the group and ask about the organization’s contributions. How does the organization decide whom to give to? Does it give money to “reward” legislators who have supported the group’s positions? Does it give money in hopes of getting access to legislators – a chance to talk up the group’s positions?

	A	B	C	D
1	Sum of AMOUNT			
2	PARTY	Total		
3	D	62300		
4	I	750		
5	R	55500		
6	Grand Total	118550		
7				

Through interviews or clips, find out what bills the donor is lobbying for or against (or lobbied for or against last session). How did the donor’s biggest recipients vote on these issues?

Each donor profile should be 350 to 500 words. Good luck. If you need help – with Excel or any other aspect of the project, let me know.