# Superintendent’s Memo 008-19

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**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: January 11, 2019

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: Virginia Council on Women 7th Annual STEM Essay and Scholarship Contest

On behalf of the Department of Education, I am pleased to announce that the [Virginia Council on Women has announced the 7th Annual STEM Essay and Scholarship Contest](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2019/january/headline-837603-en.html). The Council will award five scholarships (one in each of five geographic regions) to a female junior or senior who will be pursuing a STEM education at an institution of higher education. Essays will be judged by a panel of Council members and women who hold a degree in or work in STEM fields. I encourage you to share this opportunity with principals, teachers, parents and students in your school divisions.

The STEM Essay Contest was launched in 2012 with 170 young ladies from across the Commonwealth submitting essays focusing on the student’s vision for a future STEM education or career.  Last year, the Council received more than 500 essay submissions and with the generous support of sponsors, awarded $35,000 in scholarships to high school women.

**This year’s winners will be notified by March 21, 2019**. The scholarship awards will be presented at a reception at the Executive Mansion in Richmond, Virginia, in April 2019 and will be hosted by Governor Northam and First Lady Pam Northam. Please visit [Virginia Council on Women - Stem Essay Contest](https://www.commonwealth.virginia.gov/advisory-boards/council-on-women/stem-essay-contest/) for more information.

**Who is eligible:**

To be eligible, one must be a female or identify as a female, reside in Virginia, be a junior or senior in high school and hold at least a 2.5 GPA.

**How to apply:**

Essays will be judged by a panel of Council members and individuals who represent STEM fields. The essay contest [requirements and guidelines](https://www.commonwealth.virginia.gov/advisory-boards/council-on-women/stem-essay-contest/) are available online. **Entries must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on February22, 2019**.

JFL/lj