



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: January 12, 2018
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Steven M. Constantino, Ed.D., Acting 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](#). The Council will award five scholarships (one in each of five 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 23, 2018. The scholarship awards will be presented at a reception at the Executive Mansion in Richmond, Virginia, in April 2018 and will be hosted by Governor-Elect Northam and First Lady-Elect Pam Northam. For more information about this scholarship program please visit: <http://commonwealth.virginia.gov/council-on-women/stem-essay-contest/>

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:

Applications and guidelines are available online here: <http://commonwealth.virginia.gov/council-on-women/stem-essay-contest/>. **Entries must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on February 8, 2018.** Essays will be judged by a panel of Council members and individuals who represent STEM fields.

SMC/LW/lj