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MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release

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WHAT: Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Awards Committee

WHEN: Wednesday, October 6, 2004, 10:00 a.m.

WHERE: General Assembly Building, Senate Room B, Richmond, Virginia

PURPOSE: Organizational Meeting and Notice to Certain Eligible Former Public School Students Between 1954 and 1964

Senator Benjamin J. Lambert, III, patron of Senate Bill 230 (2004) and Delegate Viola O. Baskerville, patron of House Bill 846 (2004), jointly announced today the creation of the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Awards Committee, pursuant to Senate Bill 230 (2004), by the 2004 General Assembly. The members of the Scholarship Awards Committee are Senators Benjamin J. Lambert, III of Richmond and Henry L. Marsh, III of Richmond; Delegates Watkins M. Abbitt, Jr. of Appomattox, Clarke N. Hogan of South Boston, Floyd H. Miles, Sr. of Charles City, Thomas C. Wright, Jr. of Victoria; and nonlegislative citizens Dr. Patricia Johnson Brown of Richmond, Andrew I. Heidelberg of Norfolk, Donald E. Martin of Charlottesville, Phyllistine Ward Mosley of Lynchburg, and Dr. James M. Yarbrough of Burkeville.

One component of the Commonwealth's two-year long commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education was the enactment of Senate Bill 230, which established the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program to assist students, who were enrolled in the public schools of Virginia between 1954 and 1964 in jurisdictions in which public schools were closed to avoid desegregation, in obtaining an education. The Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Awards Committee has been authorized by law to manage and administer the Program and award scholarships to eligible persons.

Under the statute, awards may be granted only to current domiciled residents of Virginia for part-time or full-time attendance for:

- one year of study to students enrolled in adult education programs and General Education Development preparation programs
- two years of study for students enrolled in comprehensive community college programs
- four years of study for students enrolled in four-year undergraduate degree programs
- five years of study for students enrolled in recognized five-year undergraduate programs

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During the era of Massive Resistance, public schools were closed in several school divisions in the Commonwealth, many African-American and White students moved to other localities in- and out-of-state to try to secure an education, and other school divisions were impacted by school closings. Therefore, to ensure that potentially eligible persons are made aware of the opportunity for an education through the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program, the Committee hereby notifies all residents of the Commonwealth of the eligibility requirements for the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program.

You may be eligible to receive an award if you resided in a jurisdiction in Virginia between 1954 and 1964 in which the public schools were closed to avoid desegregation and were:

- (i) unable during such years to begin, continue, or complete your education in the public schools of the Commonwealth; or
- (ii) unable to attend a private academy or foundation, whether in state or out of state, established to circumvent desegregation; or
- (iii) unable to pursue postsecondary education opportunities or training because of the inability to obtain a high school diploma; or
- (iv) required to relocate within or outside of the Commonwealth to begin, continue, or complete your K-12 education during such years because of public school closings to avoid desegregation.

All meetings are open to the public; however, the organizational meeting is not a public hearing. **No public testimony will be permitted at this time.**

After certain required organizational, procedural, and administrative matters have been completed, formal scholarship applications will be issued. Prior to that time, interested persons may contact Mrs. Brenda H. Edwards, Division of Legislative Services, General Assembly Building, 2nd Floor, 910 Capitol Street, Richmond, VA 23219, (804) 786-3591.

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