

For Immediate Release

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GOVERNOR WARNER ANNOUNCES FIRST ROUND OF BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS — FORTY-EIGHT VIRGINIANS ONCE DENIED EDUCATION DURING MASSIVE RESISTANCE WILL RECEIVE FUNDS TO PURSUE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES —

RICHMOND - Governor Mark R. Warner and **Senator Benjamin J. Lambert, III** today announced the first scholarship recipients of the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program. Forty-eight Virginians will receive up to \$5,500 each for tuition costs during the 2005-2006 academic year. An additional 42 applications are currently being reviewed. Governor Warner and the Virginia General Assembly **created the scholarship program in 2004** to provide educational opportunities to Virginians whose schools were closed by local authorities between 1954 and 1964 following the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education.

"Access to a quality education is a fundamental American value," said Governor Warner. "These scholarships will help ensure that those once unjustly denied the chance to learn have access to higher education opportunities. As a Commonwealth, this program will help us move beyond the past and on to a more productive future."

"The personal stories of those seeking scholarships to improve their lives and give back to their community were very moving," said Senator Lambert, Chairman of the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Committee. "These scholarships will help Virginia heal the wounds caused by Massive Resistance and offer educational opportunities for those who were wrongly denied access to a quality education."

Virginia established the scholarship program during the first year of the Commonwealth's two-year long commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education. The landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision ruled the "separate but equal" doctrine unconstitutional under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

The 2004 General Assembly session approved Governor Warner's budget request of \$1 million for the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program. Mr. John Kluge of Charlottesville, Va. matched the appropriation with a \$1 million donation, bringing the total funding for the program to \$2 million.

The program offers scholarships for eligible, current residents of Virginia, who were enrolled in the public schools that closed in several Virginia localities between 1954 and 1964 to avoid desegregation. During this era, known as Massive Resistance, many African-American and White students moved to other localities in- and out-of-state to try to secure an education. The school closings also impacted other school divisions.

Eligible Virginians can use the scholarships for tuition costs to obtain a high school diploma, a General Education Development certificate, career or technical training certificate, or an undergraduate degree from a public institution of higher education in Virginia. The law also provides for these funds to be used at private accredited institutions of higher education in Virginia.

Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Committee members 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; Dr. Patricia Johnson Brown of Richmond, Tameka A. Ferrell of Halifax, Andrew I. Heidelberg of Norfolk, Donald E. Martin of Charlottesville, and Phyllistine Ward Mosley of Lynchburg.

The Committee will send award letters to scholarship recipients detailing the amount of the award, eligibility criteria for scholarship renewal, and the approved educational program, local school board, or institution of higher education to which the funds will be released on behalf of the recipient. The Committee has also tentatively approved 42 other applications for the 2005-2006 academic year, pending the applicants satisfying the eligibility criteria for the scholarship.

Applications for the 2006-2007 academic year are due March 1, 2006. Application packets will be available after October 1, 2005. For more information about the program and eligibility requirements, contact Ms. Brenda H. Edwards, Division of Legislative Services, General Assembly Building, 2nd Floor, Richmond, VA 23219, (804) 786-3591 or visit the Web at <http://dls.state.va.us/brown.htm>.