

# Dominion Energy and the Library of Virginia Honor Five Leaders as 'Strong Men & Women in Virginia History'

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- 13th annual program recognizes African American leaders and their contributions to the Commonwealth
- Honorees include a Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates, Composer, Librarian, Forensic Scientist
- Four high school student finalists of creative contest also recognized

[Dominion Energy](#) and the Library of Virginia are pleased to announce the 2025 Strong Men & Women in Virginia History honorees and Student Creative Expressions Contest finalists.

This annual program recognizes notable African American business and community leaders who have overcome obstacles to make significant impacts across the state.

"This year's Strong Men & Women in Virginia History honorees are trailblazers whose tireless efforts have created lasting change in their communities," said Ed Baine, President Utility Operations & Dominion Energy Virginia. "We proudly salute these inspiring community leaders whose lives demonstrate the power of perseverance and service."

Members of the armed forces, engineers, medical professionals, community leaders, educators, writers, judges, and elected officials have been celebrated throughout the program's history.

"We are deeply honored to join Dominion Energy in celebrating African Americans who have made remarkable contributions in their respective fields and positively impacted the lives of our Commonwealth's citizens," said Librarian of Virginia Dennis T. Clark. "This year's honorees reflect inspiring success stories that embody legacies of excellence."

The 2025 honorees:

The Honorable Winsome Earle-Sears  
Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, Winchester

The Honorable Don Scott  
Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates, Portsmouth

Damien Geter  
Composer, Conductor & Bass-Baritone, Chesterfield

Kelly L. Knight  
Forensic Scientist, Fairfax

Virginia Young Lee (posthumously)  
Librarian, Roanoke

The leaders were celebrated at a special event on Thursday in Richmond. Along with the event, the Library of Virginia will host a traveling exhibition featuring each of the honorees and their biographical information.

The exhibition will be on display at various community, business, and educational institutions throughout the year so that Virginians can learn about these outstanding leaders and their contributions to the Commonwealth.

In 2013, Strong Men & Women in Virginia History was born when Dominion Energy and the Library of Virginia began a new educational initiative that merged two phenomenal Black History Month programs: Dominion Energy's 22-year-old series, Strong Men & Women: Excellence in Leadership and the Library of Virginia's eight-year-old program, African American Trailblazers in Virginia History.

As a part of the initiative, Virginia high school students can participate in a creative contest to honor outstanding African Americans and share stories they feel may be missing from the mainstream narrative.

Each finalist received an Apple MacBook Air laptop and money for their school.

The winner of the student creative contest was Matthew Peng from Meridian High School in Falls Church. Matthew reinterpreted the novel-in-verse "The Crossover," by 2019 honoree Kwame Alexander, to create a "found poem" titled "Alone" to bring awareness to the need for inclusion. In honor of those efforts, Matthew's school received an additional monetary award.

The 2025 Student Creative Expressions Contest finalists:

Alvaro Lobo Arispe  
Washington-Liberty High School, Arlington

Allison Arnett  
Grafton High School, York County

Nikhita Saravanan  
Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government and International Studies, Richmond

For more information on Strong Men & Women in Virginia History, photos and full honoree biographical information, go to: Strong Men & Women in Virginia History - Library of Virginia Education.

#### About Dominion Energy

Dominion Energy (NYSE: D), headquartered in Richmond, Va., provides regulated electricity service to 3.6 million homes and businesses in Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, and regulated natural gas service to 500,000 customers in South Carolina. The company is one of the nation's leading developers and operators of regulated offshore wind and solar power and the largest producer of carbon-free electricity in New England. The company's mission is to provide the reliable, affordable, and increasingly clean energy that powers its customers every day. Please visit [DominionEnergy.com](https://www.dominionenergy.com) to learn more.

#### About the Library of Virginia

The Library of Virginia is the state's oldest institution dedicated to the preservation of Virginia's history and culture. Our online offerings attract nearly 4 million website visits per year, and our resources, exhibitions and events bring in nearly 100,000 visitors each year. The Library's collections, containing more than 130 million items, document and illustrate the lives of both famous Virginians and ordinary citizens. The Library is located in downtown Richmond near Capitol Square at 800 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219. Learn more at [www.lva.virginia.gov](https://www.lva.virginia.gov).

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