



# LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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## Strong Men and Women Essay Contest Winners Announced

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For Immediate Release

Please join the Library of Virginia and Dominion Virginia Power in congratulating the winners of the student essay contest for the 2015 Strong Men and Women in Virginia History program. This program highlights eight African American leaders and their achievements.

High school students in Virginia were invited to participate in the annual essay contest. Four winning essays were chosen, one from each of the four regions in Virginia that Dominion Virginia Power serves. The contest winners receive a prize of an Apple iPad Air and \$1,000 for each student's school.

The winners of the 2015 Strong Men and Women essay contest are:

### **Central Region**

Paige Lambert - (**senior**)  
*School:* Hanover High School

### **Eastern Region**

Vanessa Adkins - (**senior**)  
*School:* Charles City High School

### **Northern Region**

Angela Gyane - (**sophomore**)  
*School:* Potomac Senior High School

### **Western Region**

Eric Xu - (**senior**)  
*School:* Western Albemarle High School

Students were required to send an original, unpublished, 400-word essay reflecting on the heroism of one of the 2015 Strong Men and Women honorees, Sergeant William H. Carney, a Norfolk-born Civil War

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soldier and the first African American Medal of Honor recipient. Students were asked: *Have you ever been in a position that was unfair? Do you know of an African American—past or present—who was in a position that was unfair and yet rose above it? Describe the situation, its significance, and the lessons it teaches about perseverance and overcoming obstacles in the face of adversity.*

The four contest winners will read their essays at an awards program in front of 500 distinguished educators, public officials, and community and business leaders in Richmond at the downtown Marriott Hotel on the evening of Wednesday, February 4, 2015. The winning students and a school representative will be present to receive the awards.

The Library thanks those who submitted essays and the many people, especially educators, who encouraged their participation. Please read and share the winning essays available at [www.lva.virginia.gov/public/smw/](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/smw/).

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