



City of Harrisonburg
Public Information Office
409 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801
540-432-7701 (office)

For Immediate Release
February 11, 2019

Contact: Ande Banks, Deputy City Manager
540.432.7701
Ande.Banks@HarrisonburgVA.gov

Mayor Deanna Reed Receives Award

MAYOR DEANNA REED HONORED AS TRAILBLAZER Winner of "2019 Strong Men & Women in Virginia History" Award

HARRISONBURG, Va., Feb. 8, 2019 – We are pleased to announce that Harrisonburg Mayor Deanna Reed is among seven African-American leaders statewide who were honored yesterday during the seventh annual STRONG MEN & WOMEN IN VIRGINIA HISTORY awards program held Thursday, Feb. 7, at the Richmond Marriott.

The STRONG MEN & WOMEN IN VIRGINIA HISTORY is a joint project of the Library of Virginia and Dominion Energy. The program honors prominent African Americans past and present who have made noteworthy and admirable contributions to the commonwealth, the nation and their professions. Mayor Reed is the only recipient in the Shenandoah Valley region.

"These honorees set a strong example for people who wish to serve their communities, and we are pleased to recognize them for their leadership and accomplishments," said **Bill Murray**, senior vice president – Corporate Affairs & Communications, Dominion Energy.

"The life stories and accomplishments of the men and women honored this year are powerful and inspirational," said Librarian of Virginia **Sandra G. Treadway**.

This year's honorees are:

Kwame Alexander	Writer and Youth Advocate, Fairfax County
Lawrence A. Davies	Minister and Civic Leader, Fredericksburg
Fannie W. Fitzgerald*	Educator & Elementary School Supervisor, Prince William County
Deanna Reed	Mayor and Mentor, Harrisonburg
William T. Stone*	Judge and Civic Leader, Williamsburg
Gladys B. West	Mathematician and Educator, King George County
Andrew J. White Sr.	Minister and Community Activist, Petersburg

**Posthumous honor*

About Mayor Reed

Growing up in Harrisonburg, Deanna Reed was surrounded by women whose examples of community service inspired her to mentor young women of color. When she returned to the city to care for her aging grandmother, Reed worked in the public schools and became involved in several community organizations, including the African-American Culture Festival and the

Harrisonburg Women's Service League, of which she has served as president. For more than thirty years she has also been a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. In 2009 Reed co-founded Precious Gems Academy, an after-school mentorship program for students from elementary to high school. In 2015 she became program director for the On the Road Collaborative, a local initiative that connects low-income youth with academic support, career enrichment classes, and leadership development to prepare middle- and high-school students for life after graduation.

Concerned about school overcrowding, Reed began attending city council meetings and was struck by the fact that there were no female members at the time. After unsuccessfully attempting to recruit a woman to run, she decided to run for office herself, winning election in 2016 with the most votes in the council's history. The first African-American woman elected to Harrisonburg's city council, she was also the first to be chosen mayor by the council. As mayor, Reed focuses on education and strives to bring together Harrisonburg's diverse communities. In 2018 *Essence Magazine* named her to its list of Woke 100 Women, which highlights African-American change agents.

About The City of Harrisonburg

The City of Harrisonburg is a vibrant city centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 50,000 people.

About Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation

The Foundation supports nonprofit causes that meet basic human needs, protect the environment, promote education, and encourage community vitality.

About the Library of Virginia

The Library of Virginia located in historic downtown Richmond, holds the world's most extensive collection of material about the Old Dominion.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 50,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.



###