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VSBA Board of Directors Central Region Regional Scholarship Recipient Announced



Charlottesville, VA – The Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) proudly announces Harper Ullrich, a senior at Charlottesville High School in Charlottesville City Public Schools, as the 2026 VSBA Board of Directors Regional Scholarship recipient for the VSBA Central Region. Ullrich was recognized last night during the VSBA Central Region Spring Network Forum and will receive a \$5,000 scholarship to support her post-secondary education.

Ullrich is a dedicated student leader with a passion for language and literature. She is the founder of Black Knight Mentors, a city-wide mentoring initiative serving more than 1,000 students across six elementary schools, and has trained nearly 100 high school mentors. A distinguished scholar, Harper has earned recognition through the AP Scholar with Distinction award, the Seal of Bilingual Literacy in French, and honors from the Société Honoraire de Français and the National French Contest.

Ullrich plans to attend Washington and Lee University where she will study English and French with a focus on comparative literature. Her goal is to teach abroad and ultimately pursue a Ph.D. to become a professor or literary critic.

When asked what message she would like to share with her school board or educators, Ullrich said “I am grateful to have attended Charlottesville City Schools, where many of my teachers have had a profound impact on my life. I would like to thank each and every teacher, administrator, and member of staff who taught me, encouraged me, got to know me, and empowered me to be my best self. Public educators work so hard and make such a positive difference in the world, positively affecting individuals and also shaping the future by producing informed, thoughtful, and engaged people.”

“Harper represents the outstanding talent and leadership we see in students across the Central Region,” said VSBA Central Region Chair and Louisa County School Board Chair Gregory Strickland. “Her initiative in creating a mentoring program that reaches so many younger students, combined with her academic achievements, demonstrates a remarkable commitment to both learning and service. We are proud to recognize her accomplishments and excited to see the impact she will continue to make in the years ahead.”

VSBA Executive Director Gina Patterson stated, “The VSBA Board of Directors Regional Scholarship program celebrates students who reflect the strength and promise of Virginia’s public schools, and Harper Ullrich is an excellent example of that promise. Her leadership, dedication to helping others succeed, and passion for learning embody the spirit of this scholarship.”

About the Virginia School Boards Association

The Virginia School Boards Association, a voluntary, nonpartisan organization of Virginia school boards, promotes excellence in public education through advocacy, training, and services. The Association offers conferences, information, training, and counseling designed to meet the needs of the Commonwealth’s educational leaders.

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