



February 10, 2024

*“I tell young people: Do not think of yourself; think of others. Think of the future that awaits you, think about what you can do, and do not fear anything.” Dr. Rita Levi-Montalcini, Italian neurologist and 1986 Nobel Prize Winner in Physiology*

The Commonwealth of Virginia has so many talented women who are contributing their time and talent through their work on the frontlines of our healthcare system, educating young minds, and leading the way in businesses focused on technology to further communities and continue American innovation. However, as of 2023, there is still a gender gap in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Computer Arts, Math, and Healthcare (STEAM-H). Specifically, the 2023 National Girls Collaborative Project’s *State of Girls and Women in STEM*<sup>1</sup> report finds that women remain underrepresented in the science and engineering workforce, where women comprise only 34% of workers in STEAM organizations. Diving even deeper, in the STEAM concentrations, only 25.2% of women work in computer and mathematical sciences, and a mere 16.5% work in engineering areas despite 50% of women earning their bachelor’s degrees in Science and Engineering, according to the NCGP report. Meanwhile, the AAUW reports that nearly 80% of the healthcare workforce are women, but less than 25% of health executives and board members are women, and only 1/3 are doctors <sup>2</sup>

The positive news is that young women across the Commonwealth want to break through that gap and contribute their talents to the sciences. To this end, the Virginia Council on Women (VCW) is thankful to be able to continue our work to inspire and empower young women across Virginia to think of others and think about the future that awaits them in the areas of STEAM-H by launching our 13<sup>th</sup> Annual STEAM-H Essay Contest. The contest, supported by Governor Glenn Youngkin and First Lady Suzanne Youngkin, focuses on supporting female Virginia high school seniors by providing financial scholarships to youth across the Commonwealth. The VCW is a volunteer, governor-appointed council whose statutory purpose is to help women reach their full potential and maximize their contributions as wage earners and citizens to the Commonwealth and society. Over the past twelve years, the VCW has awarded more than \$185,000 in scholarships to deserving students pursuing careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, Computer Arts, Math, and Healthcare.

The Council on Women would like to invite you to join us in supporting the dreams of young women by making a critical investment in the lives of young women across the

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<sup>1</sup> This report can be found at <https://ngcproject.org/resources/state-girls-and-women-stem>

<sup>2</sup> This report can be found at: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/research/the-stem-gap/>



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Commonwealth. A gift in any amount will help the Council continue supporting young women with the drive and passion for continuing their education in our crucial STEAM-H fields.

The full Council would like to thank you for your consideration of investing in students across the Commonwealth who wish to break barriers by pursuing careers in STEAM-H. We look forward to you, or your organization, joining us as a sponsor.

Online donations are accepted via the link below. For additional sponsorship opportunities, please see our attached Sponsorship Levels and Opportunities. If you have any questions regarding donations or sponsorship, please contact the councilwoman below. All general questions may be directed to [women@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:women@governor.virginia.gov).

Thank you, and we look forward to having your support!

Sincerely,

Ashley Reynolds Marshall, J.D.  
Chair, Virginia Council on Women

Kara Moran  
Chair, Health Equity Committee & Lead, STEAM-H Contest

Joely Mauck  
Member, Council on Women & Lead, STEAM-H Contest



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## GIVING LEVELS & SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- Platinum \$25,000.00
- Gold \$10,000.00
- Silver \$5,000.00
- Bronze \$2,500.00
- Friend \$1,000
- Patron \$500
- I/We cannot sponsor but would like to contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Official Listing for Scholarship Recognition: \_\_\_\_\_

**All Sponsors will be recognized in promotional materials and press releases and invited to the scholarship presentation event. In the past, this has taken place at the Executive Mansion.**

Please make your *tax-deductible* check payable to **CollabHERation**, VCW's fiscal sponsor, and note in **Memo Line – STEAM-H Essay Contest**. You can learn more about CollabHERation at their website: <https://collabheration.org/>

**Mail to:**

CollabHERation | 1510 Willow Lawn Drive, Suite 100A | Richmond, Virginia 23230

*Online donations are accepted here: <https://donorbox.org/donate-here-350-2>*

If you have any questions or concerns regarding sponsorship, please contact the VCW Chair, Ashley Reynolds Marshall, at [amarshall.vcw@gmail.com](mailto:amarshall.vcw@gmail.com). However, please direct any general inquiries to [women@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:women@governor.virginia.gov).



## VIRGINIA COUNCIL ON WOMEN'S STEAM-H ESSAY CONTEST FAQs

### ABOUT THE CONTEST:

Since 2010, the Virginia Council on Women (VCW) has held its signature Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Essay Contest for female high school seniors. In 2020, the Council added Arts and Healthcare as both are essential to a STEM education and renamed the contest STEAM-H. The Virginia Council on Women presents deserving female students in the Commonwealth with scholarships to help them pursue STEAM-H in higher-education settings. The scholarships are awarded and presented at a reception at the Executive Mansion.

### CONTEST GUIDELINES:

To enter, students should be in their senior year in high school and hold at least a 3.0 GPA for Merit-Based scholarships and a 2.5 GPA for Need-Based scholarships. Students must write about their vision for a future STEAM-H career and why they consider the field an area of study or possible career path. Applicants are asked to submit an original 700 to 1,000-word essay created exclusively for this contest. Each submission is judged by a panel of Council members and women currently in STEAM-H careers.

The contest application is available at: <https://www.women.virginia.gov/steamh-essay-contest/>. A merit-based and need-based scholarship recipient will be chosen from each of the five geographical regions in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### ABOUT THE COUNCIL ON WOMEN:

The Virginia Council on Women is a volunteer, governor-appointed council of 15 members whose statutory purpose is to help women reach their full potential and to maximize their contributions, as wage earners and citizens, to the Commonwealth and to society. The Council has initiated several projects to meet this goal, including the STEAM-H Essay contest, which provides opportunities and encouragement to young women early in life to aid in their future success.

### AWARDS RECEPTION:

In past years, the Governor and the First Lady of Virginia have graciously agreed to serve as Co-Chairs and have hosted a reception in the spring at the Executive Mansion to present the scholarship awards and recognize our awardees, sponsors, and judges.

### VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

For more information and to learn about our past scholarship winners and sponsors, please visit our website: <https://www.women.virginia.gov/steamh-essay-contest/>

You can also learn more about what our past scholarship recipients are doing now on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CouncilOnWomen/>