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**EMILY COURIC
LEADERSHIP FORUM**

Emily Couric Leadership Forum Recognizes 20th Year by Awarding \$150K in college scholarships, Announces winners as the New Faces of Women’s Leadership

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA — “What could be a better time than this to recognize new faces of women’s leadership?” is the question asked and answered by the Emily Couric Leadership Forum Board. Despite having to cancel its 20th annual awards luncheon, scheduled for today, April 15th, the Board will fulfill its pledge to award \$150,000 in college scholarships to high school senior women from Charlottesville and Albemarle who embody the grace, intelligence, and courage of the late Emily Couric, a Virginia State Senator and proud champion of our region and of women in leadership.

“Many sponsors of the luncheon, donors, and ticket purchasers have agreed to dedicate their contribution, even without the luncheon, to the bright futures of these amazing young women,” said Colette Sheehy, Chair of the Board. “We are tremendously grateful for their generosity and confident these exceptional students will go on to demonstrate they are worth every bit invested in their futures.”

To celebrate the Forum’s 20th year, the Board embraced an ambitious goal of awarding \$150,000 in college scholarships, the most ever in one year, to ten area high school seniors. The overall winner of the awards process, who will receive \$50,000, is Sophia Isabelle Pardue of Albemarle High School. Isabelle plans study in economics, physics, and neuroscience, as well as research that will alleviate the suffering caused by mental illness. “I may not know exactly what my future entails, but one thing is certain, I’ll be working to change the lives of millions of people worldwide affected by mental disorders,” she said.

This year, the interview committee also selected a winner for the Joshua J. Scott merit award (\$20,000): Taylor Denise Mills of Murray High School, the first in her family to attend college, who plans to study nursing at Virginia Commonwealth University. Taylor hopes to spark positive change in healthcare – an industry close to our hearts, especially these days.

The Board recently named the merit award in memory of the late Joshua J. Scott, a beloved member of our community who worked with Senator Couric and served for many years on the interview and selection panel for the scholarship awards, where he was a tireless advocate for offering a merit award.

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The other scholarship winners, nominated by their area high schools, each receiving \$10,000 are:

Sophia Colby, Renaissance School
Meridith Frazee, Tandem Friends School
Francesca Gibson, Western Albemarle High School
Aiya Gilliam, The Covenant School
Clare Inlow, Charlottesville High School
Talia Prosper, Miller School of Albemarle
Elise Rebellato, Monticello High School
Vivienne Shields, St. Anne's-Belfield School

A series of videos highlighting each winner will be posted, two each day, throughout next week, and is introduced here: <https://www.emilycouricleadershipforum.org/2020-week-of-winners>.

The Forum Board plans to sponsor the luncheon again next Spring. It is not too late to donate to the scholarship fund for these young women or for our next year's scholarship fund.

For additional information or to arrange interviews with a board spokesperson or scholarship recipients, please contact:

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