

# THE AKOYA

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Norfolk Pearls Foundation of Virginia, Incorporated Newsletter

Norfolk Pearls  
Foundation of Virginia  
P.O. Box 2734  
Norfolk, VA 23501  
npfv.org  
Carla Perry, Chairman

## Chairman's Message

Greetings!

Welcome to the latest edition of *The Akoya*. We're excited to share some of our most recent achievements and updates with you. Our partnership and collective efforts with Iota Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®, allows us to continue to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals and families in Norfolk. We want to enhance the socio-economic condition of our community by providing educational, financial, cultural, charitable, and health-related resources and events.

The mission of Norfolk Pearls Foundation of Virginia is to be a leader in Hampton Roads in addressing the social and emotional needs of families, while encouraging continued education by extending scholarships to college-bound high school seniors and continuing college students in the City of Norfolk.

As a 501(c)(3) organization, we rely on grant funding and donations to provide educational workshops, community fairs and scholarships. Fundraising is another means of seeking financial support for our philanthropic endeavors.

Our 2024 fundraising event, *Renaissance Pink in the Night*, was held on November 9 at Khedive Shrine Center located in Chesapeake, Virginia. During this event, we recognized our scholarship recipients and presented our exemplary community service awards. This issue of *The Akoya* presents in pictures, highlights of the evening.

As always, we thank our donors and sponsors. When you partner with NPFV, you effect change in our community and ensure our success in the future. Visit our website at [www.npfv.org](http://www.npfv.org) to view our activities and to donate.

Carla Perry, Chairman  
[chairman@npfv.org](mailto:chairman@npfv.org)



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## ***2024 Exemplary Community Service Awards***

### **HBCU Award *A Call to Action***

#### ***Dr. Alvin C. Lomax***

Dr. Lomax is a graduate of Hampton University and holds a Doctor of Education degree from the College of William and Mary. After graduating from Hampton, Dr. Lomax was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. After completing two years of active duty, he continued to serve in the Army Reserves for eighteen years, while concurrently beginning his civilian professional career as a teacher with a focus on the natural sciences and chemistry and completing his graduate education. Dr. Lomax was a founding member of the Tri-County Veterans Association.

He served under three presidents: Dr. Lyman Beecher Brooks, Dr. Harrison Wilson and Dr. Marie V. McDemmond. He also served with distinction to ensure students had resources to become successful. He was the president of the Virginia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. He worked with others in the community to provide support to students who needed housing, familial support and other resources to be successful in college.

Dr. Lomax was a founding member of the Norfolk State University Retirees Association. Founded on July 12, 2000, the association was formed to give structure and official voice to the University's retirees. The goal of the Association includes "activities that enhance the image, support the programs, and promote the advancement of the University." The Association continues to serve the university.



### **Constance Ferebee Jones Award *Women's Healthcare & Wellness***

#### ***Annie M. Williams, MD***

Dr. Annie L. Williams is a notable healthcare physician in the city of Norfolk. She has decades of experience in women's healthcare and public health. She has over 45 years of experience as a medical practitioner. She is the Deputy District Health Director in the City of Norfolk, with the Virginia Department of Health.

She is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, earning a BA in psychology; Eastern Virginia Medical School earning a doctorate in medicine in 1979; and was a resident in obstetrics and gynecology from 1979-1983. She is board certified with the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She is affiliated with Sentara Norfolk General Hospital.



Dr. Williams has a long and distinguished career in the medical field. She has partnered with WAVY-TV - (News Channel) Department of Community Affairs serving as a panelist on *Domestic Violence Special*; partnered with Sentara as panelist for seminar *Balancing the Demands of the Decade*; partnered with *Speaking of Women's Health* project as speaker for workshop sessions on topics including *Premenstrual Syndrome*, *Women's Health – What you need to know*, and *Menopause*; partnered with 757 Health (community organization) as speaker for the event, *Breast Cancer: Surviving Then Thriving*. She was a leading voice in the city of Norfolk during the COVID 19 pandemic.



## ***2024 Exemplary Community Service Awards***

### ***Carla Perry Award Economic Legacy***

#### ***Black BRAND Mrs. Blair Durham***

Black BRAND (Business Research Analytics Networking and Development) is the Regional Black Chamber of Commerce for Hampton Roads, Virginia. CEO and Co-founder, Blair Durham, states that the organization was founded to promote group economics through professional development and community empowerment. The organization has a strong commitment to uplifting the Black community by supporting business owners and fostering economic growth.

Black BRAND's mission is to create scalable businesses that can compete on a global level while anchoring the community in strong values. Their approach includes unity, education, access, and opportunity, aiming to build a self-sufficient and thriving Black community.

Black BRAND operates on the principles of winning, innovation, integrity, humility, and community. These values guide their mission to transform the local, regional, and national Black community through unity and development. The organization has consistently demonstrated its ability to create meaningful impact through a variety of initiatives that address the specific needs of Black entrepreneurs and businesses.



### ***Joyce Gilliam Brown Award Cultural Educational Enrichment***

#### ***Mr. Dudley Colbert***

Norfolk native, Mr. Dudley Colbert, has contributed immensely to the Black community and city of Norfolk. His love for culture, history and the arts can be found in his leadership in the historic institution of the Blyden Branch Library, the oldest public library for African Americans in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The library opened in 1921. Mr. Colbert worked to ensure that not only does the library provide traditional books, but it has e-books, videos, meeting space, a computer lab and other services for the community.

He is a graduate of Booker T. Washington High School and Norfolk State University. Mr. Colbert served as the head librarian for the historic Blyden Branch, the first public library for Black people in the Commonwealth of Virginia for over 20 years. Mr. Colbert also served as chairman of the Multicultural Committee, City of Norfolk Public Library.

In 2017, Mr. Colbert hosted the inaugural African American History Month event to recognize young Black leaders in the Norfolk community at the library. The library has routinely sponsored cultural programming in the arts, featuring African dancing and storytelling. As a head librarian, Mr. Colbert

continues a tradition of celebrating our rich cultural heritage through education, literature, cultural expression and the arts.





## 2024 Exemplary Community Service Awards

### Lillian Brinkley Award Global Educational Impact

#### Ms. Trista Pope

Trista Pope has nearly 30 years of experience in public administration. As Deputy City Manager for the City of Norfolk, Ms. Pope oversees the Community Affairs portfolio which includes departments such as the Norfolk Public Libraries, Human Services, Neighborhood Services, Housing and Community Development and Office of Citizen Services, the Slover and Cultural Facilities Arts and Entertainment.

Ms. Pope has served the City of Norfolk in various leadership positions for the past 17 years including Acting Director of Real Estate, Senior Assistant to the City Manager, and the Assistant Director for the Department of Public Works. She has served on the Southeastern Public Services Authority Board of Directors, Downtown Norfolk Council Board, the Norfolk Invocation Corridor Board, and the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation on behalf of the City of Norfolk.

Ms. Pope holds a bachelor's degree from Old Dominion University, and a Master of Public Administration from Troy State University. She is also a graduate of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary class of the Project Inclusion Leadership Development Program and the Leading Educating and Developing Program from the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service.





















# INQUIRING MINDS...

**The season of giving.** “Giving Season refers to the last two months of the year when charitable giving is done at high rates. Although charitable giving has been around for centuries, tax benefits for it were put in place in 1917 in the U.S., which helped grow the practice of donating. The Season of Giving is celebrated during the holiday-packed months of November and December. Holidays that are generally associated with the Season of Giving include Thanksgiving, Giving Tuesday, Hanukkah, Diwali, Kwanzaa, Christmas Eve, and Christmas.”



<https://www.jpmorgan.com/insights/wealth-planning/philanthropy/a-historical-look-at-giving-season#:~:text=Giving%20Season%20refers%20to%20the,grow%20the%20practice%20of%20donating.>

## **Norfolk Pearls Foundation of Virginia, Incorporated**

### ***Board of Directors***

**Mrs. Carla Perry, Chairman**

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