



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**JONI L. IVEY AND ASHBY C. KILGORE
NAMED CO-CHAIRS OF THE 52ND ANNUAL
PENINSULA HUMANITARIAN AWARDS DINNER**

HAMPTON, VIRGINIA - The Peninsula Chapter of the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities announces that **Joni L. Ivey** and **Ashby C. Kilgore** will serve as the co-chairs of the 52nd Annual Humanitarian Awards Dinner to be held on Thursday, February 20, 2020, at the Newport News Marriott Hotel at City Center. Ms. Ivey and Dr. Kilgore will assume the leadership role in recognizing those who have made significant humanitarian contributions to the Virginia Peninsula.

Joni L. Ivey is the retired as Chief of Staff to U. S. Representative Robert C. "Bobby" Scott of Virginia's Third Congressional District, after serving 40 years in the role. A native of Newport News, she graduated from Carver High School in 1971, the last graduating class of the segregated high school that was closed when local schools were racially integrated. Joni went on to attend Christopher Newport University and graduated from Norfolk State University. In 2002, Ms. Ivey assembled a group of community leaders for the purpose of addressing critical issues of importance to citizens of the Southeast Community of Newport News. "The Group" has continued to bring about positive changes in several areas important to the community. Ms. Ivey spends nearly every waking moment of her free time helping others, either through her involvement in her church, Ivy Baptist Church in Newport News, or work with the local NAACP, where she once served as branch president, by tutoring young people in Newport News, working with the local food bank, or through her service in The Links, Incorporated. In 2018, Governor Ralph Northam appointed Ms. Ivey to the Virginia Commission on Higher Education Board.

Ashby C. Kilgore is the retired Superintendent of Newport News Public Schools, with over 45 years of experience in public education in Hampton Roads as a teacher, principal, deputy superintendent and superintendent. She was appointed Superintendent of Newport News Public Schools in 2007 -- the first woman ever to lead the 30,000-student school division. Leading an agenda focused on college, career, and citizen readiness, the school division created initiatives including Early College, Early Career, Career Pathways, and STEM innovations, with a 417% increase in career certifications, and a youth development movement and the summer SPARK initiative, resulting in a 93% graduation rate, a 2% dropout rate, and a decrease in suspensions. Dr. Kilgore was named a 2012 Old Dominion University Darden College of Education Fellow, received the 2016 Urban League of Hampton Roads Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Leader Award in Education, a 2015 VCIC Humanitarian Award, and the 2014 Thomas Nelson Community College Medallion. Dr. Kilgore remains active in her community during retirement, serving on the boards of Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, the Virginia Living Museum, WHRO Public Media, and continues her work to advance career internships for high school students.

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities works with schools, businesses, and communities to achieve success by addressing prejudices, in all forms, in order to improve academic achievement, increase workplace productivity, and enhance local trust. Through workshops, retreats, and customized programs that raise knowledge, motivation, and skills, VCIC develops leaders who work together to achieve success throughout Virginia.

For more information about the organization or the event, contact Jonathan Zur, CEO, or the staff at 804-515-7950. Information about the 52nd Peninsula Humanitarian Awards Dinner may also be found online at www.inclusiveVA.org/awards/peninsula/.

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