



## NEWS RELEASE

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### VCIC Announces Recipients of 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Peninsula Humanitarian Awards

(Newport News, VA) - The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (VCIC) is pleased to announce the recipients of the 55<sup>th</sup> annual Peninsula Humanitarian Awards. The awards honor individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions to the promotion of respect and understanding among people of diverse racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds in the Peninsula community. The 2023 awards will be presented by the Peninsula Chapter of VCIC at their annual dinner on Thursday, February 23, 2023, at the Newport News Marriott at City Center.

#### The 2023 Peninsula Distinguished Virginian Award Recipients

**William R. Harvey & Norma B. Harvey** – Mrs. Norma B. Harvey served with distinction as the First Lady of Hampton University for 44 years. She gracefully organized campus events to honor academic and athletic student achievement; supported the University's life-saving proton therapy cancer treatment center; welcomed new faculty and organization, community, state, and national leaders; hosted events for alumni, trustees, and even sitting presidents. Passionate about community service, she has been appointed to the Governor's Task Force on Substance Abuse and Sexual Assault on College Campuses, the USS Hampton Commissioning Committee, and The Hampton Roads Sports Facility Authority. Throughout her life, Mrs. Harvey has been actively involved in the community and has served as a member of the Peninsula Council for the Arts, the Planning and Research Committee for the United Way, the Board of the American Heart Association, the State Board and Peninsula Chapter of the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, and the Virginia Symphony. She has also served on the Board of Visitors for The College of William and Mary and the Virginia Museum of Natural History.

Dr. William R. Harvey is President Emeritus of Hampton University and 100% owner of a Pepsi Cola Bottling Company in Michigan. While President of Hampton University, Dr. William R. Harvey introduced innovations that have solidified Hampton's stellar position among the nation's colleges and universities. His innovative leadership was reflected in the growth and quality of the University's student population, academic programs, physical facilities, and financial base. Along with his duties as President, some of the corporate boards that Dr. Harvey served on were the National Geographic Society, NCAA Division I Board of Directors, and Newport News Shipbuilding. He served on the President's National Advisory Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service, the Commission on Presidential Scholars, the U.S. Department of Commerce Minority Development Advisory Board, and the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia. Additionally, he was Chairman of the President's Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education.

#### The 2023 Peninsula Humanitarian Award Recipients

**Rabia Jafri** – Dr. Rabia Jafri was born and raised in Karachi, Pakistan, and emigrated to the United States in the mid-1990s. In 2015, Dr. Jafri was introduced to members of the refugee community who were being re-settled in Newport News. She found these families struggling to make ends meet and assimilate into their new community. With a dedicated group of individuals who formed the first Board of Directors, Dr. Jafri founded Hampton Roads Refugee Relief ("HR3"). This organization's mission is to help build stronger, more inclusive communities on the Peninsula and throughout Hampton Roads by offering a variety of needed services to the refugee community. Since then, HR3 has assisted families and individuals who have arrived here penniless and with no support system to settle their families, begin successful jobs and careers, see their children succeed in college, and own homes. Many have become

citizens of the United States, truly exemplifying the American Dream. Rabia continues to serve as Chairperson of the Board of HR3.

**Joshua N. King, Sr.** – Reverend Joshua N. King, Sr. is currently the 8th Senior Pastor of Zion Baptist Church in Hampton, Virginia. Pastor King serves as a connector and bridge between community, business, government, and nonprofits. He extended himself most recently with the Heart of Giving, a community-wide giving and resource fair. The goal was to bring resources to the community at large to build relationships and give hope. Through collaboration with business and non-profit partners, there were over 70 exhibitors which included multiple churches, schools, organizations, businesses, and community agencies. Dr. King was the past Vice-Moderator of American Baptist Churches of the South (ABCOTS) for Area II. Previously, he served as Trustee for the Progressive Baptist National Convention, Inc. (PNBC), for two years as Program Committee Chair for the PNBC, as Vice President of the ABCOTS Ministers Council for Area II, as well as a member of the Global United Fellowship Compassion International Committee, and on the Board of Directors for Transitions Family Violence Services.

**Theodore R. Reiff and Anthony R. Santoro** – Dr. Theodore R. Reiff is an internationally known Holocaust researcher, esteemed physician, and highly regarded medical educator. Dr. Reiff is regarded globally for his research on war crimes committed by Nazi physicians under Hitler's rule. He is a sought-after lecturer on genocide studies, medical malpractice, and the consequences of human rights violations, and the founding president of the Genocide Education Project. Dr. Anthony R. Santoro is a Distinguished Professor of History and President Emeritus at Christopher Newport University. One of his specialties is National Socialist German History. These two longtime friends and academics ensured their life's work, research, and teaching about National Socialist Germany and the Holocaust will continue at the highest level, having established the Reiff-Santoro professorship in History at Christopher Newport University. Dr. Reiff's million-dollar investment is the largest, single-donor endowed professorship at Christopher Newport, and will be used to carry on the important work Reiff and Santoro have conducted for decades.

Fifty-five years ago, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities - then called the National Conference of Christians and Jews - began a tradition on the Virginia Peninsula, "to honor the work of our friends, neighbors, and family members who gave to others the same rights, respect, and dignity that they sought for themselves." Today, VCIC works with schools, businesses, and communities to achieve success through inclusion. The 88-year-old organization delivers programs to educators and students in the region through Diversity Dialogue Day, Project Inclusion, and professional development sessions. VCIC also conducts workshops for many local businesses and nonprofit organizations, leveraging diversity and inclusion to achieve success. The organization opened an office in Hampton Roads in 2018 to better serve the community.

The 2023 VCIC Humanitarian Awards Dinner is co-chaired by Golden Bethune-Hill and Don Roberts. Metro Productions and Virginia Oncology Associates are the Humanitarian sponsor, and the Benefactor sponsors are Ferguson, Old Point National Bank and TowneBank.

For more information about the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities or about reservations for the Awards Dinner on February 23, go to [www.inclusiveVA.org/peninsula](http://www.inclusiveVA.org/peninsula).

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