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VCCS Celebrates Philanthropy – The Lipman Foundation

Richmond, Va. (April 17, 2018) – Each April, Virginia’s community colleges honor leading philanthropists from each of 23 community colleges at a special luncheon hosted by the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education (VFCCE). The 13th annual Chancellor’s Award for Leadership in Philanthropy event was held in Richmond on April 17, 2018 and recognized the outstanding contributions made to the growth and development of Virginia’s community colleges and their respective foundations. More than two dozen individuals, families, and businesses from around Virginia earned the Chancellor’s Award. Their combined contributions totaled \$6 million dollars to Virginia’s community colleges.

Reynolds Community College submitted The Lipman Foundation to be one of the philanthropists recognized with this year’s Chancellor’s Award. In 1991 Eric and Jeanette Lipman made their first gift to the college. Mrs. Lipman went on to establish the *Eric and Jeanette Lipman Endowed Scholarship*, to create an endowment to support Reynolds’ Middle College program, and to fund the Jeanette Lipman Auditorium housed in the Massey Learning and Technology building on the Reynolds Parham Road campus. Mrs. Lipman also gave of her personal time and talent by joining the Reynolds Educational Foundation Board in 2001. The Lipman Foundation’s latest support was a \$1 million donation to extend the college’s footprint in Richmond’s East End.

The Lipmans were fervent champions of individuals determined to overcome difficult circumstances and succeed. Eric Lipman fled his native Germany to escape the Nazi Holocaust. He served in the U.S. Army and later he, along with his wife Jeanette, built a highly successful machine tool import business operating out of Richmond. Along the path of their success the couple experienced their own struggles and hardships.

“Jeanette was very much interested in helping people help themselves,” said Elizabeth Littlefield, executive director of the J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College Foundation. “She saw our college as a pathway to economic independence, and provided scholarships to make sure financial resources were not a barrier.”

Ellen Robertson of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* had this to say about Mrs. Lipman: “Jeanette Lipman once said that she practiced “venture philanthropy.” Although she and her husband made gifts to prominent Richmond institutions, her special passion was for causes that had little or no mechanism for funding. She then found resources to address problems.”

Eric Lipman passed away in 1992. Jeanette Lipman passed away in 2017 at the remarkable age of 102. Although they are now gone, the Lipmans and their Foundation will have a lasting impact not only on Reynolds, but on about 30 other organizations in Richmond, in Virginia and beyond.

Serving over 19,000 students annually, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College is the youngest and third largest of 23 community colleges in Virginia. The College operates three campuses serving residents in the City of Richmond and the counties of Henrico, Hanover, Goochland, Powhatan and Louisa.

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