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News Release

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Celebrating the Remarkable Winner of the Fourth Annual VSBA Student Essay Contest *Recognized at the VSBA Conference on Education*

Charlottesville, VA – In a thrilling announcement today at the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) Conference on Education, Ann Elizabeth Cherian, a rising junior at Grafton High School in York County Public Schools, was named the winner of the 2024 VSBA Student Essay Contest! This year's theme, "Kind Hearts, Strong Schools," inspired a wave of creativity and passion among participants, making Ann's victory a standout achievement.

Ann's eloquent essay and captivating recorded speech won her a \$1,000 scholarship, courtesy of WellNet Healthcare. Her insightful and heartfelt words impressed the judges, earning her this prestigious accolade.

To view Ann's winning speech, please visit: <https://youtu.be/kkB352j6gAo>

VSBA Executive Director Gina Patterson highlighted the contest's significance, stating, "This contest provides an incredible platform for school board members from across the Commonwealth to hear directly from our students on topics that matter to them."

Ann's recognition included a special invitation to the Conference on Education, where she delivered her inspiring speech to a captivated audience of Virginia school board members, superintendents, and school division staff. Her powerful message and poised delivery left an indelible mark on all who attended.

About the Virginia School Boards Association

The Virginia School Boards Association, a voluntary, nonpartisan organization of Virginia school boards, promotes excellence in public education through advocacy, training, and services. The Association offers conferences, information, training, and counseling designed to meet the needs of the Commonwealth's educational leaders.

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