



## The Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges

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### ***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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### **Bridgewater College Wins Champion Title at 26<sup>th</sup> VFIC Applied Ethics Bowl, Presented by TowneBank**

*“Ethics and Business” Discussed by College Students and Community Leaders*

**Richmond, VA – Bridgewater College** won the **2026 VFIC Applied Ethics Bowl** competition, held February 13 on the campus of the University of Richmond in Richmond, Virginia. A program of the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges (VFIC), 16 student teams from independent colleges and universities located throughout the Commonwealth deliberated over four rounds of case studies with ethical dilemmas related to *Ethics and Business*. The teams presented their analysis, positions, and recommendations to panels of judges comprised of business, professional, and community leaders from all over the Commonwealth of Virginia. This one-day event was made possible through the generous support of our presenting sponsor, TowneBank, whose commitment to education and ethical leadership helps ensure the success of programs like the VFIC Applied Ethics Bowl.

**Bridgewater College’s** student team won the championship and the Batten Trophy. The four-student team was comprised of **Laine Anthony, Junior; Madison Lizarraga, Junior; Isaac Plange, Junior and Ifeatu Udokwu, Senior**. The team was led by faculty coordinator **Matthew Lamb, Instructor of Philosophy**.

The five-student team from **Mary Baldwin University** comprised of **Lee Iraheta, Senior; Malissa Louis, Sophomore; Madeline Matics, Freshman; Adiba Tojimirzaeva, Senior and Emma Wadovick, Junior**, competed against **Bridgewater College** in the final round and was the runner-up. The team was led by faculty coordinator **Johnny Williams III, Professor of Practice in Theatre**.

In addition to the competitive portion of this event, a networking luncheon and reception were also held. At the networking luncheon corporate leaders from various career fields hosted tables to engage students in career conversation and networking. A reception was held following the final championship round.

The VFIC extends special thanks to our sponsors BHR Associates, Inc., Birdsong Peanuts, Carilion Clinic, Clearstead, Kaufman & Canoles, LifeNet Health, Spider Management Group, and Woods Rogers. Sponsorships raised funding for scholarships for deserving VFIC students across the Commonwealth.

Locke Ogens, President of VFIC, said, “The Applied Ethics Bowl reflects the distinctive educational experience offered by VFIC schools. Through small, faculty-led classes, students develop rigorous critical thinking skills, participate in thoughtful and respectful dialogue, and build a strong ethical framework for decision-making. Graduates leave VFIC not only well prepared for professional success, but also equipped to serve as principled, civic-minded leaders throughout the Commonwealth.”

### **About the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges**

Established in 1952, the **Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges (VFIC)** advances the distinctive values and strengths of Virginia’s leading independent colleges and universities. VFIC represents a consortium of seventeen institutions committed to providing an exceptional education in highly personalized learning environments.

VFIC’s mission is to ensure that **academically qualified students—many of whom are first-generation college students—can attend an independent college regardless of financial circumstances.** Through strategic fundraising, partnerships, and student-centered programs, VFIC has provided **more than \$181 million in support** to its member institutions and their students since its founding.

The Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges supports the programs and students of the following seventeen independent colleges and universities in the Commonwealth:

**Bridgewater College, Emory & Henry University Hampden-Sydney College, Hampton University, Hollins University, Mary Baldwin University, Marymount University, Randolph College, Randolph-Macon College, Roanoke College, Shenandoah University, Sweet Briar College, University of Lynchburg, University of Richmond, Virginia Union University, Virginia Wesleyan University, and Washington and Lee University.**

For additional information on the VFIC, visit [www.vfic.org](http://www.vfic.org).

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