

Josie Flannery '29 Named to Inaugural VFIC Presidential Scholars Cohort

Sweet Briar's Josie Flannery '29 joins the inaugural VFIC Presidential Scholars cohort, earning scholarship, mentorship, and leadership opportunities

SWEET BRIAR, VA, UNITED STATES, August 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Sweet Briar College's Josie Flannery '29 has been selected as a member of the [Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges](#)' (VFIC) inaugural cohort of Presidential Scholars.

A new statewide initiative, the VFIC Presidential Scholars Program is designed to develop the next generation of values-based leaders across Virginia's independent colleges and universities. In its inaugural year, the program recognizes one exceptional rising second-year student from each of the [17 VFIC member institutions](#). Selected by their college or university presidents, these scholars exemplify outstanding leadership, a commitment to service, and a passion for strengthening their communities.

"The VFIC Presidential Scholars Program reflects our belief that leadership grounded in ethics, service, and responsibility is essential to the future of the Commonwealth," said VFIC President Locke Ogens.

Josie, from Barboursville, Va., has already demonstrated leadership ability in her first year at the College. She is a member of the student government's Inter-Club Council, which provides leadership training and guidance to all the student clubs and organizations. An avid rider, she is a member of the College's [National Collegiate Equestrian Association \(NCEA\)](#) and [Intercollegiate Horse Shows Association \(IHSA\)](#) teams. During the IHSA Region 4 Zone 4 Final in February, Josie earned Reserve High Point Rider honors, and the team was named Reserve High Point Team.

"I am beyond honored to represent Sweet Briar College as a VFIC Presidential Scholar, and incredibly grateful for this investment in my education," Josie said. "I look forward to growing



Josie will represent Sweet Briar as a VFIC Presidential Scholar.

alongside fellow driven students and developing into the capable female leader that Sweet Briar College is so dedicated to producing.”

With generous funding provided by Bonnie and Wick Moorman, each VFIC Presidential Scholar receives a comprehensive package of financial support and leadership opportunities, including:

A \$10,000 annual scholarship for up to three years.

Mentorship provided by their college or university president.

Participation in leadership development seminars including statewide networking opportunities with business, government, and non-profit leaders.

A fully funded experiential learning opportunity, such as study abroad, an internship, or a research project.



Josie Flannery '29 celebrates a win on Sweet Briar's Jetson at the 2025 SWVHJA Hunter Seat Equitation Finals

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Through this cohort-based experience, scholars will connect with peers from across Virginia, build leadership skills, and prepare to lead with integrity in their chosen professions and communities.

“I am thrilled that VFIC has established this program, and grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Moorman for their generosity in underwriting it. This is a transformational opportunity for all VFIC Presidential Scholars, and I believe Josie has represented and will continue to represent Sweet Briar

well. As an accomplished equestrian and student leader, she is a natural fit for the inaugural cohort,” said President Mary Pope M. Hutson '83 on her selection of Josie for the program.

Over time, the program will develop a robust statewide network of alumni—graduates equipped to make meaningful contributions across industries and communities throughout the Commonwealth and beyond. The inaugural cohort reflects the remarkable diversity of talent across Virginia’s independent colleges and universities, with scholars pursuing a wide range of academic disciplines and representing communities from across the Commonwealth.

Established in 1952, the VFIC advances the distinctive values and strengths of Virginia’s leading independent colleges and universities, representing a consortium of institutions committed to

providing an exceptional education in highly personalized learning environments.

At Sweet Briar, leadership isn't something students wait until graduation to practice—it begins from the moment they arrive. Josie's selection as one of the inaugural VFIC Presidential Scholars demonstrates what is possible when talented women are given opportunities to lead, serve, compete, and grow. Through personalized mentorship, equestrian and athletic opportunities, student leadership, and transformative experiences beyond the classroom, Sweet Briar prepares women to lead with confidence, integrity, and purpose. If you're ready to discover what you can accomplish at a college built for women who want to lead, visit sbc.edu/admissions or contact admissions@sb.edu

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Sweet Briar College: Where Bold Women Thrive, nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is more than just a campus—it's a launchpad for fearless leaders, innovators, and changemakers.

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