

Kaci Easley: Perseverance means getting back up after you've been knocked down over and over and over again to keep trying to solidify your goal. Everything is not easy and often times you're met with no, but it's figuring out how you get what you want and getting to yes.

Torrey Smith: My mother and my grandmother, just watching their life, all the highs, all the lows, all the trials and tribulations that they continue to overcome. They weren't perfect by any means, but their strength allowed them to not be defined by their past. And for me to see that firsthand, and even the stuff that happened before I was born, really kind of motivated me to keep on fighting and do the right thing.

Penny Franklin: You're not giving up. You just keep pushing and pushing and pushing. You keep restating why and you make sure that the folks coming up understand why they have to do it too. So for me, it's just to stand up keep pushing.

Jocelyn Harrison: One of my biggest challenges was starting off. And my mentor, starting off, is actually here tonight. His name is Dr. Jerry Sinclair. He was my first boss and mentor at NASA Langley Research Center. And he was such an encouraging force in my life and so whenever our things got a little tough, I remember working with him doing research and him threatening to break my arm if I didn't stop work and write a patent up because he knew that I was on to something. So I think working with him and persevering through those early years was key to my career.

Marcus Williams: I feel like I'm one of many who try to contribute something to their community, who try to be the shoulders that others can stand upon to achieve things. So recognition, in itself, is quite special.

Kaci Easley: And I'm honestly just so fortunate and humble to be amongst this group of strong men and women and look forward to continuing the work of our Commonwealth in our nation.

Jocelyn Harrison: I want to commend Dominion for, you know, taking the time and making the investment to celebrate people of all walks of life that have made significant contributions. I think it's important to you know mark that history and tell those stories because those stories can be helpful in inspiring to other people to come.