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LDF Calls for Resignation of Virginia Governor Ralph Northam Over Racist Medical School Yearbook Image

A medical school yearbook page belonging to Virginia Governor Ralph Northam surfaced today showing a photograph of two men, one in blackface and one in a Ku Klux Klan robe and hood. [Janai Nelson](#), Associate Director-Counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), issued the following statement calling for Governor Northam's resignation.

“Whether the year is 1984 or 2019, the image on Governor Northam’s yearbook page is simply inexcusable. Such bigotry has no place in American life, let alone the highest levels of government. While we are mindful that youth and young adults can make regrettable mistakes that may merit leniency, this image perpetuates some of the worst hate in our nation’s history and undermines the ability of all Virginians – particularly those of color – to have faith in the integrity of their Governor. His failure to proactively own a mistake of this magnitude before it was discovered by others calls into question his ability to credibly lead the diverse people of Virginia.

“We vehemently condemn racism regardless of the political party of the offender, and Governor Northam is no exception. His apology is insufficient, and we demand his immediate resignation.”

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.