

January 16, 2026

The Honorable Glenn Youngkin
Office of the Governor
1111 E. Broad Street, 3rd Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Governor Youngkin:

Alongside my fellow board members, I write to inform you of our decision to resign our positions as Visitors effective January 16, 2026. From the time I took an oath when I joined the University of Virginia Board of Visitors, I have been exclusively guided by one overriding consideration: the best interests of the University. I have never waived from that commitment and do not lightly step away from the leadership of an institution that has meant so much to me. I have come to believe, however, that our efforts to do what is right for UVA have become paralyzed through purposeful political warfare that is destabilizing to the University.

Despite these challenges, there is still much that we have accomplished over the past two years. As University leaders, we stabilized the UVA Health System so that it can once again serve as a world-class care facility for our community, established new governance structures including a compensation committee on the Board to better steward the resources of the University, recruited respected new leaders for the Health System and the University, oversaw the resolution of three years material weaknesses in the University's internal controls over financial reporting, worked diligently with the administration to maintain our AAA credit rating, strongly advocated for investment in our athletics programs, promoted equal pay for women in senior leadership, renewed the University's focus on research, and insisted on holding in-state tuition flat this year. We also did our level best to maintain the University's independence and academic freedom from political forces on all sides.

It is a distressing fact of civic life in the United States that toxic national politics converts every disagreement, even among well-meaning people who share the same hopes and believe in many of the same values, into a pitched battle of competing camps.

As President Beardsley and I presented to the General Assembly earlier this week, the University desperately needs stability and the ability to focus on the many challenges it faces. We have placed incredible people in important University roles, including the 10th President and the head of the UVA Health System. I sincerely hope that they will be allowed to do their jobs without political interference.

I am truly grateful for the opportunities attending this great University has provided me and for the opportunity to serve. I also hope that members of our community can give each other some grace and focus on the values that unite us rather than those that divide. I will continue my service to UVA and its mission in every way that I can moving forward.

Sincerely,

Rachel Sheridan