



# HARRISONBURG | VA FRIENDLY BY NATURE



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## City honored to receive marker in recognition of Lucy Simms

*Harrisonburg Parks & Rec to place marker near Lucy F. Simms Continuing Education Center*

HARRISONBURG, Va. – One of The Friendly City’s most revered and impactful leaders is about to receive another much-due honor.

The Virginia Board of Historic Resources has selected Harrisonburg’s Lucy Simms as the honoree of a historical marker, to be placed near the building that bears her name. The Lucy F. Simms School is already listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register, and on the National Register of Historic Places, but there is no marker indicating these honors recognizing Simms’s contribution to our community.

So, Harrisonburg Parks & Rec staff set out to change that.

Simms Center Supervisor Stephanie Howard and the Parks & Rec team worked closely with Randall Jones of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to complete the application for a historic marker. A committee including Mayor Deanna Reed, Obie Hill and Sandra Bopp from the Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, Harrisonburg Deputy City Manager Ande Banks, and Northeast Neighborhood Association president Karen Thomas assisted in the process, and the marker was officially approved this month.

The marker, once installed, will provide information about Simms’s life, her accomplishments, and the important role she played in shaping the future of Harrisonburg.

“Lucy Simms’s impact on our City, and on Virginia as a whole, would best be shared by the thousands of people she reached as an educator,” Mayor Reed wrote to the Virginia Board of Historic Resources Committee. “She rose from a childhood born in enslavement in 1856 to become a college-educated teacher of African American students in the Shenandoah Valley. Harrisonburg’s history would not be what it is without Lucy Simms, and our present would not be what it is now without her. We celebrate her life and thank you by honoring her historical legacy with a Virginia highway marker.”

Harrisonburg Public Works will assist Parks & Rec in the installation of the marker later this year. A date has not been set at this time.



*(Above) The historic Lucy F. Simms School, now home to the Lucy F. Simms Continuing Education Center. The marker will be installed nearby.*

**The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 54,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov).



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