

# *Virginia's first lady apologizes for handing cotton to Black students*

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Richmond, March 2 (RHC)-- In the U.S., Virginia's first lady Pam Northam has apologized after she handed out cotton to African-American students touring the Governor's Mansion and asked them to imagine being an enslaved cotton picker.

The incident came as Governor Ralph Northam, a Democrat, continues to resist mounting calls from within his own party to step down after claims he posed for a racist photo seen in his 1984 medical school yearbook page depicting a man wearing blackface next to a man wearing a Ku Klux Klan outfit. Northam has denied that he is in the photo, but he did admit to wearing blackface on another occasion that same year and apologized.

After the latest incident, Leah Dozier Walker, the mother of one of the students handed cotton by first lady Pam Northam, said in a statement: "The governor and Mrs. Northam have asked the residents of the commonwealth to forgive them for their racially insensitive past actions. But the actions of Mrs. Northam, just last week, do not lead me to believe that this

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