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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, AMERICAN EVOLUTION™, Participating  
in 2017 ASALH Meeting and Conference**

*Distinguished African American History Scholar, Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander of Norfolk  
State Univ.*

*Will Speak with Media about Enduring Impact of 1619 African Arrival at Exhibit Booth 21*

**Jamestown, VA** (September 27, 2017) – Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, AMERICAN EVOLUTION™ is exhibiting at the 2017 Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) Annual Meeting and Conference, which runs today through October 1 in Cincinnati, Ohio. Throughout the conference, nationally recognized historian, Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander of Norfolk State University, will be available in the American Evolution booth (#21) to speak with media and conference attendees about the 1619 arrival of the first Africans in English North America in Hampton, Virginia, and this event's enduring and powerful impact in shaping America today.

In direct alignment with the 2017 ASALH conference theme of "education," the 2019 Commemoration is a multi-year initiative that includes events, programs, education and legacy projects highlighting pivotal events of 1619 Virginia, which have had a significant and enduring impact on America's history. A key focus of the 2019 Commemoration is the arrival of the first Africans in 1619 in English North America at Point Comfort near present-day Fort Monroe, Virginia. The 2019 Commemoration is examining the lasting impact that the African arrival has had on American society, culture and government.

"The story of Africans arriving in Virginia in 1619 and the continued impact that African Americans have had on our country is key to who we are as Americans," said Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the 2019 Commemoration. "This history is fraught with hardship, inequality and difficult issues, but the past 398 years have also seen tremendous contributions from people of African descent, which has definitively shaped our country and put us on a path towards the ideals of democracy, diversity and opportunity. We are proud to join ASALH in furthering the study of African American history and adding dimension to our American history."

As the organization that founded Black History month and a leader in advancing the study of African Americans in the United States, ASALH's efforts run parallel to those of the 2019 Commemoration. Over the next two years, the 2019 Commemoration is supporting events and historical sites that tell a more inclusive story of America's history, honor the African American experience, and connect the pivotal events of 1619 Virginia to themes and issues present in America today. Upcoming events include:

- **Remembering Jamestown II Conference: The Missiology of Jamestown 1619**, Virginia Union University, Richmond, VA – January 2019
- **First Africans in Virginia: Impact and Legacy Exhibition**, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA – February – August 2019
- **Cultural Arts World Premiere**, Various Sites in Virginia - May-June, 2018
- **Fort Monroe Visitor and Education Center Dedication Ceremony**, Fort Monroe, Hampton, VA – August 24, 2019
- **1619: Making of America Summit**, Norfolk State University, Norfolk, VA – September 27-28, 2019
- **Customs, Cultures and Cuisine Festival**, Williamsburg, VA – November 8-10, 2019

#### **About the 2019 Commemoration**

The 2019 Commemoration, AMERICAN EVOLUTION™, highlights events that occurred in Virginia in 1619 that continue to influence America today. Featured programs, events and legacy projects will position Virginia as a leader in education, tourism and economic development. AMERICAN EVOLUTION™ commemorates the ongoing journey toward the key ideals of democracy, diversity and opportunity. Dominion Resources is an AMERICAN EVOLUTION™ Founding Partner and Altria Group is a Virginia Colony Partner.

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