



**CONTACT**  
Robin Crawford  
2019 Commemoration  
[Robin.crawford@finnpartners.com](mailto:Robin.crawford@finnpartners.com)  
PH: (202) 974-5025  
C: (703) 966-7616

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**VIRGINIA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TO COMPETE IN THE 2018 AMERICAN EVOLUTION™ INNOVATORS CUP AT THE TOM TOM FOUNDERS FESTIVAL**

*Steve Huffman, Reddit Cofounder, to be amongst judges in the student competition*

**JAMESTOWN, VA** (April 6, 2018) – On April 12 at the Tom Tom Founders Festival in Charlottesville, Virginia, the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution™ Innovators Cup will convene entrepreneurial teams from Virginia colleges and universities to compete as they pitch their compelling business concepts to a panel of distinguished investors. This year, 14 teams will be participating from 11 colleges and universities. Below is a list of the competing student teams and their projects:

- Andrew Pinney and Rebecca Argueta, “Easy Life,” Germanna Community College
- Tate Socha and Luis Torres, “Fully Stocked,” Hampden-Sydney College
- Mariam Mitaishvili, Alexis Morgan, Andrew Gray, Kaitlyn Williams, Jose Thomas and Peter Odegbami, “Generators Inc.,” Hampton University
- Brett Danielson, Evan Fisher and Hunter Markle, “BarTrack,” James Madison University
- Blade Taylor and Bryce Cahoon, “3DXtremes LLC,” Old Dominion University
- Janay Brown, “Full Belly Delights,” Old Dominion University
- James Overton, “Time4Dealz,” Radford University
- Aneesh Dhawan and Victor Layne, “PurPics,” University of Virginia
- Fritz Steuer and Erik Quigg, “Kestrel,” University of Virginia
- Keith Ranaldi, Lee Wilson, Shannon Cowan and Andrew Indelicato, “The Abstract Athlete,” Virginia Commonwealth University
- Neil Hailey and Matthew Sozio, “French Slide,” Virginia Commonwealth University
- Destini Woods, “Solidarity,” Virginia State University
- Glenn Feit, Ben Ailinger and Maria Solares, “Aecium,” Virginia Tech
- Kent Rollins, Trevor Jackson and Greg Garnhart, “Candid Campus Tours,” William & Mary

The Innovator’s Cup is designed to cultivate the next generation of entrepreneurial leaders by encouraging Virginia students at the undergraduate and graduate level to submit their best business concepts. This year’s competition will take place at the Jefferson Theater, and students will compete for \$20,000 in prizes, mentorships with celebrated innovators, and collaborations with investors. The winners will be selected based on business viability and business strategy. A

panel of high profile investors, including Steve Huffman, Reddit cofounder and Nancy Twine, Briogeo Hair Products CEO and Founder, will evaluate each submission.

“Virginia is the original startup, and our goal is to motivate the Commonwealth’s next generation of innovators,” said Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the American Evolution. “The American Evolution Innovators Cup is a fantastic opportunity for Virginia students to showcase their most unique business ideas.”

Additionally, the University of Virginia’s Galant Center for Entrepreneurship at the McIntire School of Commerce will reserve spots in its entrepreneurial competition later this month for winner of the Innovators Cup. The Galant Challenge is a live investment round that has seeded over \$2 million to ventures. All finalists will also receive complimentary Summit Badges to the 7th annual Tom Tom Founders Festival.

The 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution commemorates the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of several pivotal events that took place in 1619 Virginia, which have had an enduring impact on Virginia and America’s history. These events set the state and the nation on a course towards the ideals of democracy, diversity and opportunity. In addition to key programs that recognize the launch of free enterprise in the Commonwealth, the Commemoration also raises awareness about the arrival of the first recorded Africans to English North America, the First Representative Legislative Assembly in the New World, the recruitment of English women in significant numbers to the Virginia colony, and the first official English Thanksgiving in North America.

To learn more about the American Evolution Innovators Cup, please visit [www.tomtomfest.com/innovators-cup](http://www.tomtomfest.com/innovators-cup).

### **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 and TowneBank are Virginia Colony Partners.

### **About the Tom Tom Foundation and Founders Festival**

The Tom Tom Foundation is a nonprofit organization that celebrates entrepreneurship, culture, and innovation in small cities. Tom Tom’s signature event is a weeklong Founders Festival that

takes place in Charlottesville, VA, each April in conjunction with Thomas Jefferson's birthday. This cross discipline, multi-venue experience transforms the historic downtown and empowers entrepreneurs, innovators, and civic leaders who are defining the future. Since its inception in 2012, the Foundation's programming has showcased thousands of speakers, artists, and bands to 186,000 program attendees, and has channeled \$2.9 million to new ventures and projects. Learn more: [www.tomtomfest.com](http://www.tomtomfest.com)