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**VIRGINIA'S 2019 COMMEMORATION AND THE TOM TOM FOUNDERS FESTIVAL
PRESENT THE AMERICAN EVOLUTION™ INNOVATORS CUP
FOR COLLEGIATE TEAMS STATEWIDE**

*Student Teams in the Commonwealth to Submit Unique Business Proposals
to Compete for Cash Prizes*

JAMESTOWN, VA (March 8, 2018) – Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution™, continues its multi-year partnership with the Tom Tom Founders Festival through the 2018 presentation of the [American Evolution Innovators Cup](#). On April 12 at the Jefferson Theater in Charlottesville, Virginia, entrepreneurial teams of college and university students from across Virginia will compete as they showcase their compelling business ideas.

Designed to cultivate the next generation of Virginia's entrepreneurial leaders, the Innovators Cup encourages Virginia students at the undergraduate and graduate level to submit their best business concepts. Students will compete for \$20,000 in prizes, mentorships with celebrated innovators, and collaborations with investors. A panel of high profile investors, including Steve Huffman, CEO and Cofounder of Reddit, will evaluate each submissions. The deadline to apply for the Innovators Cup is March 11, 2018.

"The Tom Tom Founders Festival is thrilled to be partnering with American Evolution to inspire and support the next generation of founders," said Paul Beyer, Founder and Executive Director of The Tom Tom Founders Festival. "The American Evolution Innovators Cup will showcase new, innovative ideas from future leaders in this state. This is an essential part of our Summit experience, which will feature legendary innovators like broadcaster Dan Rather and comedy icon John Cleese, alongside hundreds of aspiring entrepreneurs and civic leaders."

American Evolution will have a presence at various other Tom Tom Founders Festival events, which will be held in Charlottesville, VA, from April 9-15 and visitors are encouraged to stop by to learn more about 2019 Commemoration initiatives. American Evolution will have a tent at the Community Potluck on April 9 and at the Block Parties from April 13 to 15, as well as a lounge at the Jefferson Theater from April 11 to 13.

“We are immensely proud to partner with The Tom Tom Founders Festival and look forward to another momentous year of recognizing economic ingenuity and advancement in Virginia,” said Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the American Evolution. “Since the founding of our nation in the Virginia colony during the 1600s, the tradition of free enterprise has propelled the country forward, and with the Innovators Cup we are encouraging future generations of innovators.”

At this year’s festival, American Evolution will also announce plans for the 2019 Innovators Cup, which will encourage students to hone their business skills and gain a deeper understanding of the Commonwealth’s long history of innovation and entrepreneurship. The competition will culminate with a multi-day program for students at the 2019 Tom Tom Founders Festival and a robust American Evolution student track where young people can fully immerse themselves in the themes of the 2019 Commemoration.

The 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution commemorates the 400th 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.

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.

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.