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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**VIRGINIA'S 2019 COMMEMORATION, AMERICAN EVOLUTION™, PROMOTES  
ENTREPRENEURIALISM AND ANNOUNCES "INNOVATION ROAD" SERIES  
AT 2017 TOM TOM FESTIVAL**

*Innovation Road Event Series Will Feature Nation's Brightest  
and Most Innovative Startup Concepts*

**Jamestown, VA** (April 14, 2017) – This week, Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, AMERICAN EVOLUTION™, and leaders from its Entrepreneurialism and Innovation Committee explored the themes of Democracy, Diversity and Opportunity with speakers and attendees at the sixth annual Tom Tom Founder's Festival in Charlottesville, Virginia. The festival has made a name for itself as the region's premiere gathering for forward thinking and engagement with innovators and visionaries, and this year featured over 60 bands, 200 speakers and 400 community organizations.

At the festival, the 2019 Commemoration promoted the Commonwealth's long history of opportunity, innovation and entrepreneurship through sponsorship of the Youth Summit and the Founders Summit. Thursday's Youth Summit convened students, educators and civic leaders from across Virginia to hear inspirational stories from youth-driven speakers who participated in high energy challenges that inspire entrepreneurial problem solving. The Founder's Summit consisted of a series of exclusive workshops and small group discussions focusing on entrepreneurialism. As this year's festival concludes, 2019 Commemoration is looking ahead to future programming.

Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the 2019 Commemoration spoke at the Founder's Summit and announced "Innovation Road," a series of pitch events that will be held throughout the AMERICAN EVOLUTION™ 13 Colony Tour. These events will highlight some of the nation's brightest and most innovative startup concepts. In April 2019, Innovation Road will culminate in "Innovation Nation," which will be a focal point of the 2019 Tom Tom Founder's Festival. Innovation Nation will select several of the most promising startups featured over the course of Innovation Road and award financial prizes to those with the greatest potential.

"We are excited by the energy and innovation emanating from this year's Tom Tom Founders Festival, which showcase the Commonwealth's powerful and enduring entrepreneurial leadership," said Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the 2019 Commemoration. "Through our partnership with the Tom Tom Founders Festival AMERICAN EVOLUTION™ is amplifying 400 years of Virginia's successful enterprising history. Through Innovation Road and Innovation Nation we will continue to inspire and empower the innovators of today and tomorrow."

#### **ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN TOM TOM AND 2019 COMMEMORATION**

The 2019 Commemoration is working to promote events around the Virginia that exemplify the themes of Democracy, Diversity and Opportunity. The 2019 Commemoration is pleased to partner with Tom Tom and make the festival a signature event as the 2019 Commemoration seeks to promote Virginia's innovation ecosystem and honor its entrepreneurial and cultural leaders.

#### **ABOUT THE TOM TOM FOUNDATION AND THE FOUNDERS FESTIVAL**

The Tom Tom Foundation is the nonprofit organization that hosts the annual Tom Tom Founders Festival. Supporting high-impact events throughout the year, the Foundation seeks to empower the innovators whose creativity, entrepreneurial spirit, and dedication to community help ensure a better future for us all. Now in its sixth year, the action-packed Founders Festival is held during the week of April 13 (hometown hero Thomas Jefferson's birthday) in Charlottesville, VA. Featuring outstanding local music, art, and food, as well as high-stakes startup competitions and high-impact conversations with business, entrepreneurial, and academic and civic leaders, the event attracted 38,000 attendees in 2016. Learn more at [www.tomtomfest.com](http://www.tomtomfest.com).

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