



CONTACT
Robin Crawford
2019 Commemoration
robin.crawford@finnpartners.com
P: (202) 974-5025
C: (703) 966-7616

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**2019 COMMEMORATION, AMERICAN EVOLUTION LAUNCHES
“AMERICAN EVOLUTION STORIES” DIGITAL STORYTELLING PLATFORM**

*Site Encourages Virginians to Discover, Publish, and Share Personal Stories
About Virginia’s Rich History*

JAMESTOWN, Va. (August 6, 2018) – Today the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution launched [American Evolution Stories](#), a new digital storytelling platform that encourages Virginians and Americans to explore the many stories that have shaped our American Evolution and be inspired to share their own. The crowd-sourced website collects and preserves untold or under-told stories from the 400-year arc of history, from 1619 to today, and fosters conversations that contribute to telling a more inclusive and authentic narrative of Virginia and America’s history.

“Storytelling is central to American culture and we are inviting Virginians to engage with the American Evolution Stories platform and learn about fascinating stories that have shaped the last 400 years of Virginia and America’s history,” said Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution. “We also encourage Virginians to share their own stories with us as we work together to build a more inclusive and authentic historical narrative for the Commonwealth and our nation.”

Stories have the power to inspire, educate, motivate and challenge established thinking. The American Evolution Stories platform will build awareness of Virginia’s pivotal role over the past 400 years in shaping today’s America. Users can engage with the site as both a reader and a contributor. Given the diverse population of Virginia, which reflects all backgrounds, customs, beliefs and experiences, the American Evolution Stories platform will curate stories representing a panoply of American perspectives and experiences.

The American Evolution Stories platform is organized in three sections: Categories, Collections, and Communities. Stories in the Categories section correspond to the 20 trails in the [Virginia History Trails app](#). The Collections section offers stories reflecting the three key themes of the 2019 Commemoration: democracy, diversity and opportunity. Stories in the Communities section

include narratives from African Americans, Women, Emerging Leaders, and Civic Engagement. Virginians can submit their own stories on the American Evolution Stories platform through written word, video or audio recording.

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 1619 events set the state and the nation on a course towards the ideals of democracy, diversity and opportunity and include 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, the launch of free enterprise in the Commonwealth, and the first official English Thanksgiving in North America. For more information about the 2019 Commemoration and upcoming events, programs and educational initiatives visit AmericanEvolution2019.com.

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.

###