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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**VIRGINIA'S 2019 COMMEMORATION, AMERICAN EVOLUTION  
PARTNERS WITH BRITISH EMBASSY TO COMMEMORATE  
400TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY**

*HRH Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex; Virginia Senators Timothy Kaine and Mark Warner;  
Former Virginia Senator John Warner; Virginia Governor Ralph Northam;  
and Other Dignitaries Attend Washington, DC Event*

**JAMESTOWN, VA** (September 13, 2018) – The British Embassy in Washington, D.C., hosted a reception for Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution™ that recognized the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of representative democracy in America. The event was attended by HRH The Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex; British Ambassador Sir Kim Darroch; Senators Mark Warner (D-VA) Timothy Kaine (D-VA) and Roy Blunt (R-MO); former Virginia Senator, John Warner; Rep. George Holding (R-NC); Virginia Governor Ralph Northam; and former Virginia Governor George Allen. The reception highlighted significant moments over 400 years of shared history between the United States and the United Kingdom.

Democracy, diversity and opportunity are central themes of the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution™. The first representative legislative assembly in the New World took place on July 30, 1619, and planted the seed of representative democracy in America. This assembly brought 22 representatives from 11 Virginia "boroughs" to Jamestown for six days to develop and pass laws that evolved Virginia's colonial settlement beyond a commercial enterprise. The event at the British Embassy focused on the first legislative assembly's significance in paving the way for our country's system of democratic government.

"The American experience began in 1619 Virginia with the seeds of democracy planted by entrepreneurs and intrepid settlers. Nearly 400 years have passed since then, but those original settlers understood, as we do today, that allowing the creative capacities of everybody to flourish in an atmosphere of freedom and equality allows us to make great things, build great things, be great as individuals and also build a better economy and nation," said Senator Timothy Kaine. "The anniversaries that we commemorate in 1619 are significant and there are many important milestones that are part of this American Evolution, and they are all worth marking."

HRH The Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex delivered a brief speech at the reception. He said, "Being able to share the significant shared history between our two countries is important. Those events

and those people from 400 years ago, have shaped our story. And all of those bits and pieces along the way help us to explain how we got here, and why we got here.”

British Ambassador Kim Darroch said, “The UK and Virginia have a rich shared history that continues to endure today. Our continued close relationship encompasses national security and the economy. We have over 200 British military personnel embedded in the state, while British companies employ more than 30,000 Virginians and is the second largest export market for the state.”

“Democracy is an essential pillar of the 2019 Commemoration,” said Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution. “We are honored to partner with the British Embassy to recognize the first legislative assembly in the New World, led by Sir George Yeardley. Those six days in 1619 were fundamental to the survival and evolution of the Virginia Colony, and to the future of the United States. This shared history between Virginia and the United Kingdom created the foundation that shaped our nation.”

Over the next 14 months, American Evolution will host a series of signature events commemorating the 400th anniversary of several formative events that took place in 1619 Virginia, which have had an enduring impact on Virginia and America’s history. These important events set Virginia and America on a course towards the ideals of democracy, diversity and opportunity. For more information about the 2019 Commemoration and upcoming events, programs and educational initiatives visit [AmericanEvolution2019.com](http://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.

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