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## TOP EIGHT REASONS TO VISIT VIRGINIA IN 2019

### *Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution Shares Insights with Travel Professionals at Va-1 Trade Show*

Richmond, Va. (November 13, 2018) – Today, Virginia's 2019 Commemoration. American Evolution took center stage at VA-1, Virginia's premiere event for travel professionals and travel destinations. Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the 2019 Commemoration keynoted Tuesday's breakfast session and shared the *Top Eight Reasons to Visit Virginia in 2019*.

"If you ever wanted to visit Virginia, the time to do it is in 2019. This will be a spectacular year for the Commonwealth with attractions and events for everyone. American Evolution has worked with Virginia's most notable institutions, destinations, national partners, and leading corporations to amplify all that Virginia has to offer," said Kathy Spangler, Executive Director, 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution. "We have planned 365 days of programming to build awareness of Virginia's role in the creation of the United States and reinforce why Virginia is a top destination for history and heritage tourism."

The *Top Eight Reasons to Visit Virginia in 2019*:

1. [Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution](#) – The 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution has engaged every corner of the Commonwealth and generated visibility worldwide. The [official 2019 schedule](#) inspires local, national and international engagement in the themes of democracy, diversity and opportunity and showcases 400 years of Virginia and American history.
2. [Virginia History Trails App](#) – The recently launched, free, mobile app helps visitors navigate more than 200 sites and 400 stories from every corner of the Commonwealth. Virginia History Trails represents the 400-year arc of Virginia history and offers 20 themed trails each exploring an important part of Virginia and American History. The app's "near me" function helps visitors discover important history right where they are.

3. **365 Days of Special Exhibitions and Signature Events** – American Evolution, in partnership with leading Virginia institutions has developed a world-class series of special exhibitions for the commemorative year. Visitors can learn more about Virginia’s role in the creation of the United States and explore the enduring issues that have shaped our country.
4. **Explore the Origins of American Democracy** – July 30, 2019 is the 400th Anniversary of the first representative legislative assembly in North America. A 400th Anniversary Commemorative Ceremony will take place at Historic Jamestowne and Jamestown Settlement and the eyes of the nation will turn to Virginia as the home of American Democracy.
5. **400 years of African American History** – On August 23-25, 2019 we will commemorate the arrival of the first Africans in English North America. In partnership with the City of Hampton, Fort Monroe and the National Park Service, we will dedicate a new Visitor and Education Center.
6. **Women Who Changed Virginia And America** – In 1619 English women were recruited in significant numbers to the Virginia Colony. We will reflect upon the contributions of the three original cultures, Virginia Indian, English, and African, from a women’s perspective. The recently-opened exhibition, [TENACITY: Women of Jamestown and Early Virginia](#) at Jamestown Settlement, is one of many ways we are creating a lasting legacy for women’s role in Virginia and the American Evolution.
7. **50th Anniversary of The *Virginia Is for Lovers* Brand** – In partnership with Virginia Tourism Corporation we will amplify the *Virginia is for Lovers* 50th anniversary in 2019.
8. **Come Home to Virginia for The Statewide Customs, Cultures and Cuisine Festival** – The November 2019 American Evolution finale will be a month-long celebration across the Commonwealth that promotes Virginia’s customs, cultures and cuisines - region by region/community by community.

Ms. Spangler encouraged the public to engage with American Evolution through social media, the recently-launched [Virginia History Trails mobile app](#), and American Evolution Stories, the Commemoration’s [online storytelling platform](#). Ms. Spangler concluded her remarks with a [video](#).

During the 2019 commemorative American Evolution will host a series of more than 20 exhibitions, [featured events](#), [educational initiatives](#), and statewide campaigns that build awareness of Virginia’s role in the creation of the United States. American Evolution programming inspires local, national and international engagement in the campaign themes of

democracy, diversity and opportunity, and reinforces Virginia's leadership in education, tourism, and economic development.

2019 marks the 400th anniversary of pivotal 1619 Virginia events that forever changed the trajectory of Virginia and America's history. These 1619 events include the First Representative Legislative Assembly in the New World, the arrival of the first recorded Africans to English North America, the recruitment of English women in significant numbers to the Virginia colony, the first official English Thanksgiving in North America and the launch of free enterprise in the Commonwealth. For more information about American Evolution's 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 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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