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**VIRGINIA'S 2019 COMMEMORATION, AMERICAN EVOLUTION PARTNERS WITH
UNIVERSITIES FOR MULTIPLE LECTURE SERIES**

Universities to Host Lecture Series Commemorating 400 Years of Virginia History

Williamsburg, VA (February 13, 2019) – Virginia's [2019 Commemoration, American Evolution](#) has partnered with Virginia Commonwealth University, James Madison University, and George Mason University to sponsor a series of lectures aligned with the 2019 Commemoration's themes: democracy, diversity, and opportunity. Each of these events are free and open to the public and will cover one or more theme-related issues, to be presented by renowned speakers.

In conjunction with the American Evolution lecture series, the Humanities Research Center at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond is hosting a speaker series entitled [Virginia's Past, Present and Future](#). The series includes eight events taking place in 2019 with the objective of fostering an informed and constructive conversation about the events of 1619, the subsequent experience of Africans and African Americans in Virginia, British America, and the United States, and the continued impact of that history. The series also crucially addresses the possibilities for a future in which Americans can shed that legacy, building together a just and inclusive multi-racial society. The series will engage directly with America's changing relationship to its own diversity as it has journeyed over the past four hundred years toward becoming a more democratic society in which equal opportunity will be available to everyone.

The next lecture in the VCU series will be held on February 21, 2019. Entitled Race and Christianity in Early Virginia, the lecture will feature guest speaker Rebecca Goetz, Associate Professor of History, New York University, and author of *The Baptism of Early Virginia: How Christianity Created Race*. These and the remaining lectures are free of charge and open to the public.

George Mason University's Department of History and Art History in Fairfax will commemorate the 400th anniversary of 2019 with [three short, pop-up lectures](#) that explore the significance of 1619 in American history. The first lecture in their series will be held on March 20, 2019, entitled 1619: When Democracy Came to America, featuring Dr. Rosemarie Zagari, Professor of History at Mason and author of *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early American Republic*.

James Madison University has partnered with the 2019 Commemoration to host the [Madison Vision Series](#) that will bring renowned scholars, thinkers, and leaders to the Harrisonburg campus to help the JMU community engage with contemporary issues and to explore the relevance and importance of liberal arts and sciences to education. The next program will address opportunity and shall be presented on April 1, 2019 by Dr. Barbara Schaal, Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Sciences and Professor of Biology at Washington University in St. Louis.

Partner lecture series are a critical platform in fostering authentic and inclusive discussions related to the themes of democracy, diversity and opportunity and are part of the larger [2019 Commemoration](#) recognizing 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 entrepreneurship and innovation in the Commonwealth.

For more information about American Evolution's upcoming events, programs, and educational initiatives, visit [AmericanEvolution2019.com](#). You can also join in the conversation through social media (@Commemorate2019), the [Virginia History Trails mobile app](#), and [American Evolution Stories](#), the Commemoration's online storytelling platform.

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About the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution

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.