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## **VIRGINIA'S 2019 COMMEMORATION, AMERICAN EVOLUTION™ RECOGNIZES THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF VIRGINIA WOMEN DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**

**Jamestown, VA** (March 5, 2019) – This March, in recognition of Women's History Month, [Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution](#), is showcasing untold stories of women pioneers from across the Commonwealth over the last 400 years. 2019 marks the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the recruitment of English women in significant numbers to the Jamestown, VA colony.

"In March we honor 400 years of the accomplishments and struggles of the Commonwealth of Virginia's trailblazing women who indelibly influenced the course of Virginia and America's history," said Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution. "Through the American Evolution events and programs, we are exploring the diverse, untold stories and experiences of inspirational Virginia women from 1619 to today."

In November 1619, to establish permanency in the Virginia colony, 147 English women were recruited to join Jamestown's male settlers. The English settlers had experienced great hardship in the colony since 1607, and the Virginia Company officials recognized that the presence of women would be crucial to developing a stable and productive society. Not only did their arrival help colonists put down roots and form families, women also ensured survival by performing domestic work – brewing beer, making clothes, and preparing food. America's birthplace, the Jamestown colony, would not have survived without the brave Native American, African and English women whose stories are being told through American Evolution events, exhibitions and partner events.

In 2019, American Evolution is convening more than 20 events, programs, educational initiatives performances and exhibitions that showcase several key events from 400 years ago in 1619 Virginia, which set our nation on the course towards the ideals of democracy, diversity and opportunity. In addition to the recruitment of English women in significant numbers, these pivotal 1619 Virginia events include the first representative legislative assembly in the New World, the arrival of the first Africans to English North America, the first official English Thanksgiving in North America, and the development of the Virginia colony's entrepreneurial and innovative spirit. A full schedule of American Evolution programming can be found [here](#).

Upcoming 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution Women-focused signature events, exhibits and partner programs include:

- [Tenacity](#), November 10, 2018- January 5, 2020, Jamestown Settlement

This special yearlong exhibition explores captivating and little-known personal stories of women in Jamestown and the Virginia colony and their tenacious spirit and impact on a fledgling society. Discover the struggles that women faced in the New World and their contributions, from the arrival of the first English women in Virginia in 1608 and the Powhatan Indian women they encountered to the arrival of the first documented African woman in Virginia in 1619 and the influx of English women to the colony. From women's roles to women's rights, connect issues of the 17th century and their relevance today.

- [Women of Revolutionary Courage – Storytelling w/ Denise Bennett](#), **March 9, 2019, St. John's Church, Richmond, VA**

In this program, storyteller and musician Denise Bennett will share stories of women during the American Revolution including Richmond's Anna Maria Lane who followed her husband into war and fought beside him disguised as a man; Lydia Darraugh, written off by the British as a "poor little old lady" who was actually a spy; Mammy Kate, an enslaved woman who saved a Continental officer from execution by smuggling him out of prison in a laundry basket.

- [Global Status of Women and Girls Conference](#), **March 21-23, 2019, Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA**

The Global Status of Women and Girls is an interdisciplinary conference that uses the tools of the arts, humanities, social sciences, and other fields to address the challenges faced by women and girls around the world, both historically and today. The 2019 conference theme marks the 30th anniversary of Kimberlé Crenshaw's use of the term "intersectionality" as well as the 400th anniversary of the first Africans arriving in Hampton and the Jamestown Colony in 1619.

- [400th Anniversary of Virginia Company Brides for Planters in 1619](#), **October 5, 2019, Henricus Historical Park, Henricus, VA**

In 1619, the Virginia Company of London began the recruitment and transport of young women who contracted to marry Virginia planters. Women in large numbers would ensure a permanent colony for the English. Our event will demonstrate through lectures and living history the contributions this cadre of women would bring to the success of Virginia.

- ["Voices from the Garden" Women's Monument Dedication Event](#), **October 14, 2019, Capitol Square, Richmond, VA**

The first-in-the-nation monument dedicated to women on state capitol grounds will be in Virginia. The dedication ceremony will recognize the full range of women's achievements by honoring 12 historic Virginia women enshrined by the monument. The dedication ceremony will be held on Columbus Day and be open to the public. Join us for a ceremony that honors 400 years of women.

- [Women's Achieve Summit](#), **October 14-15, 2019, Richmond, VA**

Join the Commemoration for a two-day multi-faceted, interactive summit to honor women 400 years ago, today, and in the future. The focus of each day will be unique; on the first day, Women's Legacy in America and the second day, A Vision of the Future of Women in America. On both days, participants will engage (attending and online) in conversations regarding the role

of women in all aspects of society, business, and community, and the power of women's involvement and sensibilities.

**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 Energy is an American Evolution Founding Partner and Altria Group and TowneBank are Virginia Colony Partners.

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