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VIRGINIA'S 2019 COMMEMORATION, AMERICAN EVOLUTION INVITES ALL AMERICANS TO "COME HOME TO VIRGINIA" FOR NOVEMBER CUSTOMS, CULTURES, AND CUISINE FESTIVAL

State-wide, month-long festival includes American Evolution signature events, festivals and special programming

Jamestown, VA (October 29, 2019) – In November, Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution will host a series of events and programs across the Commonwealth in its [Customs, Cultures, and Cuisine Festival](#). Presented by TowneBank, the premier events, festivals and special programming will draw on 400 years of Virginia's unique history and culture. The festival is timed to coincide with the 400th anniversary of the first official Thanksgiving in English North America, which occurred in Virginia in 1619. This month-long, statewide festival will serve as a momentous capstone to the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution.

Many people are unaware that Virginia is the true home of America's first English Thanksgiving, though scholars and U.S. Presidents have recognized the Commonwealth's role in hosting this significant tradition. In 1619, a group of English settlers arrived safely in Charles City, Virginia and held a ceremony of Thanksgiving for safe passage across the Atlantic, which was to be observed "annually and perpetually" thereafter.

"We invite Americans from across the nation to come home to Virginia this November to enjoy and participate in the many events and special programs the Commonwealth has planned to commemorate 400 years of Virginia's unique history and culture," said Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution. "In honor of the 400th anniversary of the first official English Thanksgiving, American Evolution is taking back the spirit of Thanksgiving by partnering with area food banks to ensure that no Virginian goes hungry during the holiday season this year."

Find your local food bank or make an online donation [here](#).

The upcoming Customs, Cultures, and Cuisine signature events will include:

- **[Sampling the Centuries: Virginia's Food Firsts](#), November 2, Richmond, VA**
The 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution has partnered with Richmond's Fire, Flour & Fork, named one of the top three food festivals in the nation by *USA Today*, for Sampling the Centuries: Virginia's Food Firsts. Enjoy a bountiful journey from the 1600s into the future, all in one night. Tickets are now on sale. Please visit the Fire, Flour & Fork website [here](#) to purchase.
- **[Virginia Thanksgiving Festival](#), November 3, Charles City, VA**

Upon safe arrival at Berkeley Hundred on December 4, 1619, a group of English settlers held a ceremony of Thanksgiving, which was to be observed annually and perpetually. The Virginia Thanksgiving Festival event showcases cultural performances and a reenactment of the first official English Thanksgiving in North America. Join us for the yearly celebration of culture, togetherness, and 400 years of Thanksgiving.

- **[10th Biennial Conference, ASWAD \(Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora\), November 5-9, Williamsburg, VA](#)**

This conference will feature cutting-edge scholarship, cultural events, film festivals, and excursions to local historical sites that highlight and celebrate the global dimensions of the African Diaspora and the centrality of black people worldwide to the making of the modern world.

- **[Fanfare to the Military & Democracy, November 9, Virginia Beach, VA](#)**

The 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution is partnering with the Virginia Arts Festival to present an unforgettable concert featuring the best of the U.S. military bands on November 9, 2019 at the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts in Virginia Beach.

- **[Pocahontas Reframed Storytellers Film Festival, November 21-24, Richmond, VA](#)**

The Pocahontas Reframed Storytellers Film Festival stems from a passion and desire for indigenous languages, cultures, and societies to thrive. The Festival strives to bring together artists, authors, filmmakers, and actors willing to share, teach, and explain their creativity and history. The Festival includes Native American-affiliated classic and recently released films that have been official selections of world-renowned festivals including the Sundance Film Festival, the South by Southwest Film Festival, and the Toronto International Film Festival. Join the commemoration in honoring Native American culture.

The Customs, Cultures and Cuisine Festival will feature more than 40 statewide events across Virginia. To find events in your area, please visit AmericanEvolution2019.com/CCC.

The Customs, Cultures and Cuisine Festival is a signature event of Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution. As a part of the 1619 commemorative year, American Evolution has partnered with Virginia institutions and national partners to convene more than 20 events, programs, educational initiatives performances and exhibitions that showcase significant historical events that occurred 400 years ago in Virginia. These 1619 events set our nation on a course towards the ideals of democracy, diversity and opportunity. For more information about American Evolution's upcoming events and programs, visit: <https://www.americanevolution2019.com/>

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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.