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**QUEEN LATIFAH, SENATOR MARK WARNER, MIKA BRZEZINSKI AND OTHERS CONVENE TO
HONOR 400 YEARS OF WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENTS AT THE 2019 COMMEMORATION,
AMERICAN EVOLUTION WOMEN'S ACHIEVE SUMMIT IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

Richmond, VA (October 16, 2019) – Yesterday, [Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution](#) presented the **Women's Achieve Summit** at the Greater Richmond Convention Center in Richmond, VA. Queen Latifah, and honorary co-host Virginia Senator Mark Warner were joined by featured keynote speaker Mika Brzezinski, journalist and co-host of MSNBC's Morning Joe. In addition, Pamela Northam, First Lady of Virginia, and other notable female business leaders, politicians, soldiers, activists and more than 1,400 guests came together in this event honoring 400 years of the accomplishments of Virginian and American women.

Women's Achieve Summit Host Queen Latifah kicked off the event with inspiring words of women empowerment. "I'm so happy to be your host today. Today's summit is one of the signature events of the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution. All year Virginia's been telling authentic stories of 400 years of democracy, diversity and opportunity in American. Women have not always been invited to participate in that democracy, oh but we in it now and we are here to celebrate that today. We are actresses, we are astronauts, we are journalists, business owners, soldiers, educators, but what we all have in common is we are women and we are committed to a better future for our communities, Virginia, and of course, the world."

The panels at the Women's Achieve Summit included *"Speed Date' with Senator Mark R. Warner,"* *"Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Women Trailblazers,"* featuring Sgt. Monica Beltran, Virginia National Guard, Bronze Star and Purple Heart Recipient; Connie Nyholm, Owner and CEO of Virginia International Raceway; Chief Anne Richardson, Chief of the Rappahannock Tribe; and Rynthia Rost, Vice President of Public Affairs at GEICO, *"Innovation and Entrepreneurship,"* featuring panelists Jay Ell Alexander, Founder and CEO of The Vaughn Strategy and of Black Girls RUN!; and Shannon Siriano, Founder of Rebelle Con & the Rebelle Community, and *"Stepping into Public Life and Beyond: A Conversation with Virginia First Ladies,"* featuring Susan Allen, Former First Lady of Virginia and Pamela Northam, First Lady of Virginia.

Summit keynote speaker Mika Brzezinski shared advice on knowing your value. "Know it. Grow it. Share it. And play the long game." On knowing your brand, Brzezinski said "Before tomorrow's over be able to say what your value is and what you bring to the table in 20 seconds or less. You have to know what it is you bring to the table, what you're excited about, what your passionate about, and practice putting it into words."

The Women's Achieve Summit also hosted the first-ever **"Well-behaved women seldom make history" Story Slam**. Four Virginia women, Tee Marie Hanible, Carrienne Polo, Pam Mines, and Lisa Renshaw, shared compelling stories about history-making, rule-breaking moments in their lives in a story-slam style commentary.

Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution, told the crowd "We've been planning for four years to have you join us to commemorate and celebrate 400 years of women's achievements and impacts – this is for you."

The full list of speakers at the Women's Achieve Summit includes:

- Queen Latifah, Summit Host
- Senator Mark Warner
- Mika Brzezinski, journalist and co-host of MSNBC's show Morning Joe
- Pamela Northam, First Lady of Virginia
- Susan Allen, Former First Lady of Virginia
- Wendy Lawrence, former NASA - National Aeronautics and Space Administration astronaut & U.S. Navy Captain
- Sergeant Monica Beltran, Virginia National Guard, Bronze Star & Purple Heart Recipient
- Eboni K. Williams, Attorney, best-selling author and television personality
- Irma Becerra, President, Marymount University
- Deborah Jewell-Sherman, Professor of Practice at the Harvard Graduate School of Education; Former Superintendent of the Richmond Public Schools
- Nancy Redd, Miss Virginia 2003, author, speaker on women's body image and founding host of HuffPost Live
- Connie Nyholm, Owner and CEO of Virginia International Raceway
- Anne Richardson, Chief of the Rappahannock Tribe
- Rynthia Rost, Vice President of Public Affairs, GEICO
- Jay Ell Alexander, Founder and CEO of The Vaughn Strategy, and of Black Girls RUN!
- Shannon Siriano, Founder of Rebelle Con & the Rebelle Community
- Kathy Spangler, Executive Director, 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution
- Tee Marie Hanible, Story-slam speaker
- Pam Mines, Story-slam speaker
- Carrienne Polo, Story-slam speaker
- Lisa Renshaw, Story-slam speaker

The Women's Achieve Summit is a signature event of Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, American Evolution and was timed to coincide with the 400th anniversary of the recruitment of English women in significant numbers in the Virginia Colony. As a part of the 1619 commemorative year, American Evolution has convened more than 20 events, programs, educational initiatives performances and exhibitions that showcase key events from 400 years ago in 1619 Virginia, which set our nation on a course towards the ideals of democracy, diversity and opportunity. For more information about the upcoming American Evolution events and programs, please 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.