



Commemoration Priorities - Narrative

Updated April 1, 2019

I. K-12 & Education Initiatives

- A. **Distance Learning:** Throughout the 2020 Commemoration, VMHC will connect with students across the Commonwealth virtually through its award-winning distance learning program, *HistoryConnects*. These 45-minute interactive classroom lessons will focus on women as agents of change in Virginia's history and make use of dozens of primary resources. Programs will be offered free of charge and will be designed to cover content and skills articulated in Virginia Department of Education's Standards of Learning. [measurables: number of programs, number of classrooms, number of students]
- B. **Virginia History Day:** This statewide social studies contest for 4th through 12th graders will provide educators and students with project-based learning opportunities that can be tailored to women's history in Virginia as it relates to the 2020 *National History Day* theme, "Breaking Barriers." Awards will be given at the district and state contests to the projects that exemplify quality scholarship on the women who have made a difference in Virginia. [measurables: number of students doing History Day in the classroom, number competing, number doing projects related to women's history]
- C. **Teacher Resources:** The VMHC and LVA will digitally distribute resource packets and lesson plans highlighting primary and secondary sources from VMHC and LVA collections. These resource packets can be used in conjunction with a visit to the exhibit at VMHC, LVA, other historic sites within the Commonwealth, or as standalone activities in the classroom. Educators who register for VMHC's *HistoryConnects* programs will be provided additional pre- and post-activity materials to enhance their experience. All materials will align with the Virginia Department of Education's Standards of Learning. [measurables: number of teachers receiving the materials; number of schools with access to the materials]
- D. **Teacher Institutes:** The VMHC and LVA will coordinate professional development opportunities for K-12 educators focused on the history and legacy of women in Virginia. Educators will acquire content knowledge as well as learn how to teach their students to analyze primary sources and use historical thinking skills. [measurables: number of teachers who attend]
- E. **Onsite Programs:** Students, teachers, and chaperones across Virginia will have access to free field trips to VMHC and LVA. These immersive learning experiences will engage students of all ages (PreK-12) in the new exhibit and the 2020 themes of civic responsibility, women's history, and full suffrage. [measurables: number of students, teachers, and chaperones who attend]

II. Civic Engagement

- A. Voter Registration Drives:** The VMHC will work with the League of Women Voters of Virginia, and other like-minded organizations, to incorporate voter registration drives into our existing portfolio of patriotic events and the August 2020 commemorative event at the museum. In addition, VMHC will facilitate voter registration drives at venues across the state that will host the 2020 Commemoration's traveling exhibitions. [measurables: number of registration drives, number of potential registrants]
- B. Events Across the Commonwealth:** In conjunction with the commemoration's traveling panel exhibits, VMHC will partner with host venues to develop opening events with guest speakers, as well as local and state representatives, to highlight women's history and the invaluable role that women have played in the evolution of the Commonwealth. [measurables: number events, number of guests that attend]
- C. Patriotic Events:** Through the course of the 2020 Commemoration, VMHC will coordinate meaningful public events to honor women's history. These events will include Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Veterans Day, as well as an event to mark the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment's ratification in August 2020. [measurables: number of guests who attend]
- D. Special Commemorative Publications:** The *Virginia Magazine of History & Biography (VMHB)* is one of the oldest history publications in the nation. It has continuously published articles and reviews of Virginia and southern history uninterrupted for more than 125 years. It's readership spans state, national, and international audiences. Like past commemorations, Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War, WWI Centennial Commemoration, and American Evolution 2019 Commemoration, the *VMHB* will distribute a special commemorative edition devoted to the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commemoration. A special foreword will include a description of the centennial commemoration and a series of articles and book reviews will follow creating a commemorative keepsake for readers. LVA has contracted with The History Press to publish a book early in 2020, written principally by Brent Tarter and Mari Julienne, about the League of Women Voters in Virginia. The Library's book will be reviewed in the commemorative edition of the *VMHB* to help promote the story to a broader audience. [measurables: number of books distributed]
- E. Collecting Initiative:** To mark this important commemoration, and ensure it has a lasting impact, VMHC will lead a collecting initiative to gather new items that help document and tell the story of women as agents of change throughout Virginia's history and related social and political activism. This pro-active effort will focus on the acquisition of materials and oral histories documenting inspirational stories that will be made accessible to future generations for research, exhibition, and online in digital format. [measurables: number of items collected and digitized]

III. Economic Development & Tourism

- A. **Themed Exhibitions:** Two special exhibits will be mounted during the commemoration, one at LVA and the other at VMHC:

VMHC: *Agents of Change: Female Activism in Virginia from Women's Suffrage to Today* (March 14, 2020 – September 27, 2020) celebrates a century of women's social and political activism in the Commonwealth. This exhibition highlights the efforts and impact of a selection of female change-makers in Virginia, including suffragists, office holders, community organizers, educators, and social reformers. Using a range of strategies and working for a diverse array of causes, these women brought about positive change in their communities, the Commonwealth, and the nation. They also created new models of female empowerment and new opportunities for women—ultimately fostering a more inclusive and equal society. *Agents of Change* will feature artifacts from the museum's vast collections, including new acquisitions, along with interpretive texts and multimedia content. The exhibition will engage and inspire museum guests with the stories of many heretofore unheralded Virginia women who have been agents of change. [measurables: visits to the exhibit]

LVA: *Votes for Women* (January 13, 2020 – December 5, 2020) will reveal how a remarkable group of women created a statewide organization and political pressure to advocate for women's right to vote. They united various strains of the Progressive Movement into the largest women's organization in the state to that time. The local and state leaders of the suffrage movement in Virginia came from varied backgrounds in different regions of the state and combined their efforts on behalf of extending democracy to the state's women. They held parades, rallies at the state capitol, spoke to crowds on street corners, distributed literature on women's suffrage, staffed booths at state and county fairs, lobbied legislators and congressmen, and even went to jail. In 1920, having won the right to vote, those women transformed themselves into the nonpartisan League of Women Voters in Virginia. Virginia suffragists were a remarkable group of talented and dedicated women who have almost all been forgotten. At the centenary of women's suffrage, those women and their important achievements and contributions to all the people of Virginia can be recognized for the first time. [measurables: visits to the exhibit]

- B. **Traveling Panel Exhibitions:** To amplify the impact of the Women's Centennial Commemoration, VMHC and LVA will organize traveling panel exhibitions complementing their large, special exhibitions. Both traveling exhibitions will be available to libraries, museums, tourism welcome centers, and other venues beginning in the Spring 2020. Venues will be encouraged to host both exhibitions, one after the other.
- C. **Online Calendar of Women's History Events:** To promote this meaningful anniversary, VMHC will create a dedicated landing page for the commemoration, VirginiaHistory.org/2020. On this page, visitors will find details of the commemoration, its task force and sponsors, and will feature a comprehensive calendar of statewide events. The museum's homepage will prominently feature a link to this commemoration page, and we will encourage other participating venues to link to it as well. [measurables: visits to the landing page]