VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF HISTORY & CULTURE

District 4 Winners to Compete with Hundreds of Students on Virginia History Day
at the Virginia Museum of History & Culture

Richmond, VA — First and second place winners from the District 4 history contest in Charlottesville will advance to compete with hundreds of students in the statewide contest known as Virginia History Day on April 21, 2018, at the Virginia Museum of History & Culture in Richmond. Virginia History Day, a massive history competition for students in grades six through twelve, is directed in conjunction with the National History Day Contest.

"We are honored to host Virginia History Day, and excited to provide a permanent home in Richmond for this statewide program," said Virginia Museum of History & Culture's President and CEO, Jamie O. Bosket. "Encouraging students of the Commonwealth to learn and appreciate our shared history is at the very heart of our mission."

Social studies was the spotlight at the Charlottesville contest, which took place on March 6, at UVA's Curry School of Education. 144 middle and high schoolers from nine area schools submitted exhibits, websites, papers, documentaries, and performance pieces. Fifty-four students from six schools placed to advance to the statewide competition. Their projects covered a wide range of topics, from the creation of Shenandoah National Park to the history of the Magna Carta. Participants came from Frederick Country Middle School, Sherando High School, Robert E. Lee High School, Admiral Richard E. Byrd Middle School, William Monroe Middle School, Western Albemarle High School, Buford Middle School, Stonewall Jackson High School, and Robert E. Aylor Middle School. The competition took place in partnership with the Curry School of Education, Monticello, Greene County, Albemarle County Public Schools, and the Virginia Museum of History & Culture.

After Virginia History Day, the top two entries in each project category from both the Junior and Senior divisions will advance to the national contest. Founded in 1974, the National History Day Contest was created to inspire students to conduct original historical research. Since its creation, the contest has grown into an international competition with more than half-a-million participants and thousands of dollars in scholarship awards and prizes annually. According to an independent study in 2011, students who participate in the National History Day Contest are better prepared for college, careers, and citizenship. They also outperform their peers in areas including communication, planning, research, and perseverance.

"Creating a project for the National History Day Contest is challenging. It requires hard work and dedication. But, it also provides great reward," said Dr. Cathy Gorn, National History Day® Executive Director. "The skills of conducting research and recognizing credible sources are crucial to increasing civic engagement in young people."

The national contest will be held at the University of Maryland, College Park in June. The theme of this year's competition is "Conflict and Compromise in History." Students are encouraged to examine their topic's influence on history and draw conclusions about the ways in which it had an impact on the course of events and on individuals, communities, nations, and the world.

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Photo 1: William Monroe Middle School students from Greene County. Photo by Stephanie Hammer.
Photo 2: Students from Western Albemarle High School at the District 4 Virginia History Day Awards Ceremony at the UVA Curry School of Education. Photo by Elizabeth Mulcahy.