



VIRGINIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Story of Virginia

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Virginia Historical Society Announces the Story of Virginia Campaign \$38 million effort puts learning at the heart of the VHS mission

Richmond, VA—The Virginia Historical Society (VHS) is launching the public phase of its \$38 million Story of Virginia Campaign.

As of today, more than \$30 million has already been committed to the campaign.

Dr. Paul A. Levenson, VHS president and CEO, said “This is not a traditional bricks and mortar campaign. Rather, its goal is to put learning at the heart of the Virginia Historical Society’s mission and to make smarter use of our existing space.”

The new campaign has three elements:

- \$20 million for capital projects, including the renovation of all public space on the main level, a larger *Story of Virginia* long term exhibition, the creation of a pedestrian-friendly Boulevard plaza, a new south entrance with better accessibility and visibility for our visitors entering the main doors from the south, and the reorganization of existing space on the ground floor to create a multi-classroom learning center with a new, dedicated entrance;
- \$8 million for programs, including a website redesign, more digitized content online, processing and cataloging projects to make the research collection accessible through a single search solution, and support for existing programs;
- \$10 million for endowment, to sustain the 183-year-old VHS well into the future.

The Story of Virginia Campaign is designed to help the VHS refresh portions of its existing facility—such as the restoration of the Charles Hoffbauer Memorial Military Murals that have graced the walls of the original 1912 structure for over a century—and to maximize the existing footprint of the building. This will allow for the display of more of the collections as well as hosting more and larger special events and lectures.

(more)





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Glavé & Holmes Architecture designed the new space, and the Whiting-Turner Contracting Company will conduct the renovations. The Richmond Commission of Architectural Review has approved the plans.

A prime focus is creating a learning center to meet the growing demand for VHS history programs. Pamela R. Seay, VHS vice president for institutional advancement, said “Our vital, expanding education mission will be accommodated by converting a portion of our ground-floor book storage area to compact shelving. This will free up 5,000 square feet, five times the space of our existing classroom, for the creation of a new learning center that will serve all our teachers, students, adult learners, researchers and scholars. The additional space also will provide a studio for *HistoryConnects*, the Society’s distance learning initiative using interactive video conferencing and web platforms to deliver educational programming across the world.”

E. Claiborne Robins, Jr., chairman of the VHS board of trustees frames the campaign in this way, “The ideas, accomplishments and struggles of Virginians have shaped both American and world history. The Story of Virginia Campaign is about connecting people to the American past through those stories of Virginians.”

The Boulevard entrance to the VHS is closed while construction is underway. The Library and Museum Shop remain open. Visitors may access the building Monday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to research, shop and attend a variety of programs. The construction work, to begin in February and to be completed in phases over the next eighteen months, will be sequenced so that the building will remain open during the process. Architectural renderings of the project are available on request.

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The **Virginia Historical Society** (VHS)—a privately funded nonprofit organization—collects, preserves, and interprets the Commonwealth’s history, linking past with present to inspire future generations. Visitors may connect with the 8.5 million objects in the VHS collection through the research library, a variety of programs, and a recently redesigned website to learn more about the unparalleled story of Virginia. Exciting plans are underway to expand and improve VHS exhibitions in 2014 to offer visitors a better experience. The transformation of gallery spaces will create even more vibrant, accessible, and engaging gateways to America’s past. The VHS is located at 428 North Boulevard in Richmond’s Museum District. Admission is free. Hours are Monday–Saturday 10 a.m.–5 p.m. for the library, museum shop and a variety of programs. The VHS is closed on Sunday. For more information, call (804) 358-4901, visit www.vahistorical.org, or connect with the VHS on Facebook and Twitter.

