

Virginia Museum of History & Culture Receives Large Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services

Richmond, VA — The Virginia Museum of History & Culture (VMHC) is pleased to announce that they have been awarded a highly competitive grant of nearly \$200,000 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). This substantial IMLS CARES Grant will allow the VMHC to continue its focused efforts to tell more inclusive stories and provide greater access to rich historical content to all Virginians and beyond. Working in partnership with the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia (BHMVA), the VMHC will catalog, digitize and provide public access to – both in person and online – select historical images and artifacts from the BHMVA’s collection.

Since announcing a long-term collaboration with the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia last year, the two organizations have been actively working toward their shared project goals. Taking advantage of VMHC’s extensive collections storage facilities, staff expertise, and related digital tools, this creative alliance will dramatically amplify critical, mission-related work at both organizations.

“This tremendous grant will accelerate our growing relationship with the Black History Museum and the work we have planned together,” said VMHC President and CEO Jamie Bosket, “generations stand to benefit from this innovative collaboration, and we hope it will be yet another sign of the VMHC’s sincere commitment to play a stronger part our community and be a more vibrant cultural asset for this Commonwealth and all its people.”

This is the first federal grant from IMLS that the VMHC has received in nearly two decades. The VMHC was selected from 1,701 qualified applications and is one of only 68 awards in the nation and one of only 14 recipients in Virginia. In addition to supporting the cataloging and digitization of BHMVA collections, this grant will provide partial underwriting for designated VMHC and BHMVA staff over the next two years.

“Both the BHMVA and VMHC will mutually benefit from this project,” said Adele Johnson, Executive Director of the BHMVA. “Our mission at the BHMVA is to preserve stories that inspire! And our long-term partnership will allow both institutions to sustain and maximize our existing staff and infrastructure, enhance collections growth and preservation, and expand and prioritize public engagement – particularly in underserved audiences – with artifacts and stories relevant to the Black community that have helped shape our nation and our world.”

The IMLS is an independent federal organization which advances, supports and empowers America’s museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research and policy development. The IMLS CARES Act Grants supports the role of museums and libraries in responding to the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic’s widespread impact has changed how museums and libraries engage with their communities, but all continue to provide information, education, support, entertainment and numerous other resources. The IMLS is dedicated to supporting this critical work and help stabilize these organizations now and for the future.

The Virginia Museum of History & Culture is owned and operated by the Virginia Historical Society – a private, non-profit organization established in 1831. The historical society is the oldest cultural organization in Virginia, and one of the oldest and most distinguished history organizations in the nation. For use in its state history museum and its renowned research library, the historical society cares for a collection of nearly nine million items representing the ever-evolving story of Virginia. For more information visit www.VirginiaHistory.org.

The Black History Museum & Cultural Center of Virginia celebrates the rich culture of African American people in Virginia and shares their stories to provide a more complete and inclusive history of their contributions to the American story. For more information visit www.blackhistorymuseum.org.

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