Remembering and recollection are a constant of the human experience. Looking back on the year, I’m reminded of all the challenges experienced, accomplishments made, and the emotions that have been a part of this time: anticipation, regret, sadness, happiness, and love. I also think about how important human connections and relationships are in getting us through these moments and preparing us for changes ahead.

The thread of human connection is sewn into the fabric of this issue of Views, and that thread makes up the core of all that Virginia Humanities does. In fact, with so many uninspiring definitions of the humanities out there, perhaps what Virginia Humanities actually does can be best understood as a study of relationships across time: with ourselves, with one another, with our built and natural environments.

When I think about centering human connection, David Bearinger’s name jumps immediately to mind because he has made that his life’s work. As David brings his four-decades-long chapter at Virginia Humanities to a close this year, we look back at his career here and to the relationships he has built with communities across the commonwealth by showing up as a listener, colleague, and supporter of their work and lives. Like a priest to the gospel, David’s calling is the humanities; it is a part of his DNA. I invite you to join us in wishing him a fond farewell but know that this will not be goodbye.

With David’s departure, we also have new colleagues to welcome such as Katy Clune, the new State’s Folklorist and Director of our Virginia Folklife Program. Over the last twenty years, the Virginia Folklife Program has helped build and deepen relationships between artists, craftspeople, and living tradition bearers. Under her new direction, Katy looks ahead and describes her exciting vision for the future that supports these past connections and creates new ways to help Virginia folkways flourish.

Speaking of history, the City of Danville occupies a critical yet often overlooked place in Virginia’s civil rights story. It was the “Last Capital of the Confederacy.” It could also be argued that Danville is where the end of Virginia’s Reconstruction began in the aftermath of the 1883 Danville Massacre. The city is also the site of “Bloody Monday,” after a civil rights demonstration on June 10, 1963, where police turned clubs and firehoses on participants. Our colleague, Karice Luck explores the critical significance of the City of Danville’s recent addition to the U.S. Civil Rights Trail and the people and residents—past and present—who have worked for that recognition for so long.

Finally, in this issue you’ll learn how we’ve been shifting our fellowship program to more actively reach educational audiences and people who have not been able to get past support because of institutional barriers. You will read how thanks to a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Encyclopedia Virginia is embarking on exciting work to center new perspectives about the American Revolution and the nation’s founding. And author and Encyclopedia media editor Donna Lucey gives you her critic’s choice of the four favorite images she has curated over her thirteen-year career here. You will learn how our With Good Reason and Virginia Folklife programs collaborated to highlight community connections around food and how With Good Reason helped share the story of the Monacan Nation’s fight to save Rassawek. And last, but not least, you will hear how our American Rescue Plan grants helped cultural partners across the state thrive while emerging from COVID-19 restrictions.

I hope you enjoy and learn from these stories. Your support and connection with Virginia Humanities is what makes so much of this work possible.

In friendship,
Matthew Gibson
Executive Director
The Monacan Nation’s fight to preserve the historic site of their capital, Rassawek.

What does the next chapter of the Virginia Folklife Program hold?

The “Last Capital of the Confederacy” receives national recognition for its role in the fight for civil rights.

A look back at David Bearinger’s time at Virginia Humanities.

Virginia Folklife Futures and With Good Reason team up to explore Virginia foodways.
The Chiefest Town Saved

BY NINA WILDER

First identified on John Smith’s 1612 Map of Virginia, Rassawek was once considered “the chiefest town” in the Monacan territory, to which all other towns paid tribute. Researchers throughout the last century have continually verified the site’s location and historical importance, estimating that Monacans occupied Rassawek beginning 4,730 years ago and that extensive human burials still remain beneath the land’s surface.

In 2017, the James River Water Authority (JRWA)—a joint venture between Louisa and Fluvanna counties—announced its plan to build a raw water intake, pump station, and pipeline at the confluence of the James and Rivanna Rivers, the same site where this historic capital of the Monacan Indian Nation, was located. Upon learning of the JRWA’s plans for the site, the Monacan Nation immediately jumped into action, demanding the consideration of feasible alternative routes for the project. For Tribal Chief Kenneth Branham, the biggest question was not if Rassawek would be saved—it was when.

“If you know any Monacan Indians, you know we won’t give up on something once we’ve set our minds to doing it,” Chief Branham said. “We’re here and we’re not going anywhere.”

In the summer of 2020, at a moment when widespread public support for the preservation of Rassawek was critical, Virginia Humanities’ radio show With Good Reason (WGR) produced an episode highlighting the issue and its significance for the Monacan Nation. WGR interviewed Jeffery L. Huntman, author of Monacan Millennium; Martin Gallivan, author of James River Chiefdoms; Justin Curtis, lawyer for the JRWA; and Chief Branham. The WGR episode was one meaningful show of support among thousands that summer: When the Army Corps of Engineers solicited public comments on the JRWA’s permit application, more than 12,000 individuals and dozens of institutions voiced their opposition to the project, including most of the 574 federally recognized Indigenous tribes in the U.S.

Finally, in March 2022, the JRWA unanimously voted to abandon its plan to build a waterway through Rassawek. Instead, the authority selected an alternative route proposed by the Monacan Nation located two miles from the historic site, which will have significantly less impact on the tribe’s cultural heritage. “A site like Rassawek is not just Monacan history—it’s Virginia history,” Chief Branham said. “And once you lose it, you can’t get it back.”

Now, without the threat of destruction looming over it, Chief Branham is looking toward Rassawek’s future. The tribe’s first step will be to secure ownership of as much of the site as possible—a transfer supported by the majority of the area’s landowners, including the JRWA. In order to prevent more skirmishes over the site’s preservation, Chief Branham predicts the land will then be entered into a trust with the federal government. Though the Monacan Nation has yet to decide on a specific outcome for the site, the Chief promises that whatever comes next for Rassawek will be special.

“We’ve just got to get the land before we can do anything with it,” he said with a laugh.
WHAT MAKES A FACT TRUE?

BY MEGGAN THOMAS

How are we informed, and why does it matter? What makes news local? How do lived experiences get fact-checked? For that matter, what makes a fact true? These questions are at the heart of the symbiotic relationship between journalism and the humanities. Both share a goal to surface well-researched stories of public interest and concern within our communities. Those who study the humanities rely on the news, as we all do, to be a critical recorder of the events, people, and moments that make up our lives.

But, how does journalism depend on the humanities? The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation surely had this question in mind when they awarded forty-nine statewide humanities councils—including Virginia Humanities—funds to create programs that examine the connections between democracy, the humanities, journalism, and an informed citizenry. Administered by the Federation of State Humanities Councils, this nationally funded effort is titled Democracy and the Informed Citizen.

Through these programs, we learned how threats to journalism are threats to us all. Each of us has a role to play by supporting our local newspaper and taking a more active role in our own media literacy. Otherwise, Richmond Times-Dispatch columnist Michael Paul Williams says “it’s going to be like that Joni Mitchell song Big Yellow Taxi, that you don’t know what you’ve got ‘til it’s gone.”

What’s left ringing in our ears from these conversations are the questions: What are journalists doing to bring people together? How can newspapers maintain their independence? What are the forces driving journalism’s future? Asked by the audience, the panelists, and moderators, these questions and the ongoing conversations they spark may be the lasting impact of these programs.

Investigative and explanatory journalism is a bedrock of journalism. It needs to be done in order to support our understanding of how governments work. I think we need to do a better job as journalists to get those stories to people and we have to find a way to be transparent in that, so that people trust that what they’re reading from us makes sense, is fair, is balanced, and is accurate.” -Chris Tyree, Virginia Center of Investigative Journalism

For a sample of the programing that made up this five-year initiative check out...

On the Beat: Local Journalism, Truth, and Democracy | Oct 2018
VaHumanities.org/2018/10/on-the-beat/

Hard News | March 2020
WithGoodReasonRadio.org/episode/hard-news/

The Critical Role of Local Journalism | March 2022
VaBook.org/2022/03/17/the-critical-role-of-local-journalism/

What Makes a Fact True | May 2022
YouTube.com/watch?v=UR7tfqWcRNA

Opposite: The Virginia Newspaper Project is sponsored and headquartered at the Library of Virginia.
Photo courtesy the Library of Virginia

PUBLIC LAW 94-201, 94TH CONGRESS, H. R. 6673, JANUARY 2, 1976

Isha M. Renta Lopez, left, of Fredericksburg is apprenticing in bomba dance with Tata Cepeda of San Juan, the first cross-ocean Virginia Folklife apprenticeship. The women pose following their Richmond Folk Festival performance. “I have no words to express my happiness and pride for the weekend’s events,” shared Lopez. Photo by Pat Jarrett, Virginia Humanities

BY KATY CLUNE
For thirty-three years, the Virginia Folklife Program at Virginia Humanities has worked to document, sustain, present, and support cultural traditions across the Commonwealth. I began work as the third Virginia state folklorist in March 2022, and as I get settled into the position and move around the state visiting artists, community leaders, and events, I am also thinking about how to shape its future. Folklorists embrace the transformation of traditions as they move through generations—in turn, I intend to both honor the Virginia Folklife Program’s legacy and make some significant adaptations to meet the current moment.

State folklife programs were piloted at arts councils by the National Endowment for the Arts starting in 1974. In 1976, as the United States was celebrating its bicentennial with patriotic optimism, the American Folklife Center was established at the Library of Congress. The legislation, quoted on the previous page, ties the health of diverse American folkways to the “general welfare of the Nation.” Thirteen years later, the Virginia Folklife Program was founded at Virginia Humanities, thanks to the commitment of University of Virginia scholars and folklorists Charles and Nan Purdue; the Virginia Folklore Society; Robert C. Vaughan III, Virginia Humanities’ founding director; and Garry Barrow, Virginia’s first state folklorist.

Nurturing cultural well-being feels especially crucial as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic and face deep partisan divides that threaten to make us focused on our differences, rather than what we have in common. Our personal, family, and community traditions ground us in feelings of belonging and pride—and sharing these cultural expressions with others creates opportunities to connect individuals across boundaries to increase understanding and respect. As Dylan Locke, owner of the Floyd Country Store and steward of its decades-old Friday night jamboree tradition, put it when I met him in April, participating in community arts amounts to “civic repair.” My task ahead is to grow the network of artists and organizations we serve and inspire an ever-growing audience that values our collective cultural “welfare.”

Cultural welfare and wellbeing are at the core of our Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program. Jon Lohman, my predecessor, established this program in 2002 with essential funding from the National Endowment for the Arts that continues today. This year marks its twentieth anniversary, and to date, the program has provided funding and a public platform to 142 teams of artists (319 total practitioners) considered masters of their craft and those eager to learn beside them. I met Reverend Tarrence Paschall, who was part of the very first cohort of traditional artists, this June when we recorded him singing with The Chosen Few for an online concert hosted by the American Folklife Center. Paschall was the leader of the Tidewater a cappella gospel quartet The Paschall Brothers. He shared that the opportunities the Folklife Program opened for The Paschall Brothers were nothing short of transformative: “We’ve been to some tremendous places that would not have been open to us otherwise.” The warmth of his singing, in harmony with the six other singers in The Chosen Few, was warm and powerful, embodying the lasting impact of that initial support.

As the Apprenticeship Program enters its third decade, we are celebrating its impact and charting a course for its future. We have doubled the award amounts to meet the national average for like programs. A thorough evaluation of what people, traditions, and places have been served to date will make clear who we must invite moving forward. We are also shifting our emphasis from festival production to a variety of smaller events across the state that celebrate tradition bearers in their home communities. By moving away from the annual Apprenticeship Showcase at James Monroe’s Highland, we can expand our offerings in other areas. In June, we premiered “In Good Keeping in 2022,” a documentary featuring the 2021–2022 apprenticeship artists at the Birthplace of Country Music Museum in Bristol. This feature-length film...

*Views*
was produced and directed by Pat Jarrett, digital media specialist for Virginia Humanities, while he served as interim director for the Folklife Program and is named in honor of a 2007 publication by Lohman. In addition to community screenings, these films are available on our YouTube channel—and hopefully to even broader audiences as we continue to grow our partnerships with public media across the state.

Moving forward, the Folklife Program will invest more in documentation and fieldwork, including growing the number of voices that tell the story of contemporary cultures in Virginia. This fall, we will launch a paid writing and media production opportunity for our “Sights & Sounds” blog. In the future, I hope to establish funded, twelve-week fieldwork fellowships. As a result, the kinds of living traditions we showcase and present to the public will grow even more diverse.

We will also invest in our archives. My goal is to make this ever-growing collection of fieldwork recordings and performances fully cataloged and publicly accessible online before the program’s thirty-fifth anniversary in 2024. Currently our holdings are split between the Library of Virginia, internal hard drives, and Discovery Virginia—Virginia Humanities’ online repository. Having these materials cataloged in one place, and safeguarded for posterity, will in turn empower us to offer consulting support—or even a permanent home—to community collections around the state.

Twenty years after the Paschall Brothers participated in our apprenticeship program, another mentor artist, Bernadette Lark of Roanoke, is teaching gospel in the 2022 apprenticeship class. However, rather than a tradition rooted in Virginia, she is a master of singing in the Gullah-Geechee style of her birthplace, coastal South Carolina. Her apprentice is Alanya Harris, who has kept singing throughout the challenges her family continues to face as a result of a random act of gun violence. Her brother was shot by someone passing through their apartment complex parking lot in 2019. Their apprenticeship is empowering these artists to carve out a refuge to focus on their singing. Lark explained her commitment to using the arts for positive social change, saying, “If you are lucky enough to be involved in good works, slow down to take a look and see who is missing.”

Lark’s question is at the core of that founding charge issued by Congress to explore “the diversity inherent in American folk life.” As I listen, look back, and shape the future of the Virginia Folklife Program, I am keeping her words in mind. What Virginians, and Virginia traditions, do we have yet to serve? At its heart, cultural continuation requires a near-immeasurable resource: individual wellness. So, I am also asking, how can the Virginia Folklife Program work in support of our collective cultural wellness—and maybe even improve “the general welfare of the nation” a little bit in the process?

For the Latest from the Virginia Folklife Program, sign up for their e-newsletter at VirginiaFolklife.org.

HELP SHAPE VIRGINIA’S FOLKLIFE FUTURES

Do you have a suggestion for the Virginia Folklife Program? We welcome your input!

Be in touch: folklife@virginiahumanities.org
ENCYCLOPEDIA VIRGINIA TELLS THE INCLUSIVE STORY OF THE American Revolution

BY NINA WILDER

Anyone who has ever read reference material is familiar with the phrase: “see also.” You would like to learn more about Thomas Jefferson? See also: the Declaration of Independence. See also: Presidents of the United States who were enslavers.

To historian Woody Holton, this is the genius of Encyclopedia Virginia (EV), our free online resource on the history and culture of Virginia: the ability to pursue those never-ending connections with the ease of a click.

“While Encyclopedia Virginia helps us all start at the same baseline of knowledge, it also allows us to see the connections between various people, places, and events,” said Holton, a professor of history at the University of South Carolina. “Consequently, staying in an ideological or historical silo isn’t just difficult—it’s impossible.”

It’s only fitting, then, that EV recently received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for a three-year project to tell an integrative account of the American Revolution in Virginia. Titled “By the People: The Inclusive Story of Revolution in Virginia,” the new section of EV content dedicated to the era will feature 150 encyclopedia entries; primary resources, media objects, and virtual tours; and a select group of entries designed for use by fourth- and eighth-grade readers.

In collaboration with EV’s editorial staff, Holton and fellow historian Christa Dierkesheide have created a list of topics that will prioritize historically marginalized perspectives to paint a more detailed portrait of the Revolution and its impact on the Commonwealth. The Library of Virginia is providing fifty biographical entries, and EV is also partnering with Kenah Consulting, which works with cultural institutions to ensure tribal ownership of tribal history. In addition, as two new partners, the American Revolution Museum in Yorktown and the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia, to provide images and digitize relevant artifacts.

“When we’re trying to tell the inclusive story of the American Revolution not only emphasizes the experiences of women and people of color, but also those of the individuals who found themselves in opposition to the prevailing historical assumption of the Revolution; that every colonist eagerly supported the war and desired independence. “Many ordinary, middling white Virginians didn’t necessarily want to fight,” Dierkesheide said. “What ultimately compelled or didn’t compel them to join the militia? These are the other types of important perspectives that are lost when we focus our historical retellings on those in positions of power.”

Take, for instance, the story of Virginia native Sarah Osborne, a “camp follower” who traveled alongside her husband and his regiment while they fought in the war. She became the de facto matriarch of the group of soldiers, performing everyday domestic duties like cooking meals, washing clothes, and cleaning camp. Holton cited Osborne as an example of someone whose contributions to the Revolution have been trivialized in the historical record, though in reality they were anything but. Given that the second biggest threat to a soldier’s life at the time was lice, the seemingly simple act of boiling a shirt to clean it was an essential contribution to the Patriots’ success over the British. Even the label of “camp follower” serves as a diminutive for women like Osborne; Holton pointed out that George Washington referred to them instead as the “women of the Army.”

Worth noting, too, is that the inclusive story of the American Revolution not only emphasizes the experiences of women and people of color, but also those of the individuals who found themselves in opposition to the prevailing historical assumption of the Revolution; that every colonist eagerly supported the war and desired independence. “Many ordinary, middling white Virginians didn’t necessarily want to fight,” Dierkesheide said. “What ultimately compelled or didn’t compel them to join the militia? These are the other types of important perspectives that are lost when we focus our historical retellings on those in positions of power.”

Perhaps most consequentially, we create cultural assumptions out of these narrative absences: women were passive and voiceless; enslaved Africans were perpetual victims; Natives were not significant political actors. By resisting generalizations about the American Revolution, Encyclopedia Virginia aims to show that every type of Virginian—from the pro-British Native man to the camp-following white woman—played an important role in the struggle to form a more perfect union.

“Of course, we’ll always remember George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Patrick Henry when we think of the American Revolution. But a project like “By the People” urges us to ask ourselves: Who am I forgetting?”

Sign up for EV’s e-newsletter at EncyclopediaVirginia.org and be the first to learn when new entries are published.

Above: This watercolor drawing depicting Continental Army soldiers was made by Jean Baptiste Antoine de Verger. Image courtesy of Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library
As Encyclopedia Virginia said goodbye to longtime media editor extraordinaire Donna Lucey, we asked Donna to share some of her favorite images and objects from the thousands she has collected from across the Commonwealth and the country to bring EV’s entries to life and tell a more complete and inclusive story of Virginia. Stay tuned for Donna’s next project, as she turns her talents to her next book project: Victoria’s Island, a deep dive into the fascinating cultural history of the Isle of Wight through the lens of Queen Victoria.

DONNA LUCEY’S Fab Four

Civil War-era Prosthetic Arm
This Civil War-era prosthetic arm gives a visceral sense of the brutality of war. This limb belonged to Confederate private Andrew Porter Scott, whose left arm had to be amputated after he was wounded in 1864 during the Battle of Cold Harbor. His new arm was state-of-the-art: made of molded rawhide over wood, with leather fittings, a brass elbow and a gear above the wrist that controlled the movements of his prosthetic fingers or wrist. It’s a remarkable—and rather beautiful—artifact of mid-nineteenth century medicine.

(Credit: American Civil War Museum)

“Virginia Luxuries”
This folk painting captures the crime of enslavement in almost cinematic style. Two scenes side by side: a white master kissing his “property,” a Black woman whom he was free to abuse in any manner he pleased; and an angry overseer raising his cane to beat a Black man stripped to the waist. The painting’s title, “Virginian Luxuries,” adds to the work’s nightmarish quality, as if the debasement of human beings was the privilege of enslavers. As chilling as this image is, it bears a secret: it is the reverse side of the canvas. On the other side is a portrait of a prosperous looking young man made circa 1825 in New England. So why a hidden scene? Was it shown only to a select few? Did the image express abolitionist sentiments?

(Credit: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)
Forging Connections and Community

A LOOK BACK AT DAVID BEARINGER’S TIME AT VIRGINIA HUMANITIES

BY MARK HABEEB

It was July 1984. Robert Vaughan, executive director of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy (as Virginia Humanities was known until 2018), sought a temporary replacement for an employee on leave. Vaughan offered the position to a young man who recently had moved to the Charlottesville area after five years as a book editor in New York. David Bearinger accepted Vaughan’s offer of a twelve-month-long stint with Virginia’s budding humanities council and began immersing himself in the Commonwealth’s history and culture.

The Wrath of Camille

This ranks among the most unusual images collected over the years at Encyclopedia Virginia: a car hanging mid-air. It begs the question: how did this happen? Mother Nature. Hurricane Camille dumped at least twenty-seven inches of rain overnight in Nelson County on August 19-20, 1969. The National Weather Service said it was probably the “maximum rainfall which meteorologists compute to be theoretically possible.” When this photograph was taken, the creek at right had receded and appeared calm. But during the storm it turned into a tidal wave. Sleeping residents and houses were carried off in flash floods and landslides. The death toll in the rural county was 126, and damages amounted to over $100 million.

(Credit: Brewer York / Oakland Museum)

Suffragist Photograph

Photographs are static; yet this image of Virginia-born suffragist Lucy Branham conveys action. Branham leans forward, as if pleading with the crowd she is addressing, most of them men. Woman suffragists were often treated as jokes, but Branham’s posture is one of steely resolve. Her simple checked dress indicates just that: this was the prison garb she wore at Occoquan Workhouse after being arrested in 1917 for peacefully protesting in front of the White House. She endured filthy conditions and was force-fed and beaten. Here she is on a “Prison Special” tour, speaking out against the injustice she had endured, and the injustice of women being denied the vote.

(Credit: National Woman’s Party records, Library of Congress Manuscripts Division)

Learn more about these photos and read the entries that go with them at EncyclopediaVirginia.org
David Bearinger stands next to Seyoum Berhe (left), Coordinator of Refugee Resettlement and Director of the Office of New Americans for the Commonwealth of Virginia, at the opening of the New Virginians exhibit at the Library of Virginia, December 2018. Photo by Betsy Barton

David secured National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) funds to organize what became a fifteen-year project called “The Bill of Rights, the Courts and The Law,” which produced over 160 public programs attended by 21,000 people, a book, and a teachers’ institute. Another NEH grant he secured supported a major exhibition, book, and symposium on the history of the Indian Education Program at Hampton Institute (now Hampton University).

As he traveled the Commonwealth, David developed an enduring interest in the stories of Virginians whose roots were in regions that were often overlooked. He was instrumental in starting regional humanities councils in Southwest Virginia, the western Tidewater region, and the Eastern Shore, uncovering stories and traditions that continue to be shared and celebrated and building partnerships that remain strong. “I wanted to raise awareness of the Filipino-American community in Virginia but couldn’t generate any interest. Until I met David,” said April Manalang, an associate professor at Norfolk State University who has collaborated with Virginia Humanities on over a dozen projects related to the large Filipino-American community in the Hampton Roads area. “He was willing to work with a community that was previously unseen. He lifted out the richness of the story that was there but not illuminated,” she said.

David loved uncovering and sharing these rich and diverse stories that had not been a part of the official narrative. For while that narrative is impressive on its own, it becomes more beautiful and truthful when the voices of the previously unheard are included: of the oppressed, the overlooked, and the marginalized. David connected with the emotional power of these voices, a power that often derived from heartbreak but had endured through strength and resilience. As diverse as these voices are, they shared a message: “We are here.”

Emma Violand-Sanchez, a former Virginia Humanities board member, recalls when she asked during a board meeting: “Why are there no programs about Virginia’s immigrants and refugees?” “David listened to me,” she said. In 2015 and 2016, David coordinated a NEH-funded program, “The Changing Faces of Virginia,” that explored the impact of immigration and migration in six Virginia communities—Arlington, Harrisonburg, Roanoke, Richmond, Norfolk, and the Eastern Shore.

His interest kindled, David worked with Virginia Humanities’ Folklife Program and then-director Jon Lohman to feature Bolivian and Filipino representation in the 2015 and 2016 Richmond Folklife Festivals. In 2017 and 2018, David secured funding from American Evolution, Virginia’s 1619–2019 commemoration commission, for a collaboration with the Library of Virginia called “Immigration Stories.” For almost a year, David travelled the Commonwealth doing what he does best—building personal relationships and engaging with communities. Then, with his Virginia Humanities colleague and videographer Pat Jarrett, he conducted video-recorded interviews with thirty-four “new Virginians”—immigrants and refugees from twenty-nine countries spanning the globe. These interviews, which often dealt with emotional and traumatic themes, became the foundation for the Library of Virginia’s “New Virginians” exhibit and are a testament to David’s remarkable ability to form human connection.
“He valued personal stories about our complicated journey to Virginia, our culture, traditions, and contributions to the United States,” said Violand-Sanchez, who was one of the interviewees. Another interviewee, Seyoum Berhe, state refugee coordinator at Virginia’s Department of Social Services, said, “David has a gift for a deeper listening that allows him to listen not only with his ears but through his heart and mind to a point that he becomes one and the same with those he listens to.”

As important and pathbreaking as these prominent projects were, in my opinion David left his strongest mark through his work overseeing Virginia Humanities’ grants program. The grants program is the heart and soul of Virginia Humanities’ work; it is the most direct way of supporting the humanities in every corner of the Commonwealth. During David’s tenure, Virginia Humanities awarded more than 3,500 grants to community organizations across Virginia. As a former chair of the Grants Committee, I witnessed firsthand how David was guided by his inherent curiosity, his ability to listen with equanimity, his openness to all people, and yes, his humanity.

If we received a grant proposal that was not quite up to snuff, David worked with the applicant to improve it. He was conscious that our grants are made with public funds and wanted to ensure that these funds were spent responsibly, but he also could detect the spark of creativity and promise in many proposals that just needed a bit of polishing to sparkle. He had a sharp eye for stories that needed to be told. “I have seen firsthand the visionary belief David has in the power of story to open hearts and to transform communities,” says Jamie Ross, a documentary film maker who has collaborated with Virginia Humanities for over 20 years.

And often, the smallest of grants would be a seed that blossomed into a much larger project. “I have been so impressed by the humanities powerhouse Virginia Humanities has become and the way it continues to support and nurture these local community projects. That is all David,” says Ross.

Consider the last three grant cycles David oversaw before his retirement in July: 155 grants awarded, 69 of these to first time grantees; 74 focused primarily on African-American history and culture; 17 focused on Virginia Indian history and culture; 16 on the immigrant and refugee experience; and 16 on other facets of the Virginia story, from the voices of the incarcerated to the experience of living with deafness to the history of transgender activism in the Commonwealth.

After working closely with him for six years, I believe I have finally cracked the code that made David so effective in his work and beloved by the communities he served. It’s quite simple: David never forgot that while he worked for Virginia Humanities, he served the citizens of the Commonwealth. Virginia Humanities’ single largest source of funds is the General Assembly’s annual budget allocation; as such, its employees are public servants. David took that responsibility seriously. Of course, he supported the institution and its impressive growth over the years. Even as he prepared to retire, he laid the groundwork for a renewed institutional focus on Virginia Indians.

But David has arguably travelled more miles on Virginia’s roads over the past thirty-eight years than anyone not running for elected office. It would be hard to find any corner of the Commonwealth where someone doesn’t know David. And David is extremely unselfish with his relationships, he is constantly bringing people together, forging connections, looking for commonalities. The “David Bearinger Network” is both broad and deep. “David has a rare gift for bringing disparately minded folks together, unifying hearts, and inspiring everyone towards a greater goal. If David ruled the world, there really would be peace on earth,” says current Virginia Humanities Board Member Keilee Blake.

David’s retirement is the end of an era. But his legacy will continue in the hundreds of relationships he nurtured and the thousands of people touched by his work. Just as I have no doubt that Virginia Humanities will continue to thrive, David also will thrive as he begins Act III of what has already been an immensely rewarding life.
Virginia Humanities supported these humanities projects between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022.

To LEARN MORE about the Grants Program, visit VirginiaHumanities.org/Grants.

1. Access Virginia
   Access Virginia Accessibility Program
2. Afro-American Historical & Genealogical Society, Greater Richmond Chapter
   New website
3. Alexandria Charlottesville Historical Society
   Race & Sports: The Desegregation of Gainesville Virginia Public High School Athletics
4. Ambient Globe Arts Responses, Inc.
   Kaurine West Virginia Poet, Mentor, Monacan, Scholar and Historian
5. Arlington Historical Society
   Memorizing the Enslaved in Arlington
6. Birthplace of Country Music
   Women in Old-Time Music Temporary/Traveling Exhibit
7. Blue Ridge Discovery Center
   Exhibit of Historic Timeline
8. Catticus Corp
   Striking Back, Striding Forward
9. Bluegrass Country Music Society
   Baseball and African American Life
10. Crooked Junto
    Charlottesville Initiative for Social Practice Arts
11. Fluvanna County Arts Council
    Reconstruction: The Rebuilding of African–American Communities Through Faith and Education
12. George Mason University
    Alienation and Belonging: Shifting Cultural Landscapes in Northern Virginia
13. Hardwood Global
    Hardwood Global Training: Protecting a Vulnerable Population
14. James Madison University
    A Miserable Revenge: Recovering 19th-Century Alienation and Belonging in Virginia
15. Johns Hopkins University
    99 Clay Vessels: The Muslim Women Storytelling Project
16. Josephine School Community Museum
    Jareweski Festival
17. Library of Virginia Foundation
    Indigenous Perspectives Exhibition-Planning
18. Louisville County Historical Society
    Representing our Residents: African American History
19. More Than a Fraction Foundation
    The Many True Event
20. Nansemond Indian Tribal Association
    Nansemond Indian Nation Tribal Archive Development
21. National Center for Community Strangways
    Documentary: The Arrival of the First Africans in Virginia
22. National D-Day Memorial
    Someone Talked! A Podcast of the National D-Day Memorial
23. Northampton Historic Preservation Society
    Request for Exhibits Grant - 1907 Northampton County Jail Museum
24. One Shared Story
    Legacy’s Footprints
25. Piedmont Virginia Community College
    Prison Creative Arts Project
26. Pocahontas Reframed Storytellers Film Festival
    Hidden Histories
27. Restless Books
   Restless Books: Immigrant Writing Lab
28. Rotary Club of Cape Charles
   Through It All: Public Transit and Civil Rights in Richmond, VA
29. Saint Luke’s Historic Church & Museum
   The Military Women’s Memorial Color of Our Community
30. Stratford Hall
   Hidden Histories
31. The Mariners’ Museum and Park
   Restless Books: Immigrant Writing Lab
32. The Nectar and Virtues of the University of Virginia
   Welcome to Monacan Country videos
33. The Valètes
    Augmented Reality Tour Experience and Lost Cause Programming Development
34. University of Richmond
    Through It All: Public Transit and Civil Rights in Richmond, VA
35. Virginia Civics Education, Inc.
    Interactive Field Guide to Local History, Exploring Your Neighborhood (The Virginia Edition)
36. Virginia Friends of Malaya Radio Documentary
37. Virginia Humanities
   Indigenous Perspectives: A Two-Part Initiative
38. Virginia Public High School Athletics
   Race & Sports: The Desegregation of Central Greater Richmond Chapter
39. Women in Military Service for America
   Native American Women Veterans: A Celebration of Our Service and Sacrifice

RESTLESS BOOKS: IMMIGRANT WRITING LAB
(Arlington)
A series of writing workshops designed to cultivate the individual stories of undocumented immigrants—most from Latin America—and to facilitate the sharing of these stories with the wider community. The project is a collaboration between a non-profit book publisher specializing in literature by immigrant writers and The Dream Project, an Arlington-based organization that provides mentorship and scholarship support to undocumented students seeking to continue their education beyond high school.

PIEDMONT VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE: PVCC PRISON CREATIVE ARTS PROJECT
(Charlottesville)
A two-part initiative designed to collect original writing in the form of storytelling from incarcerated Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) students, and to create a theatrical production drawing from these personal testimonies. The project builds on PVCC’s Higher Education in Prison Program established in 2006 and is designed to reach PVCC’s 7,500-member community of students, faculty, and staff, as well as a larger public audience.

NATIONAL D-DAY MEMORIAL: SOMEONE TALKED! A PODCAST OF THE NATIONAL D-DAY MEMORIAL
(Blacksburg)
A series of podcasts on the history of World War II, featuring conversations between the prolific WWII historian John McManus and other scholars and writers whose work is contributing to a more complete understanding of the war, its causes and impact. The series is designed to reach and engage new audiences now that the generation that lived through WWII has passed on.
The Richmond Public Library was on a mission. This nearly century-old library in the heart of what was once the capital of the Confederacy had committed to revamping their collection to better serve Richmond’s population which is now fifty-seven percent people of color.

“We are determined to be agents of change and create a library collection that is a dynamic, multi-racial expression of the best of Richmond,” said Susan S. Revere, executive director of the Richmond Public Library Foundation, in their application for a Virginia Humanities grant.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic interfered with their plans. In 2020, with funding cut and hiring frozen, the library was trying to get by with only three-quarters of their staff and a decimated budget. The work of revamping the collection stalled.

And they were not alone. Museums, historic sites, and other cultural nonprofits everywhere were hit hard by the pandemic. In 2020, Virginia’s cultural economy lost $2.6 billion in revenue and 15,000 of its workers were unemployed.*

Which is why in 2021, Congress included $135 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) in the American Rescue Plan. Approximately $51.6 million of those funds were sent to fifty-six state and territorial humanities councils and partners to redistribute to local humanities nonprofit organizations in need.

Virginia Humanities awarded our portion of those funds, totaling nearly $1 million, to eighty-three nonprofit organizations across the Commonwealth in November of 2021.

The Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation was among the organizations to receive a Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan (SHARP) grant. “Education is a key component of our mission,” says Hope Marstin, chief executive officer of Patrick Henry’s Red Hill, a 1,000-acre historic site in Brookneal Virginia that helps more than 10,000 visitors understand the history of Patrick Henry, colonial America, slavery, and the American Revolution each year. Red Hill used its SHARP grant to increase its ability to produce virtual programs. “SHARP allowed us to continue our educational programming even when individuals and school groups were not allowed to visit our site,” Marstin continues. “The staff were thrilled to have this project to focus on during COVID.”

A SHARP grant also helped the Richmond Public Library restart their effort to update their collection. The SHARP grant enabled us to address a significant collections budget challenge, assess and then construct a diverse book collection reflective of our city,” shared Scott Firestine, director of the library. “At a time when Richmond is transforming itself and looking to the future, Richmond Public Library can be a place of reflection, inspiration, and engagement. Our patrons must see themselves reflected in the stories found on our shelves and be able to connect to Richmond’s histories.”

The work of the Richmond Public Library, the Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation, and all our grantees contributes to a richer, more complete understanding of the story of Virginia and what it means to be a Virginian living today. We’re grateful to Congress and the NEH for their continued support of the public humanities, and we’re honored to have had a role in helping Virginia’s cultural organizations get back on their feet.

*Data obtained from Americans for the Arts Action Fund’s “Why the Arts Matter in Virginia” (2021, 2022)
Sustaining the Humanities Through the American Rescue Plan

We would like to thank the members of Congress and the National Endowment for the Humanities for making more than $950,000 in funds available to museums, libraries, historical societies, and other cultural nonprofit organizations in Virginia through the American Rescue Plan passed by Congress in March 2021. We distributed these funds to the following eighty-three organizations in November 2021.

Access Virginia
Newport News
American Civil War Museum
Richmond
Amherst Globe Arts Response, Inc.
Amherst
Augusta County Historical Society
Afton
Augusta Military Academy Alumni Foundation
Fort Defiance
Belle Grove Inc.
Middleburg
Belmead on the James, Inc.
(video Drexel-Morrell Center)
Belle Grove Inc.
Richmond
Blacksburg Historical Society
Blacksburg
Boyd Lawrence Museum
Bolivar
Bland County Public Library
Bland
Blue Ridge PBS
Roanoke
Botetourt County Historical Society & Museum
Fincastle
Chickahominy Indian Tribe - Eastern Division
Providence Forge
Clarke County Historical Society
Berryville
Compass To The Table-RVA
Richmond
Community Arts Center Foundation, Inc.
(DBA The Priory)
South Boston
Culpeper Cavern Museum Inc.
(DBA Museum of Culpeper History)
Culpeper
Danielle Historical Society
Dayton
Descendants of Enslaved Communities at UVA
Charlottesville
Eastern Shore Public Library Foundation
Accomac
Ellega Folklore Society
Richmond
Fairfield Foundation
White Marsh
Fall for the Book, Inc.
Fairfax
Fluvanna County Historical Society
Palmyra
Fredericksburg Area Museum and Cultural Center
Fredericksburg
Friends of Orange School
(DBA Historic Orange School)
Orange
Halaw Nahma Hawai
Alexandria
Hermitage-Rockingham Historical Society
Dayton
Helping Hand Cemetery Club
Pointe Vedra
Historic Gordonville Inc.
(DBA Exchange Hotel Civil War Museum)
Gordonville
Historical Society of Western Virginia
Roanoke
Ivy Creek Foundation
Charlottesville
James Sallomenn Russell Saint Paul’s College Museum and Archives, Inc.
Lawrenceville
Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, Inc.
Williamsburg
Jefferson School African American Heritage Center
Charlottesville
Journey Through Hallowed Ground
Lunenburg
Lewis and Clark Exploratory Center of Virginia, Inc.
Charlottesville
Literacy Volunteers of Charlottesville/Albermarle
Charlottesville
Local Colors of Western VA
Roanoke
London Museum
Lunenburg
Madison House
Charlottesville
Mary Ball Washington Museum & Library Inc.
(DBA Lancaster Virginia-Historical Society)
Lancaster
Maymont Foundation
Richmond
Montgomery Museum of Art & History
Chesapeake
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Alexandria
National Women’s History Museum
Alexandria
Norton State University Foundation
Norfolk
Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation
Bristol
Points of Diversity
Roanoke
Preservation Virginia
Richmond
Presidential Precinct
Charlottesville
Prio Barga, Inc.
Woodbridge
Redford Heritage Foundation (Glencoe Mansion)
Richmond
Rappahannock Historical Society
Washington
Rappahannock Tribe of Virginia
Indian Neck
Red Dirt Productions
Charlottesville
Reston Historic Trust & Museum
(DBA Reston (H)istorics)
Reston
Richmond Hill
Richmond
Richmond Public Library Foundation
Richmond
Rockbridge Historical Society
Lexington
Salen Historical Society, Inc.
(DBA Salen Museum)
Salen
Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project
Harrisonburg
Shenandoah Valley Mountain Music Makers Association, Inc.
(DBA Shenandoah Music Trail)
Swoope
Smithfield Preston Foundation
(DBA Historic Smithfield)
Blackburg
Steamed Era Museum
Fitzroy
Stratford Hall
Stratford
Suffolk River Heritage, Inc.
Suffolk
The Cold War Museum
Vista Hill
The Hermitage Museum and Gardens
Norfolk
The John Marshall Foundation
Richmond
The John Mitchell Jr. Program for History, Justice and Race
(DBA George Mason University Foundation, Inc.)
Fairfax
The Menokin Foundation
Vikasw
The Montpelier Foundation
Orange
Virginia African American Cultural Center
Virginia Beach
Virginia Association of Museums
Richmond
Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities
Richmond
Virginia Holocaust Museum
Richmond
Virginia Museum of History & Culture
Richmond
Virginia Nottoway Indian Circle and Square Foundation, Inc.
Capon
Washington Heritage Museums
Fredericksburg
Wayne Theatre Alliance
Waynesboro
William King Museum of Art
Abingdon
Woolf Wilcox Presidential Library
Staunton
Young Audiences of Virginia, Inc.
(DBA Arts for Learning)
Norfolk
The police got my cousin Boosie and whipped her pretty bad—she couldn’t run fast enough,” my grandfather would tell me. I was in elementary school when he first started sharing stories of the civil rights movement and Danville’s “Bloody Monday.” On that fateful day—June 10, 1963—several women packed into my grandfather’s station wagon to go downtown to protest the continued segregation of public facilities and the lack of jobs in the municipal government for African Americans. My grandfather told me that women in the community were always nervous he felt faint, so he parked his car beside the Worsham Street bridge and told the women he would turn the ignition on. All the women made it in except Cousin Boosie. My grandfather remembered watching her getting beaten in the rear-view mirror as he drove back across the Worsham Street Bridge. Cousin Boosie, whose real name I later discovered was Celeste Lindsey, was one of forty-seven people injured that day when police used clubs and fire hoses to attack demonstrators.

It’s easy to think that nothing ever goes on in small, rural towns. But my grandfather’s stories about Bloody Monday show just how Danville earned its place as the newest Virginia location on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail, joining Richmond and Farmville. In February 2022, the Danville Museum of Fine Arts & History was officially added to the trail. This was the site of a sit-in in 1960 by local student activists led by Chalmers Mebane and Robert Williams when it was all-white Danville Memorial Library, which kicked off the fight for civil rights in Danville. This is a big feat for a city rooted in segregationist history that was better known as the “Last Capital of the Confederacy” for the short time that fleeing Confederate government holed up here. The U.S. Civil Rights Trail will give the city more visibility, highlighting the history and the contributions made by local citizens.

For me, the story of Cousin Boosie, bold and defiant, had a deep impact. But I wouldn’t discover just how much Danville was connected to the national narrative of the civil rights movement until I was introduced to historian Emma Edmunds, who had a longstanding relationship with Virginia Humanities and did groundbreaking research on the role of Danville in the civil rights movement as a fellow. I was honored when the opportunity came to work alongside Emma. A beautiful relationship developed that was built on trust and mutual respect for each other’s work. Emma passed away in February 2020 and donated her research and exhibit on the Danville civil rights movement to the Danville Museum of Fine Arts & History, while she is the most visited exhibit in the museum. I don’t think she could have dreamed that the work started with Virginia Humanities shares these under-told stories with the public. The Danville Riot was used to usher in the Jim Crow system, robbing Black citizens of many of the rights they had won since the end of slavery.

Another Black man from Danville who took his fight for civil rights to the courts was Robert Allen, who was born enslaved in about 1835 to a woman named Betsy and Julius Allen, an unmarried farmer who was her enslaver. When Julius Allen died, he left Robert and his siblings to his nephew-in-law, William S. Patton, for a period of seven years. After the seven-year period, they were supposed to be taken to a free state, given $3,000, and allowed to settle on a plot of land. But once slavery was abolished, Patton didn’t feel the need to uphold the terms of the will. Allen sued Patton in 1866 on behalf of his family legacy. In 1878, Judge James D. Coles of Pittsylvania County violated clauses in the Fourteenth Amendment by attempting to exclude Blacks from serving on juries. This led the U.S. Supreme Court to rule in *Ex Parte Virginia* that the federal government could forbid states to exclude African Americans from juries. In the 1880s, the biracial Readjuster Party, which took on the elite to fund public education and extend voting rights, was rising politically in Virginia. The party provided hope for what the future of the United States could look like. In Danville a majority Black city council was elected. This led to the Danville Riot of 1883, which you can read more about in *Encyclopedia Virginia*, just one of the ways that Virginia Humanities shares these under-told stories with the public.

The Danville Riot was used to usher in the Jim Crow system, robbing Black citizens of many of the rights they had won since the end of slavery. The Supreme Court of Virginia found against Allen, who was represented by the white Danville Memorial Library, which kicked off the fight for civil rights in Danville. This is a big feat for a city rooted in segregationist history that was better known as the “Last Capital of the Confederacy” for the short time that fleeing Confederate government holed up here. The U.S. Civil Rights Trail will give the city more visibility, highlighting the history and the contributions made by local citizens.

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Above: Emma Edmunds (right) and a high school student participate in a program at the Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History in 2018. Photo by Karice Luck-Brimmer, Virginia Humanities

Above: A mural in Danville depicts the town’s historic connections to the tobacco trade. Photo by Pat Jarrett, Virginia Humanities
but that doesn’t diminish the courage it took to sue a white man in the aftermath of the Danville Riot. Allen’s great-grandsons Isaac Cosby Hunt and Robert Williams, both from Danville, would go on to become the second and third African Americans to attend the University of Virginia Law School.

These events show the tenacity of the citizens of Danville and that every generation had a movement. And from generation to generation these movements always involved one common denominator: social injustice. The sixteen students who staged the sit-in at the Danville Library had no idea that they would make history. All they knew was that they were tired of not having the proper books and scholarly materials to do book reports for school. Like others across the South in 1960, they were inspired by the Greensboro Four’s sit-in at a Woolworth lunch counter. Their protest in turn led to other protests in Danville and the organizing of the Danville Christian Progressive Association (DCPA), which affiliated with Martin Luther King’s Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

It was the DCPA that organized the protests against employment discrimination in Danville that Cousin Boosie took part in and that resulted in the beating and arrest of many participants. Cousin Boosie’s activism and story takes on a whole new meaning at this point in my life. I refuse to let their stories die. It is by the telling of these personal stories that we ensure their place in history is never left out. It validates who we are in history, as does the inclusion of Danville on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail.

To read more about the Danville Riot of 1883 in Encyclopedia Virginia, visit EncyclopediaVirginia.org/entries/danville-riot-1883/
After being (mostly) put on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic, our Fellowship Program has reemerged in a new, reimagined form. What was a residential fellowship program is now three different programs providing a bevy of opportunities for community historians, academic scholars, and educators looking for support for their projects.

“In recent years, we’ve reimagined our Fellowship Programs to better meet the needs of historians, educators, and community scholars. We’re meeting fellows where they are and giving them the tools, time, and financial support they need to tell the complicated stories at the heart of Virginia’s history and culture.”

The HBCU Scholars Fellowship funds the humanities research of scholars affiliated with Virginia’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in service of the heritage, stories, and communities of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). “The HBCU Scholars Fellowship creates a more equitable space for underrepresented voices in the world of academic scholarship,” says Yahusef Medina, Virginia Humanities’ interim director of Community Initiatives. “Their work will enrich the Commonwealth of Virginia and we are grateful to be involved in that process.”

The HBCU fellows for 2022 are: Ima Hicks, an assistant professor of languages and literature at Virginia Union University, exploring “Gendered Injustice: Uncovering the Lived Experience of Women in New World Slavery”; Janira Teague, an assistant professor of history at Norfolk State University, exploring “Virginians and the Global Great Migration”; and Derrick Lanois, an assistant professor of history at Norfolk State University exploring “Black Freemasonry in the Jim Crow South.”

These fellowships are made possible by a major grant from the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation. The K-12 Educator Fellowship gives educators with a wide range of humanities curriculum focuses the resources to design new learning experiences that are easily accessible for both physical classrooms and remote use by teachers across Virginia. “I have been thrilled and grateful to work with twelve incredible educators from across the state,” says Emma Ito, Virginia Humanities’ director of education. “The intention of the Virginia Humanities K-12 Fellowship was to support K-12 educators in the work they are already doing, and it was clear from the beginning that the conversations, questions, and thoughts of this cohort are beyond excellent.” The twelve K-12 educator fellows for 2022 are:

Alfonso Perez Acosta
Artist and Art Educator in Richmond

Catherine Breese
Elementary Lead Technology Resource Teacher in Montgomery County

Kara Canaday
Statewide Educator/Liaison with Virginia Tribal Education Consortium

Hashim Davis
High School History Educator in Albemarle County

Lorraine Dresch
High School History Educator in Waynesboro

Tammy Layne
High School Library Media Specialist in Bath County

Lewis Longenecker
Middle School Educator in Cumberland County

Sarah Medukas
Assistant Principal and Gifted Coordinator in Scott County

Lynn Moore
Middle School Educator in Prince William County

Shannon Outlaw
Middle School Educator in Fairfax

Melissa Politan
High School History Educator in Chesapeake

Taylor M. Snow
Secondary Social Studies Specialist in Henrico County

The four new public humanities fellows for 2022 are Melissa Ooten, of Henrico, who is working on “A People’s Guide to Richmond and Central Virginia”; Jordy Yager of Charlottesville, who is working on “The Mapping Cville Racial Covenant Exhibition Project”; Abraham Gibson and William Gibson of San Antonio, TX, and Ferrum, VA, who are working on “More than Just Moonshine: Public Education in Franklin County, Virginia, 1908-1950”; and Stephen Hitchcock of Barboursville, who is working on “Radical Hospitality: Autobiography of The Haven”.

To learn more about Virginia Humanities’ fellowship programs, visit VirginiaHumanities.org/fellowships.
As Pat Jarrett, the media specialist for the Virginia Folklife Program, recalls an afternoon he shared with foodways mentor artist Luz Lopez in her tidy kitchen on a documentation trip, a smile spreads across his face. In a reminiscence that mixes Yucatan peninsula spices with graceful hospitality, Jarrett says, “I eagerly went to Lopez’s home, where she showed me some recipes to demonstrate her craft. It smelled savory, but it was more than the smells. It was how she made me feel—just like I was part of the family. She prepared tamales. I devoured some, and more and more of her extended family showed up. We ate and drank. It was a big crowd, and it was wonderful.”

Jarrett remembered this session with Lopez when our With Good Reason radio show received an anonymous grant to explore foodways and he and associate producers Lauren Francis and Matt Darroch were brainstorming ideas for impactful foodways partnerships to feature. Such cross-programmatic collaborations provide a win-win for the Commonwealth and beyond. According to Allison Quantz, senior associate producer for With Good Reason, “Connecting with the Folklife program on foodways gave us and our listeners access to artists we don’t usually get since we focus on university guests for our segments.” Jarrett concurs about the benefits. “Our documentation needs more than one output; the audio, video, and photos we produce have lots of potential. Repurposing them shares the story with a wider audience, and we make a bunch of new connections.”

Francis, who explores food justice issues, among others, in the segments she produces at With Good Reason, jumped at the chance to connect with Lopez in her rural Earlysville kitchen over pan de muerto, the sweet “bread of the dead” traditionally prepared for Día de los Muertos, the Mexican Day of the Dead holiday. Francis remembers the sound of eggs cracking as Lopez slid them into the mixing bowl after she had assembled and steamed tamales all morning. “Matriarchs cook with perfect timing,” she said. “When the tamales hit the oven early in the day that means it’s ready for the bread later.”

“It’s always nice to do work that doesn’t feel like work,” says Francis. “It’s in my nature to go and ask questions for two hours while someone cooks. Kitchens provide an intimate space for memories to bubble up. When I interviewed Lopez, I realized there’s a deep connection; you learn a lot of things about people.”

In addition to Lopez, another foodie immediately came to Jarrett’s mind: Ken Garcia Olaes, who is preserving his culture’s baking traditions.

As Jarrett did with Lopez, Darroch immediately experienced a welcoming sensation when he travelled to Angie’s Bakery in Virginia Beach to observe Olaes, who is being mentored by his mother, Lelis Garcia Olaes, make traditional Filipino baked goods. Together they made ube bread and bibingka, a baked rice cake eaten around the Christmas holiday. “I visited on a Monday to interview them because they close the bakery to customers. Olaes and his family prepared orders for the traditional midnight mass celebration. His parents are so proud of him and were so kind and welcoming to me.”

“I never tasted these Filipino treats before,” notes Darroch. “The bibingka tasted like cake and the ube bread has an unusual, deep purple color that comes from the ube root, a type of purple yam. Olaes torched the sugar on top to caramelize it. Delicious!”

You can hear the With Good Reason radio segment featuring Luz Lopez at WithGoodReasonRadio.org/luz-lopez and the one featuring Ken Olaes can be found at WithGoodReasonRadio.org/ken-olaes. Stay tuned for a third collaboration that’s underway.

In the future, Jarrett and Katy Clune, the new director of the Virginia Folklife Program, imagine more collaborations across Virginia Humanities’ programs to amplify Folklife stories. “Foodways represent a form of cultural expression and because everybody needs to eat, eating brings people together. As we struggle for common ground, when we focus on aspects of life that we all share it allows us to expand our knowledge of each other and that’s more powerful now than ever,” notes Clune.

She continues, “As I shape the future of Folklife, which will take time, I hope to embrace the kinds of cultural artforms that may not have been emphasized as much in the past and foodways is definitely one of those.”

“Sign up for the With Good Reason podcast at WithGoodReasonRadio.org/subscribe-to-podcast/.”
Virginia Humanities thanks the individuals, foundations, and corporations whose generous contributions and involvement sustain our work throughout the Commonwealth.

With your support, we are able to amplify the narratives, traditions, and ideas that bring meaning and connection to our lives. Your investment ensures that we can continue to create high-quality, dynamic programming with wide-reaching engagement.

As we all find a way to move forward with the presence of Covid, we have been excited to be able to begin visiting and providing programming in various parts of the Commonwealth. As we look forward to the new year, we anticipate opportunities for all Virginians to share their stories and learn about each others’ experiences.

We would like to extend a special thank you to those who have given unrestricted gifts to the Virginia Humanities Fund this year. Unrestricted support is a crucial source of funding and allows us to put your gift to work where it’s needed most:

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Deceased “indicates a gift made in whole or in part to the Virginia Humanities Fund, our unrestricted fund. Report reflects giving from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. Every effort has been made to list all donors accurately. For inquiries and corrections please contact the Advancement Office at Support@VirginiaHumanities.org.

Virginia Humanities acknowledges the following benefactors who provided critical financial support between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022. Their investments help create programs and opportunities for all Virginians to share their stories and learn about each others’ experiences so we can explore our differences and connect through what we have in common.
Annual Report

Virginia Humanities is committed to building a vital future through planned and endowed gifts. We recognize those who have remembered us through a planned gift, a simple bequest, real or personal property, or a charitable trust. As substantial, long-term gifts, they serve as the cornerstone for the future of Virginia Humanities.

If you have already included us in your estate plan but do not see your name listed below, please let us know so that we may thank you appropriately.

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In Memoriam

The Board and Staff of Virginia Humanities remember with gratitude the following donors who passed away during the year. Their heartfelt contributions helped to shape our organization, develop new programs, and provide enthusiastic support for our work.

Elizabeth P. Piper
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"VPM’s partnership with Virginia Humanities allows us to serve our core public media mission and join with others in the community to make more stories accessible to all. We are grateful to work with an organization that celebrates the rich cultural treasures of our commonwealth and preserves them for future generations."

-Benae Mosby, Director of Marketing & Communications, Virginia Public Media

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In 1974, Virginia Humanities’ founding director Rob Vaughan traveled to every corner of the state holding community conversations about the humanities and public life. He had no way of knowing what fruits his efforts would bear or that the personal connections he was making would sustain this organization well into the next century.

In 2024, we’ll be celebrating our fiftieth anniversary. We’ll be spending the time between now and then reflecting on Virginia’s future and the future of Virginia’s human community.

As we prepare for our fiftieth anniversary, we want to hear from you. What do you want to see from Virginia Humanities in the future? What are your hopes and dreams for Virginia, and how can we help make that future a reality? We invite you to share your thoughts with us by sending them to fifty@virginiahumanities.org. Do you have a particular memory from the last fifty years you’d like to share? What impact have we as an organization had on you personally or the organization you work for? We’d love to hear about that too.

And stay tuned, we’ll be sharing our plans for recognizing our “big five-o” soon.

You can connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or subscribe to our e-newsletter. It’s all available online at VirginiaHumanities.org.
Honorary and Memorial Gifts

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Each year Virginia Humanities recognizes in-kind contributions from those who have hosted events, contributed artwork to the Raucous Auction, provided goods and services for programs, and promoted our programming. Their contributions help us reduce expenses, secure additional funding, increase programmatic quality and exposure, and focus on our important work throughout the commonwealth.

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Edna & Norman Freehling Fellowship

Emilia Galli Struppa Fellowship was created by Chapman University Chancellor and former Virginia Humanities board member Daniele Struppa in memory of his mother; it supports research and writing in history and literary studies.

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Encyclopedia Virginia Endowment was established to support the ongoing financial needs of Encyclopedia Virginia; it was established by then-Board chairman Barbara J. Fried.

Encyclopedia Virginia Endowment

Virginia Center for the Book Endowment supports the Center’s book-related activities; it was established by donor Michael Jay Green.

Virginia Center for the Book Endowment

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In addition to donations to the Virginia Humanities Fund and our programs, Virginia Humanities receives contributions to giving circles, named funds, and endowments that have been established for special purposes and to sustain our programs over time.

Carol Troxell Fund was established in 2017 in memory of former New Dominion Bookshop owner Carol Troxell; it celebrates voracious reading and supports a solo featured author during the Virginia Festival of the Book.

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Frank Riccio Fund was established in 2018 to honor Virginia Center for the Book member artist and educator Frank Riccio; it supports an annual visiting book artist: the Frank Riccio Artist-in-Residence.

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Literary Leaders is an annual giving circle connecting Virginia Festival of the Book donors of $2,500 or more; it supports the vitality of Festival programming each year, including author visits to K-12 schools.

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Virginia Humanities Endowment

views
Throughout 2021–2022 our staff has been evaluating our grants programs, looking for ways to better serve the organizations who request our support. The result was a comprehensive overhaul of our grants programs in the summer of 2022.

Changes to our grants programs included:

- **Two new opportunities:** Rapid Grants and Regular Grants
- **New grants deadlines**
- **Streamlined applications**
- **Former grant recipients and community partners are invited to evaluate proposals**

Grants staff will continue to provide advice and consultation to prospective applicants. However, in order for them to remain impartial and better support prospective grant applicants, grants staff will not be directly involved in proposal review.

Our grants programs have served cultural nonprofit organizations across the Commonwealth and supported groundbreaking projects in the public humanities for nearly fifty years. To learn more, we encourage you to visit [VirginiaHumanities.org/grants](http://VirginiaHumanities.org/grants).
WANT TO KEEP UP WITH VIRGINIA HUMANITIES?

- Visit VirginiaHumanities.org to sign up for our biweekly e-newsletter.
- Explore our program websites and extensive resources, starting at VirginiaHumanities.org.
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VIRGINIA HUMANITIES GRANTS DEADLINES

For the latest on our Rapid and Regular grants, including application deadlines, please visit VirginiaHumanities.org/grants.

BOARD NOMINATIONS

The Virginia Humanities Nominating Committee welcomes suggested names for nomination, specifically individuals who, when brought together as a board, broadly represent the geographic regions and demographic makeup of today’s Virginia. The committee strives to sustain a balance among scholars in the humanities, civic and business leaders, and the general public. Nominations are coordinated by the Office of the Director. Please send suggestions to rm3xa@virginia.org.