VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF HISTORY & CULTURE

Virginia Museum of History & Culture Premiers Live Virtual Awards Ceremony for Virginia History Day

Richmond, VA - The first ever virtual Virginia History Day state contest wraps up this afternoon with the premiere of a virtual award ceremony to announce this year's winners. The ceremony will begin at 4 PM via the **VMHC Education Facebook page** and **VMHC YouTube channel**. Virginia History Day (VHD), an annual student history competition that sees over 8,000 children participate across the Commonwealth, is coordinated by the Virginia Museum of History & Culture (VMHC), in conjunction with National History Day (NHD). Roughly 270 students in grades 4-12, representing every region of Virginia, submitted digital versions of their projects to be evaluated by over 80 volunteer judges. VHD remains one of the only extracurricular programs in the state that has not been cancelled due to the public health emergency.

The virtual award ceremony will announce students that placed 1st-3rd in each category. Those who won 1st and 2nd place qualify for the national NHD contest, which has also been moved to a virtual format. 3rd place winners serve as alternates. Additionally, the winners of 16 special awards will be announced. These awards are monetary prizes ranging from $50 - $1,000 sponsored by various cultural organizations across Virginia.

Students from every region of the state entered the contest after competing in district contests and the number of regional participants breaks down as follows: 19 from the Lynchburg area, 33 from the Blacksburg/Roanoke area, 47 from the Shenandoah Valley and Charlottesville region, 67 from Northern Virginia, 41 from Hampton Roads, and 62 from the Richmond metro region.

Despite the challenges presented by the move to a virtual format, the VHD state contest saw high student participation. This high turnout demonstrates the importance of the program to those who participate and the dedication of Virginia's students, teachers, and parents.

Virginia History Day is the state affiliate of the National History Day program. Similar to science fair, but for history, the National History Day Contest was founded in 1974 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. "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 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.

The Virginia Museum of History & Culture is located at 428 N Arthur Ashe Boulevard in Richmond's Museum District. Hours are Monday – Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for the galleries and museum shop, Monday – Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for the research library. For more information call 804.340.1800, visit VirginiaHistory.org, or connect on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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