

TOPIC: History

POSITION STATEMENT

Slavery is a key component to Virginia's history and it shouldn't be glossed over.

SUGGESTED USE

- How is Virginia navigating its history with slavery?
- How are historical institutions framing the narrative of slavery?

CORE MESSAGES

- Virginia is committed to telling the whole story of our history in an inclusive, authentic way.
- The state as well as historical sites are investing in initiatives that will help tell Virginia's full story, inclusive of its history with slavery.
- Virginia is home to historical sites that are leading the way in telling the full story of American history.
- Even with its history of slavery, Virginia is where African Americans reached great achievement, and Virginia historical sites are working to make sure these stories are heard.

PROOF POINTS

- Governor Ralph Northam unveiled a proposal in December 2020 to invest about \$25 million to reimagine four of Virginia's historical sites — including nearly \$11 million to transform Monument Avenue in Richmond — in an effort to help “tell the true story of our past.” Northam's proposal also includes a \$9 million investment to develop a Slavery Heritage Site, helping to preserve the Devil's Half-Acre as a historical site, and improving the Slave Trail in Shockoe Bottom.
- Examples of historical sites that are leading the way in telling the full story of American history include Monticello, American Civil War Museum, Montpelier, Fort Monroe, Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia, Virginia Museum of History and Culture, The Harrison Museum of African American Culture.
- Examples of historical sites that are broadening the historical narrative to be inclusive of multiple voices: Monticello's traveling exhibition “Paradox of Liberty:

Slavery at Jefferson’s Monticello”; Montpelier’s exhibition “The Mere Distinction of Colour”; the archeological dig at Colonial Williamsburg to uncover one of America’s first Black churches; as well as exhibits at Mount Vernon, Fort Monroe, American Civil War Center, and Jamestown Settlement & American Revolution Museum at Yorktown.

- Examples of influential Black Virginians:
 - Educators: Booker T. Washington, Robert Russa Moton, Virginia Randolph, Roger Arliner Young, Henrietta Lacks, and others
 - Public Figures: Mildred Loving, Maggie L. Walker, L. Douglas Wilder, Barbara Johns, Oliver White Hill, Vernon Johns, Royal L. Bolling, Henry L. Marsh III, and others
 - Musicians & Entertainers: Bill “Mr. Bojangles” Robinson, Ella Fitzgerald, Wanda Sykes, Missy Elliott, Timbaland, Pharrell Williams, D’Angelo, and others
 - Athletes: Dr. Robert Walter “Whirlwind” Johnson, Arthur Ashe, Wendell Scott, Pernelle Whitaker, LaShawn Merritt, Gabrielle Douglas, Allen Iverson, Willie Lanier, and others

AUDIENCE SEGMENTS

- Black travelers
- Non-Black travelers interested in inclusive experiences