

# *Williamsburg was a community of aspiration and contradiction —*

## **THE REVOLUTION IS HERE**

### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



For nearly a century, Colonial Williamsburg has inspired the nation and the world by discovering, curating and presenting fact-based information about American history through innovative, compelling and creatively designed programming. Our unwavering commitment to authenticity has earned the Foundation a place among Americans' most trusted institutions and today — to best serve them during a time when they need Colonial Williamsburg the most — we must accelerate our work and engage as many citizens as possible.

So many of the nation's events leading to the American Revolution took place in Williamsburg, where revolution was discussed in the Raleigh Tavern and many of the ideas that led to American democracy were born. Today, this revolutionary approach is embodied by our unwavering commitment to discovering the stories of the past and presenting them to our nation and the world.

In 2026, we will celebrate our nation's 250th anniversary and the Foundation's centennial. Through *The Power of Place — The Centennial Campaign for Colonial Williamsburg* we will expand our programming and advance our mission in exciting and impactful ways, maximizing our capabilities and our ability to reach and inspire people by investing in preservation, education and civic engagement.

Thanks to the extraordinary vision of the Rev. Dr. W.A.R. Goodwin and the belief and investment of John D. Rockefeller Jr., Colonial Williamsburg has become the largest American living history museum and its contributions to the nation continue to amaze generations of guests. With your support, involvement and generosity, we will build on their legacy and inspire people across the country and around the globe.

Learn more about the Campaign and our work through this guide. I hope you will join us on this journey as we write the next chapter for the Foundation — which aspires to be its most impactful yet.

Sincerely,

Cliff Fleet

*President & CEO*

*Colin G. and Nancy N. Campbell Distinguished Presidential Chair*





# *The* CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN for COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

THE POWER OF PLACE. THE POWER OF STORIES. THE POWER OF IDEAS.

*Before our nation  
was born, many  
kinds of people  
lived together  
in and around  
Williamsburg.*

Some had come by choice, hoping to find opportunity and build a new life. Others were captured and brought by force, their lives and life's work exploited by others who bought and sold them as property. Indigenous people, who had been here long before any newcomers arrived, found their world upended and their lives uprooted.

In Williamsburg, all kinds of people from many different places, and in very different circumstances, worked and sacrificed, endured and achieved. It was a community of aspiration and contradiction — and it became a crucible for revolution.

Above (l-r): Journeyman Blacksmith Aislinn Lewis works at a forge in the James Anderson Blacksmith Shop & Public Armoury. Indigenous Communities Engagement Manager Chris Custalow and Indigenous Historian Fallon Burner in the Historic Garden, which focuses on 18th-century gardening practices. Right: Nation Builder Rev. Gowan Pamphlet, portrayed by James Ingram.



## Colonial Williamsburg

Tensions with England mounted over fundamental civil and economic rights for Americans. Williamsburg responded. Within the government halls, homes and taverns of this colonial capital city, men debated and codified the ideals and principles that would define a new nation. Freedom and human dignity. Self-determination and representative government. “Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” These were worth fighting for, and so the Revolutionary Army was mustered in Williamsburg.

Virginia’s leaders then voted in Williamsburg to risk everything — to propose American independence. In the face of unimaginable odds, America’s colonies defied the most powerful empire on Earth. In so doing, they launched a new nation that forever altered the course of history.



### Places have power. Stories have power. Ideas have power.

These same rights and liberties were later enshrined in our Constitution — accessible for some but still denied to many, ensuring that America’s struggles for freedom would continue. Yet the revolutionary spirit that began here 250 years ago changed the world. It has inspired every generation and every movement for equality, dignity and liberty across America. It has inspired men and women everywhere seeking freedom and a better way of life.

Our nation’s origin story begins in Williamsburg. Here, in this capital city of Virginia we see ambition and idealism alongside conflict and struggle. We experience courage and daring, ingenuity, determination and pragmatism. We see the face of suffering and endurance. In Williamsburg, we can understand the sorrows, fears, joys and achievements of the people of that time and place — and realize how closely related they are to our own.

“That the future may learn from the past.” Never has the mission of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation been more important. The goal of the Campaign is to ensure that our nation’s origin story becomes a shared American story to inspire us all.

To fully realize our ambitious goals by 2026, Colonial Williamsburg will embark on this transformational fundraising campaign to raise \$600 million to magnify the Foundation’s impact on the nation and the world.

*The pillars of the Campaign are Preservation, Education and Civic Engagement. Concurrently, The Colonial Williamsburg Fund will provide unrestricted support while engaging a broad base of loyal friends as well as new donors.*

We will dedicate ourselves to learning from a wider and more diverse audience in our ongoing pursuit to teach the lessons of our past to positively shape the present and build a brighter future for all Americans and the world.



# *Never-ending discovery –* **THE POWER OF PRESERVATION**

*“A recovered artifact serves as a tangible link between one life and another, often separated by hundreds of years and vastly different experiences.”* — Jack Gary, Director of Archaeology

The restoration and preservation of Williamsburg, the capital of the largest, most powerful and intellectually influential colony at the time of the American Revolution, began in 1926 and has been ongoing ever since. Through the Centennial Campaign, we will protect, strengthen and enhance our ability to preserve and discover the past for present and future generations, building on our history of groundbreaking work in this field.

**\$150 MILLION  
INVESTMENT**

Colonial Williamsburg’s 301-acre Historic Area is the world’s largest American history museum. With 89 original buildings, 225 period rooms and over 600 buildings restored or reconstructed based on extensive archaeological, architectural and documentary research, the stage is set to share and interpret America’s founding story.

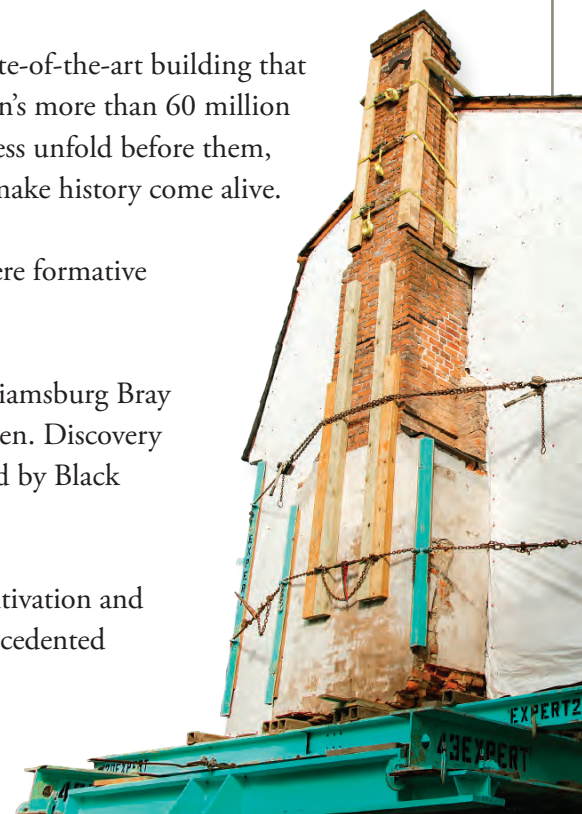
The work of our world-class preservationists, archaeologists and scholars greatly enhances and expands our preservation efforts. This ongoing work strengthens our ability to discover and tell an authentic story about many who lived and worked in 18th-century Williamsburg, while uncovering new information about stories we long thought we already knew and those not yet discovered.

We plan to build the Colin G. and Nancy N. Campbell Archaeology Center, a state-of-the-art building that will provide much-needed modern laboratory and storage space for the Foundation’s more than 60 million artifacts. It will be open to the public daily so guests can watch the discovery process unfold before them, learn about archaeology and our world-class program, and view the artifacts that make history come alive.

Discovery also takes place within the Historic Area, a powerful teaching space where formative national events occurred.

African American history will be greatly expanded with the restoration of the Williamsburg Bray School, the nation’s oldest structure used to educate enslaved and free Black children. Discovery will also happen with the reconstruction of the nation’s first Black church, founded by Black worshipers in 1776.

Through a significantly expanded horticultural program we will teach about the cultivation and gardening practices of African Virginians, American Indians and Europeans. Unprecedented







Above: A rendering of the new Campbell Archaeology Center opening in 2025. Below: In February 2023, the Williamsburg Bray School building was moved from the William & Mary campus to the Historic Area. Upper inset, right: Archaeological Field Technician DeShondra Dandridge speaks with a guest at the Historic First Baptist Church archaeology site. Lower inset, right: Executive Director of Architectural Preservation Matt Webster marks roof beams to be removed for cataloging at the Bray School.



access to our irreplaceable colonial-era breeds of animals will happen at a reconstructed Randolph Stable.

Uncovering the past will take place at the Magazine, which we will restore to its original appearance by 2025, the 250th anniversary of the Gunpowder Incident, one of the seminal events leading to the American Revolution.

Discovery also abounds during a visit to the Governor’s Palace, Capitol, Raleigh Tavern, Courthouse, Art Museums and many other sites where we teach founding principles as well as the rights and responsibilities of citizens.



*This time provides extraordinary opportunities to curate and preserve powerful discoveries that are critical to Colonial Williamsburg’s ability to tell complete stories from diverse points of view.*



**PRESERVATION  
PRIORITY PROJECTS**

- > The Colin G. and Nancy N. Campbell Archaeology Center and CW Archaeology
- > The Magazine and Military Programs
- > Randolph Stable and Rare Breeds
- > Historic First Baptist Church
- > Williamsburg Bray School
- > Custis Square
- > The Goodwin Building
- > Colonial Williamsburg Nursery



# Our contribution to the Nation – **THE POWER OF EDUCATION**

*“Our mission is to engage our guests with the stories of the people who took the first steps toward creating a more perfect union.”* — Beth Kelly, Vice President for Research, Training and Program Design

Education has long been central to the work of the Foundation, and the Campaign will enable Williamsburg to be the intellectual center for the nation’s founding as we approach 2026. We will do this by enlisting the finest educators; forming strategic partnerships; supporting scholarly research and programming; telling authentic historical accounts through a more diverse interpretive corps; and reaching more teachers and students across the country and around the globe, both in person and through digital channels.

The freedoms for which the colonists fought — speech, the press, religion, assembly — are critically important for today’s complex world and are a cornerstone of our educational programming. For example, *Freedom’s Paradox* explores the institution of slavery and the movement for independence of the enslaved and free members of the Black community.

We believe in preserving these rights and remembering the path to independence and self-government by America’s earliest patriots, Indigenous and enslaved individuals, women, shopkeepers, laborers, farmers and tradespeople. The stories of these individuals who formed a community and contributed to the nation’s founding come powerfully alive through historic interpretation, one of Colonial Williamsburg’s unique and innovative contributions to American education. Our goal is to expand the power of historic interpretation through existing sites and new locations including the American Indian Encampment, the reconstructed Historic First Baptist Church, the Williamsburg Bray School and through our increasingly popular virtual programming.

In 2021, the *Washington Post* included Colonial Williamsburg’s theater programming in its “Best of Theater” feature, the only museum in this top-ten listing to achieve this distinction. The program has been praised for its intelligent writing, excellent quality of performances and realistic portrayals of the enslaved and free people of the 18th century. Our opportunity is not only to continue these performances, but to provide them to much larger audiences, both in the Historic Area and in formats that can reach people wherever they live.







*Left: Actor Interpreter Hope Wright portrays Elizabeth DeRosario in the play Good Progress. Inset: Journeyman Farmer Marshall Scheetz harvests corn at Ewing Field. Above: Owen and Ethan practice their lessons at the spinet at the Benjamin Powell House.*

**EDUCATION  
PRIORITY PROJECTS**

- > American Indian Initiative
- > Museum Theater
- > Historic Farming and Gardening

**\$250 MILLION  
INVESTMENT**

In 2020, when the pandemic precluded many of our onsite programs, we pivoted quickly to develop online courses that provided educators with experiences and lessons they could find only in Williamsburg. Participants discovered Colonial Williamsburg as a beacon for primary-source-centered, standards-based historical content as well as innovative and engaging teaching strategies for bringing history to life for students.

The Foundation renewed a partnership with William & Mary and the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture. The Omohundro Institute, established by the two institutions in 1943, has grown into the nation's leading academic authority on historical research in all aspects of early America. This partnership helps support our work to tell fact-based history of our nation's founding.



*Time is of the essence as we plan for our future.*

# Pursuing a more perfect Union – THE POWER OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

*“We need to understand and embrace our own complex national narrative and how its earliest chapters affect and resonate in America today as we tackle our most difficult problems.”* — Cliff Fleet, President & CEO  
Colin G. and Nancy N. Campbell Distinguished Presidential Chair

From the very beginning, Americans have always sought to create a more perfect union. At this moment, Colonial Williamsburg’s role to teach our history and act as a thought leader for the nation and the world has never been more important. Through the Campaign, we will foster discussions on topics involving American democracy, the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and civic engagement.

The track record for the Foundation’s ability to assemble and deliver inspiring content is compelling. Our programming is the recipient of 16 Emmy Awards and the Japan Prize, which was given in recognition of the Foundation’s contributions across the globe.

**\$80 MILLION  
INVESTMENT**

To make a real difference it is no longer enough to be the largest site-based American history museum. To break through barriers, we must now become the world’s largest American history virtual museum.

We are making Colonial Williamsburg’s unique assets available to the world, not just to those who visit in person. Through the Campaign, we will reach people and engage them in constructive dialogue and through creatively presented, accessible and impactful programming.

The Foundation is leading the way by convening partners in planning for the nation’s 250th anniversary in 2026. In 2023, representatives from 34 states traveled to the Historic Area for the VA250 planning event. This inaugural gathering became a launching point for an annual conference in Williamsburg, which will strengthen these partnerships and create an impact across the nation in 2026.

Since 1989, the Bob and Marion Wilson Teacher Institute of Colonial Williamsburg has prepared thousands of teachers and, through them, millions of students with engaging lessons about history and civics rooted in fact. During the past several years, we have developed digital programs and now we are creating

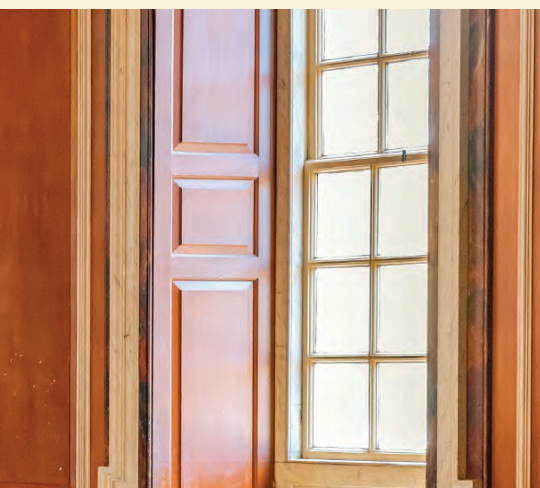
*Nation Builder Thomas Jefferson, portrayed by Kurt Smith.*







*A group of teachers visits the Capitol for the ensemble program, Resolved: An American Experiment, in the General Court. Inset, right: Journeyman Carpenter Ayinde Martin offers instruction on how teachers can move a 500-pound log with rollers.*



a center for the Teacher Institute to provide our staff and educators a dedicated place for learning.

We also have created the Colonial Williamsburg Innovation Studios to bring our unique content to the hundreds of millions of Americans who may never be able to visit us in-person. Podcasts represent a powerful way to reach new audiences and we now have responsibility for one of the world's largest history podcasts, "Ben Franklin's World," which recently surpassed 11 million downloads. Additionally, we are relaunching history.org with interdisciplinary social studies curriculum that teachers can deploy in their classrooms.



*Through this investment in civic engagement, we will shape the way educators, students and citizens access our resources, reach new generations with engaging experiences, and connect with all citizens who are drawn to participate in complex conversations.*

With an intensifying focus on the always evolving American experiment, we have an opportunity to have an impact on the lives of many Americans by encouraging civic engagement and enhancing their knowledge of our shared history.

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PRIORITY PROJECTS

- > Colonial Williamsburg Innovation Studios
- > Ben Franklin's World Podcast
- > history.org
- > Bob and Marion Wilson Teacher Institute



# THE COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG FUND

## *The Power of Stability & Flexibility*

*“Gifts to the Fund allow us to pursue excellence in everything we do and reach and impact an ever-broadening audience with the people, stories, lessons and ideals of early American history.”* — Earl T. Granger III, Chief Development Officer/Senior Vice President

The Colonial Williamsburg Fund provides unrestricted ongoing support to the Foundation. This important stream of steady funding gives the Foundation stability and flexibility. Annual support allows the Foundation to confidently plan for the future; expand our existing programs; budget for new projects and programs; and acquire and retain the best talent.

**\$120 MILLION  
INVESTMENT**



*A carriage drives along Duke of Gloucester Street on a spring day. (Inset:) The Magazine, which was at the center of the Gunpowder Incident of 1775, is undergoing restoration that will more accurately represent its original design.*



> *“We know our nation has not yet achieved our highest ideals and there is much work left to be done. Colonial Williamsburg’s mission is to allow every American to see themselves through the mirror of our shared history.”* — Carly Fiorina, Chair, Colonial Williamsburg Board of Trustees

## THE TIME IS NOW — *Rediscovering a Common Purpose*

Today, misinformation and distortion threaten the very health of our democracy. We are surrounded by the superficial and the fleeting, confusion and ignorance.

Rediscovering what binds us together as Americans and gives us common purpose is paramount. We have always depended upon our citizenry to cherish and uphold the principles and ideals first debated here in Williamsburg.

Now, more than ever, we must preserve the actual places where our nation’s very soul took shape. Now, more than ever, Americans need to be inspired by the stories of the real people who helped birth a revolution. Now, more than ever, Americans must understand the role we each play in the great, unfinished work to “create a more perfect union.”

Join us now, so that our nation’s origin story becomes a shared American story. Join us now, so that this place and these stories can lift up every American and become a source of pride. Join us now, so that each citizen feels a renewed belonging, commitment and sense of purpose as we commemorate our nation’s 250th anniversary.



*Nancy Campbell and Director of Archaeology Jack Gary join those breaking ground on the Campbell Archaeology Center on April 21, 2023.*



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