A Common Cause to All - A Convening of States on the 250th Anniversary of the Call for Committees of Correspondence

March 10-12, 2023

About the Signature Conference

During this first gathering of states to plan for 250th anniversary of American independence, planners from 34 states and more than 50 Virginia localities gathered in Williamsburg for a weekend of collaboration, cooperation, and education.

Mirroring the Committees of Correspondence, through which colonies began to communicate and unify action, A Common Cause to All catapulted Virginia into a national leadership role for the semiquincentennial, convening planners, seeking partnerships, and sharing information. The event was overwhelmingly well-received, with a chorus of requests for the continuation of such convenings each year.

The nearly 300 attendees engaged in presentation of the latest data on what Americans are looking for in the 250th, networking opportunities, and inspiration provided by the commission and its partners, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, the Virginia Museum of History and Culture and the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation. Culminating the weekend, an emotion-packed Closing Ceremony was held on the steps of the Raleigh Tavern, where Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and other members of Virginia’s Committee of Correspondence met, 250 years earlier. Delegates unanimously adopted a Resolution of the States Gathered in Partnership, pledging to join in a new common cause – for all Americans to unite in reflection, celebration, and aspiration as we continue our national journey together.

“...a common cause to all... to produce a unity of action; and for this purpose that a committee of correspondence in each colony would be the best instrument for intercommunication; and that their first measure would probably be, to propose a meeting of deputies from every colony, at some central place, who should be charged with the direction of the measures which should be taken by all.”

- Thomas Jefferson
Presentations, Distinguished Guests and Speakers included:

**Friday Keynote Speaker**
Carly Fiorina, Chair
The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

**Saturday Keynote Speaker**
Bill Whitaker
60 Minutes Correspondent

**Opportunities of the Semiquincentennial**
John Dichtl, President & CEO, AASLH

**Saturday Featured Remarks**
Stacy Schiff, Pulitzer Prize-winning Author

**Americans, Our History, and the 250th**
Susie Wilkening, President of Wilkening Consulting

**Special Remarks**
Justice Anthony Kennedy
United States Supreme Court Justice, Retired
More in Common: Navigating the Perceived Political Divide

Panel Discussion: Creating a Meaningful Commemoration for all Americans

Matt Williams, Managing Director and Chief Growth Officer of Brand Federation

Christy Coleman, Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation; Valerie Paley, New York Historical Society; Nat Scheidley, Revolutionary Spaces; Scott Stephenson, Museum of the American Revolution; Noelle Trent, National Civil Rights Museum; Barbara Hamm Lee, Moderator

Revolutionary Road Trips with Darley

VA250 Overview, Plans and Support to Local Committees

Darley Newman, Emmy Award-winning PBS Travel Host

Cheryl Wilson, VA250 Executive Director

By the numbers…

Guests traveled from 34 states and more than 51 localities across Virginia, staying in hotels and enjoying restaurants throughout the Historic Triangle. News coverage including articles from TIME Magazine and the Wall Street Journal, broadcast spots and blogs appeared in 15 media outlets. Social media impressions were nearly 11,000 and website interaction saw an increase of 54% for the event.
What people are saying

“[During the fireworks], I not only thought about the magnitude of our mutual endeavor, but I realized how appreciated I felt. This weekend reminded me why our work matters, and I felt personally moved and inspired.”

This was the best conference I’ve ever attended. Thank you. Hats off to planners, CW staff, sponsors etc. You made Virginia look great!!!!
Virginia

"Proud to be from Virginia, the state that is clearly ahead of all others as well as the national effort"
Virginia

“Over-the-top inspirational. Encouraging Virginia to 'dream big, then go bigger' for the 250th, the event showed how to commemorate the anniversary of the Committees of Correspondence for the group to bounce from to create compelling 250th events and experiences in our own localities and regions.”
Virginia

“This was an amazing opportunity to gather with so many states and discuss our shared challenges and opportunities. We are so grateful for VA250 planning and hosting this meeting. It felt like a real jump-start to collaboration, something not as easily achieved via virtual meetings.”
North Carolina

“I believe this will be remembered as a watershed moment in the nation's preparation for the 250th. Kudos to Virginia.”
Pennsylvania
A Closer Look at Numbers

Social Media Impact

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Platform</th>
<th>Facebook</th>
<th>Instagram</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>LinkedIn</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reach/Impressions</td>
<td>5,997</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>2,319</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>9,841</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>1,046</td>
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<tr>
<td>Follows from Mar 1 - 23</td>
<td>+61</td>
<td>+ 80</td>
<td>+ 23</td>
<td>+ 31</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reach% 28 Day Summary</td>
<td>+41%</td>
<td>+267%</td>
<td>+14.4%</td>
<td>+3,133.3%</td>
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Website Impact – 28 Day Summary (Mar 23)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VA250 Website</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Views</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ 36%</td>
<td>+ 34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Common Cause Event Page</td>
<td>+ 50%</td>
<td>+ 54%</td>
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In the Media

Commission Planning America’s 250th Anniversary Attemps Reset

March 23, 2023 – TIME Magazine – Carly Fiorina
Finding Our Common Cause for America’s 250th Birthday

March 27, 2023 – American Association for State and Local History Blog – John Dichtl
A Common Cause to All

March 18, 2023 - Revolutionary NY 250
A Common Cause for All: A Convening of States on the 250th Anniversary of the call for Committees of Correspondence
A Signature Event of the Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission

March 14, 2023 - Virginia Gazette - Sian Wilkerson
Gearing up for America’s 250th birthday, Colonial Williamsburg honors critical first step

March 12, 2023 - 13 News Now
Organizers gather in Williamsburg to begin planning for America's 250th anniversary

March 12, 2023 - Richmond Times-Dispatch - Sean Jones
March 13, 2023 – The Roanoke Times
March 14, 2023 – The Free Lance-Star
March 14, 2023 – The News Virginian
March 20, 2023 – Arizona Daily Star
March 20, 2023 – Omaha World-Herald
March 20, 2023 – Journal Gazette & Times-Courier

Leaders from across U.S. converge on Williamsburg to plan nation’s 250th celebration

March 9, 2023 - Travel Courier - Ian Stalker
Virginia is ready to mark an American milestone

March 9, 2023 - 13 News Now
Historians, planners, leaders to gather in Williamsburg to plan nation's 250th anniversary celebration

February 20, 2023 – Peninsula Chronicle – Barrett Baker
Virginia Is Leading The Way For The Nation's Quarter Millennial Birthday

March 8, 2023 – WY Daily
VA250, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation to Host Nation’s First Planning Event for America’s 250th
March 28 – Virginia Star
Dominion Energy Donates $1 Million to Virginia 250

March 18 – SWVA Today - Sporter
Corporate donation supports statewide programs for America's 250th anniversary

March 15 – Fluvanna Review
Commission Announces $1 million donation to celebrate nation’s 250th anniversary

March 14 – Augusta Free Press – Crystal Graham
$1 million donation to support education programs related to nation’s 250th anniversary

March 13 – Wavy TV 10
Dominion Power donates $1 million to Virginia 250 Commission

March 13 – The Dinwiddie Monitor
Virginia 250 Commission Announces $1 Million Leadership Donation from Dominion Energy to Fuel Virginia’s Commemoration of the Nation’s 250th Anniversary

March 13 – The Prince George Journal
Virginia 250 Commission Announces $1 Million Leadership Donation from Dominion Energy to Fuel Virginia’s Commemoration of the Nation’s 250th Anniversary