

Civil Rights in Education Heritage Trail Conference
Thursday, October 21, 2010 -The Prizery, South Boston, Virginia

Speaker Biographies

Alisa L. Bailey, President and CEO of the Virginia Tourism Corporation

As President and CEO of VTC, Ms. Bailey oversees the agency's \$18 million annual budget and its 71 employees. Tourism in Virginia generates \$19 billion in economic impact, providing \$1.2 billion in state and local taxes and more than 210,000 jobs for Virginians.

Prior to assuming the position in Virginia in January of 2003, Ms. Bailey was State Tourism Commissioner and Chief of West Virginia's Bureau of Commerce. She served on Governor Bob Wise's cabinet coordinating the activities of eight state agencies: Economic & Development Office, Division of Tourism, Department of Natural Resources, Water Development Authority, Division of Labor, Geological Survey, Division of Forestry and Miners' Health & Safety.

During her tenure in Virginia, VTC has won numerous awards for its marketing and advertising efforts including Best Marketing Campaign twice, Best Cooperative Advertising, Best Video, Best Electronic Marketing, Best Travel Guide and Best Niche Marketing Campaign twice from the Travel Industry Association of America. Most recently, VTC was awarded Best Electronic Marketing Award and Best Sustainable Tourism Award from the Southeast Tourism Society. VTC also won a TIA Odyssey Award for International Marketing in 2007. Despite budget setbacks, VTC has set records for Internet visitation, travel guide requests, and leveraging private-sector investment in VTC programs, thus, extending Virginia's marketing reach.

Ms. Bailey has held many positions since earning her Bachelor of Science Degree in Journalism from West Virginia University in 1979. Her previous positions include Administrative Assistant to U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd; Marketing and Communications Director for a regional law firm; Public Information Officer and Administrative Assistant to the West Virginia Attorney General; and Communications Consultant to The West Virginia State Bar.

Ms. Bailey serves on the Travel Industry Association of America's (TIA) standing board and the board of the National Council of State Tourism Directors. She is also past Chairman of Travel South USA, the nation's largest and oldest regional tourism organization. In addition, she is a member of the boards of the Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association, the Richmond Convention and Visitors Bureau, Through Hallowed Ground program, the Blue Ridge Parkway Association and Virginia Civil War Trails.

A native of Charleston, West Virginia, she is a former board member of the West Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association from the Metro Region and has been involved in various philanthropic and civic organizations, including the Charleston Festival Commission, Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), Immigration & Naturalization sponsorship, Kanawha Players, and the Children's Home Society, among others. She is married and the mother of two adult children.

Mitch Bowman, Executive Director, Virginia's Civil War Trails

Mitch Bowman was raised amid the James River Plantations in Charles City Co., Virginia, and is a graduate of the University of Virginia. Throughout the 1980's, he was an officer in the United States Air Force and flew F-111 aircraft in Europe and the Middle East. In 1990, he founded Historic Air Tours, an AAA approved, aerial-tour company based in Williamsburg, Virginia. Before selling his company in 1996, he spent nearly seven years interpreting aspects of Virginia's historic sites that are best seen from the aerial view.

In 1996, he was appointed the executive director of Virginia Civil War Trails, a non-profit organization which has interpreted more than seven hundred Civil War sites throughout Virginia, Maryland and North

Carolina, using directional and interpretive signage to link the sites and create a uniform, “user friendly” experience. In 2001, the National Trust for Historic Preservation listed Virginia Civil War Trails first among the most successful and sustainable heritage tourism programs in the nation.

Mitch Bowman is author of ***WHERE BANNERS FLEW: An Aerial View of Virginia’s History***, published in 1997.

He is the immediate past-chairman of the Southeast Tourism Society, an eleven-state, 600-member organization which promotes travel to the southeastern United States, and currently serves on NOAA’s *Monitor* National Sanctuary Advisory Council and the VA State Parks Advisory Committee.

Todd Christensen, Executive Director, Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Commission

Todd Christensen has worked in the field of community development for his entire professional career. In his most recent position, Todd was the Deputy Director for the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and oversaw all federal and state-funded community development construction programs.

He was recently appointed as the first Executive Director of the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Commission by Senator William Wampler. The Commission, which is composed of 23 appointed members, is tasked with developing a creative economy in Southwest Virginia. Todd has taken a leadership role in the development of what will be the hub of this activity – Heartwood: Southwest Virginia’s Artisan Gateway, a \$16 million, 28,000 square foot facility which broke ground in August, 2009.

Todd has worked extensively in the communities of Southwest Virginia to transform their downtowns into cultural centers and to restructure their economies through entrepreneurial development and a focus on their quality of life. He also played a founding role in the development of The Crooked Road: Virginia’s Heritage Music Trail, and was an integral part in the development of ‘Round the Mountain: Southwest Virginia’s Artisan Network.

Todd is a graduate of the College of William and Mary. He is also the recipient of the 2003 Governor’s Star Award, presented to one state employee each year whose achievements exemplify the mission of the agency, and the 2008 Excellence in Virginia Government award for his work with The Crooked Road and community development efforts in Southwest Virginia.

Joe Elton, Virginia State Parks Director, Department of Conservation & Recreation

Elton has served as the Virginia State Parks Director for 15 years. The award-winning Virginia State Parks are operated by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. Elton is the sixth Virginia State Parks director since the position was created in 1936. In his 15 years of service, he has overseen the most dynamic period of growth and development in Virginia State Park history. During his tenure, DCR has opened six new parks, and five more are in the planning and development stage. He oversees 35 state parks with a total of 70,000 acres. The parks have more than 500 miles of trails, 1,800 campsites, 260 overnight cabins and lodges, 288 full-time positions and hundreds of seasonal positions.

In 2009, Elton was elected to a two-year term as President of the National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD); a board member of the NASPD for six years, he was the immediate past vice president. In 2007 Elton received the NASPD Distinguished Service Award “in recognition of many years of dedicated service and inspired leadership to the conservation, interpretation and enhancement of our nation’s natural and cultural state park treasures.” A focus of Elton’s efforts in Virginia State Parks has been the personal experience of each of the more than 7.2 million annual visitors.

The state park system is responsible for generating more than \$170 million in annual economic impact statewide. In 2001 Virginia State Parks received the national gold medal award for “excellence in parks and recreation management.” Elton is a graduate of Ohio State University, the Commonwealth Management Institute, and the Virginia Executive Institute at Virginia Commonwealth University’s Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs. He lives in Powhatan, Va., with his wife, Patty. They have two adult sons, Alex and Lance.

Basil Gooden, Principal Deputy Director, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

As the Principal Deputy Director of VDHC, Basil Gooden is primarily responsible for assisting in the daily management and policy oversight of this state agency with an annual budget of more than \$100 million and 100 employees. His primary administrative responsibilities include strategic management, technology advancement, and community development initiatives in economically distressed communities throughout Virginia. Additionally, he serves as a coordinator of the annual Governor's Housing Conference and leads the fundraising efforts for the event.

Prior to assuming his current position, Basil worked at Virginia Tech where he served as the Coordinator of Outreach and Community Relations. Some of his additional professional experiences include working four years as a Legislative Assistant for a U.S. Congressman and receiving a Congressional Fellowship to work for a U.S. Senator.

Basil is a native of Buckingham County, Virginia. He received a B.A. in Political Science from Virginia Tech and holds a Master of Social Work (MSW) from Syracuse University. Additionally, he is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he received a Master of Public Health (MPH) and a Ph.D. in 1998.

Robert Nieweg, Director and Regional Attorney, Southern Field Office, the National Trust for Historic Preservation

Robert directs the Southern Field Office, which provides service to preservationists in Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. He has worked as a preservation advocate since 1989, when he directed Landmark West, a citizens group working to preserve Manhattan's Upper West Side. Since joining the staff of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1995, Rob has worked to preserve historic places and strengthen the grass-roots preservation movement in Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, West Virginia, Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Virginia – his home state. Rob works closely with many historic preservation organizations, including Preservation Virginia, Preservation Maryland, DC Preservation League, and Preservation Alliance of West Virginia.

Rob represented the National Trust in the Spotsylvania Battlefields Coalition, which helped to save key parts of the 1863 Chancellorsville Battlefield. He also represents the National Trust in the Cornerstones Coalition, which championed establishment in 2002 of the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. Rob represents the National Trust in the Wilderness Battlefield Coalition which is seeking to protect the battlefield as well as the Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park against the controversial "Wilderness Walmart" project. Governor Tim Kaine appointed Rob to serve on the preservation advisory group for the redevelopment of Fort Monroe, a National Historic Landmark in Hampton, Virginia. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership, working to protect the 175-mile-long national heritage area. Rob helped rescue the COMSAT Laboratories Building, Cesar Pelli's 1969 Modernist masterpiece in Montgomery County, Maryland. He has been a key player in the National Trust's effort to preserve St. Elizabeths Hospital, a National Historic Landmark in the District of Columbia currently being redeveloped to accommodate a new headquarters for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Rob led the National Trust's campaign to reverse the Army's decision to replace the authentic tomb monument at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery. And, Rob directed the Martinsville & Henry County (VA) Rural Heritage Development Project, a pilot project of the National Trust's nationwide rural preservation and small town revitalization initiative.

Rob Nieweg holds a B.A. in history from Vassar College and an M.S. in historic preservation from Columbia University. He is a graduate of the University at Buffalo Law School and a member of the New York State Bar. Rob, his wife Kelly Ferris, and their ten-year-old daughter Katie, live in Arlington County, Virginia.

Tim Pfohl, Grants Administration, Program Director, Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission

Tim Pfohl has served on the staff of the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission since 2002, overseeing implementation of grant programs that to date have invested more than \$600 million of tobacco settlement funds in local and regional economic revitalization projects in Virginia's tobacco-growing regions. He and two regional field staff provide grant recommendations and monitoring to the 31-member Commission and its Economic Development, Education, Agribusiness, Reserve and Special Projects programs. He works closely with several other state and federal funding agencies, and has represented the Commission on Virginia state agency workgroups for energy project recruitment, rural economic development planning, entrepreneur assistance programs and strategies for developing mega-sites and recruiting mega-projects.

Prior to joining the Tobacco Commission, Tim provided technical assistance and grants management for 15 years at the Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development. Previous positions in urban planning and market research include the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, Chesterfield County VA and M&T Bank in Buffalo NY.

He holds a BA in Urban Economics from the University of Michigan and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is also a graduate of VCU's Commonwealth Management and Virginia Executive Institutes.

Frank Ruff, Virginia Senate, 15th District

Frank was elected to serve in the Virginia Senate in November 2000 to fill the unexpired term of the late Richard Holland. Prior to Frank's election to the Virginia Senate, he served in the Virginia House of Delegates since first elected in 1993.

Senate standing assignments include service on the Committee on Education and Health, the Committee on General Laws, the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Committee on Local Government. Frank serves on several boards and commissions. His service includes the Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission, where he was elected as Vice-chairman in 2010. Additionally he chairs the Education Committee. He also serves on the Southside Economic Development Committee and the Executive Committee. Frank serves as Chairman of the Center for Rural Virginia that is focused on serving the needs and opportunities of the rural parts of Virginia. As well, he serves on the Martin Luther King Commission

Frank is involved in several national organizations. He serves on the Commerce and Trade Committee of the American Legislative Exchange Council. He serves on the Agriculture Committees of the National Council of State Legislators and the Southern Legislative Council. His work also includes responsibilities on national legislative organizations. Frank serves on the Trade and Economic Development Committee of the American Legislative Exchange Council and on the Agriculture Committee of the Southern Legislative Association.

For the last several years Frank has focused on economic development and education and workforce training in rural Virginia. From assistance with funding for regional industrial parks to improving our state park facilities to enhance tourism, from development of a heavy equipment training program to the creation of a much needed law enforcement hazardous driving school, he has been a leader in the fight for the small-town communities across the Fifteenth Senate District.

Frank led the effort for Forgivable Loans through the Tobacco Commission as a way to educate Southern Virginia's young people and to encourage them to return to the region to re-establish their roots in the region. He has worked to establish workforce centers throughout Southern and Southwest Virginia as well as specialized training programs at the community colleges. Frank and his wife, Jessie, have four children - sons, Frank M. "Miller" III, 26(wife - Jessica), Thomas, 21, David, 20, and daughter Genny, 16. They are active members of Clarksville Presbyterian Church where Frank serves as an Elder.

Sherry Swinson, Economic Development Director, Powhatan County & President, Virginia's Retreat

Sherry Swinson has served as the Director of Economic Development in Powhatan County since December 2006. She has been a member of Virginia's Retreat since its inception in 1993 and served as chair from 2000-02 and again from 2009 to present. A true believer in the benefits of outdoor recreation to one's mind and spirit, as well as the overall health of a community and its economic vitality, Swinson is a regular user of State Park Trails. She was appointed to the Board of Conservation and Recreation by Governor Mark Warner in 2002 and reappointed to that Board by Governor Tim Kaine in 2009.

Sherry earned a B.S. in English from Longwood College, and has completed graduate work in English and in Public Administration at Longwood College and Virginia Commonwealth University. She was a member of the Old Dominion Resource Conservation and Development Council, the organization which founded the Civil Rights In Education Heritage Trail, from 1992-2007, serving as secretary (1997-98), vice-chair (1998-00), and chair (2001-03). In 2001, Sherry was named State Council Member of the Year;

Sherry has participated in the Virginia Institute for Economic Development and the Virginia Certified Planning Commissioners Program in 1992, and the Virginia Certified Planning Commissioners Graduate Seminars, 1993-98. She was appointed to the State Board of Conservation and Recreation by Governor Mark Warner and served from 2002-2008, including tenures as vice-chair (2003-2006) and chair (2006-2008).

Jeff Trollinger, Program Manager for the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' (VDGIF) Watchable Wildlife Program

Jeff Trollinger was promoted to his current position in 2001. He has worked with or for the Department since 1987 where he began as an undergraduate at Virginia Tech.

Jeff is originally from Luray, Virginia. He moved to Blacksburg in 1982 to pursue his education and graduated from Virginia Tech with a B.S. in Wildlife Management in 1987. He received his second B.S. in 1995 in Human Resource Management from Bluefield College. He was transferred to Richmond in 1995 after accepting a full-time job with VDGIF. The Wildlife Diversity Division recognized him in 2007 for outstanding efforts in developing the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail. In 2009, he was recognized with the Department's Wildlife Biologist of the Year Award and in 2010 the Virginia Chapter of the Wildlife Society presented him with the Henry S. Mosby Professional Award. He has co-authored four publications for which he has received several regional and national awards, and he has been featured in the Department's award-winning video "A Look Outside." In addition, he co-edited a publication with the Colorado Division of Wildlife on Wildlife Viewing and Photography Blinds. He currently co-chairs the Wildlife Viewing and Nature Tourism Association, the national professional organization for wildlife viewing programs.

Over the past 19 years, he has developed skills in public information, public relations, event planning, urban wildlife concerns, fish and wildlife databases, and working with wildlife volunteers. In his spare time he reads science fiction, maintains the gardens at his home, goes birdwatching, and travels back to the mountains as often as possible.

Lacy Ward, Jr., Director, Robert Russa Moton Museum, A Center for the Study of Civil Rights in Education

Lacy Ward, Jr. is Director of the Robert Russa Moton Museum in Farmville, Virginia. The Museum honors the role Prince Edward County played in bringing about racial desegregation in America's public schools, including the 1951 Moton High student strike; the 1954 and 1955 Brown v. Board Supreme Court decisions; the 1959 public school closings; the 1963-64 Prince Edward Free Schools; and the 1964 public schools' reopening.

Prior to joining the Moton Museum, Ward served as an assistant professor and project manager at Central Virginia Community College, as well as executive director of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Central Virginia. Ward returned to Central Virginia from Tuskegee, Alabama, where he served as superintendent of the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, became vice-president for marketing and communications at Tuskegee University, and ran second in a field of seven candidates in a special election for Alabama House District 82. In 2002 he was appointed by President George W. Bush to serve on the Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Commission. A semi-native Virginian who has family ties back to the Colonial Era in Prince Edward County, but was born in Philadelphia because his mother was out of town at the time, Ward served on the staffs of two Virginia congressmen. During nine years on active duty as a Naval Flight Officer commanding the Grumman E-2C Hawkeye, Ward logged more than 1,000 military flight hours and completed over 200 carrier-based missions. He is a veteran of the Gulf War and participated in combat operations in the Libyan and Iranian theaters. Ward received his master's degree from Virginia Tech and his bachelor's degree from Virginia State University. He is a member of the Virginia Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights; and serves on the boards of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Living History and Public Policy Center; Preservation Virginia; the Virginia Association of Museums; and the Farmville Area Chamber of Commerce. Ward is married to the former Ardeania Wesley, a graduate of Saint Paul's College and Hollins University. They have five adult children and reside in Prospect, Virginia

Mark Warner, US Senator from Virginia

Mark Warner was born in Indiana and raised in Connecticut. He was the first member of his family to graduate from college, earning an undergraduate degree from The George Washington University and a law degree from Harvard. He co-founded the cellular phone company Nextel and made early investments in hundreds of promising new companies that ultimately created thousands of jobs.

From 2002 to 2006, Senator Warner served as Governor of Virginia during its worst economic recession in 20 years. He worked in a bipartisan way to make Virginia state government more modern, effective and affordable, and his efforts ultimately turned record deficits into a budget surplus. When Governor Warner left office in 2006, Virginia was nationally recognized as the country's "best-managed state" and the "best state for business." Senator Warner, his wife Lisa, and their three daughters live in Alexandria, Virginia.

Carl B. Westmoreland, Senior Advisor for Historic Preservation, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

For the last four decades, Carl B. Westmoreland has been a leader in urban revitalization and preservation, from the grassroots community level to national and international arenas. In a 1971 newspaper article, he was quoted as saying "I believe in positive fighting within the system," and this philosophy and dedication to improving communities and education through the preservation of history has led him to make a significant impact on every project he has been involved in since the 1960s. Furthermore, not only has he directly influenced communities himself, he has also served as a pioneer for the larger preservation movement, especially African-American historic preservation.

Westmoreland has lived the last 40 years of his life in Cincinnati, a city he has changed in many ways since he first moved there. In the 1960's, he focused his attention on the primarily African-American Mount Auburn community, believing that homeownership and engagement were the keys to making the community a better place. In 1967, he and some neighbors formed the Mount Auburn Good Housing Foundation with 7,000 dollars in seed money from a wealthy Cincinnati. The Foundation began by renovating buildings they believed were most damaging to the community, and quickly became a multimillion dollar operation involved in the renovation of over 2000 homes and businesses and providing technical assistance to other nonprofit housing groups in Cincinnati and nationwide.

Westmoreland's simultaneous interest in preservation as a part of renovation in the neighborhood garnered him much attention, and in the mid '70s he became the first African-American Trustee of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This leadership in preservation led him to be involved in a number of groundbreaking events on a national level, including the Savannah Neighborhood Action Conference:

Tenants and Landlords, which brought together preservationists from all over the country to explore alternatives to deterioration and displacement in inner city neighborhoods. This type of work eventually brought him a nomination in 1979 for the Rockefeller Foundation Award for Historic Preservation.

His association with the National Trust also gave him international prominence, leading him to travel the world working in diverse countries on preservation issues, even serving at one point as part of a six-person delegation to the People's Republic of China. Throughout these activities, Westmoreland never lost his dedication to his hometown and he continued his efforts in Cincinnati neighborhoods, heading organizations small and large from Madisonville Housing Services to the Cincinnati Housing Service to the Ohio Preservation Alliance.

In 1993, Westmoreland received the Louise du Pont Crowninshield Award from the National Trust. They honored him, among other things, for his dedication to both revitalizing and preserving inner city neighborhoods and fostering awareness of urban issues, poverty, and race relations, subjects he examined and re-examined throughout his career. It was Westmoreland's understanding of these issues and his interest in African-American history that spurred him to his next big project – the creation of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

Westmoreland became deeply involved in the founding and development of the Center, which opened its doors in 2004 and has since become a major draw for visitors in Cincinnati. He serves as senior advisor at the Center and curator for its main exhibit, the Slave Pen. The Slave Pen, found in a barn in the small town of Germantown, Kentucky, came to Westmoreland's attention in 1998. He immediately felt a connection and spent four years researching its history and the history and lifestyle of the surrounding community, 12 miles west of Maysville, Kentucky, before dismantling the Pen and reassembling it at the Center. Westmoreland's time and effort paid off in a deep understanding of the complex history of the internal slave trade, which is now interpreted through the Center for over 450,000 visitors a year who can walk through the jail and experience first-hand the emotions that four wood walls can conjure up and learn about the struggles embedded in this country's history.

Today, Westmoreland remains a large presence at the Center and continues to research the history of African-Americans in the United States. His vast experience with complicated issues of neighborhood politics, race relations, preservation and revitalization makes him one of the most valuable resources and leaders in historic preservation in the country, and he continues to inspire young preservationists of all races to this day.

Carla Whitfield, Superintendent, Booker T. Washington National Monument

Carla C. Whitfield officially became the superintendent of Booker T. Washington National Monument in June 2009. Before joining the National Park Service, Whitfield began her career in 1989 as a historical interpreter with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in Virginia. In 1998, she joined the Service by becoming a park ranger in St. Louis, M.O. at the Old Courthouse where the Dred Scott Case was argued.

Prior to taking the helm as Superintendent, Whitfield most recently served as the Regional Planner for Interpretation of the Northeast Region, with responsibility for more than 55 units of the National Park System from Maine southward to Virginia and across the country from the Atlantic Ocean to West Virginia, serving roughly 300 employees.

Carla Whitfield moved up through the National Park Service as an interpretive ranger, supervisory ranger, an interpretive specialist, and a Chief of Interpretation at parks such as Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in Missouri, Cane River Creole National Historical Park in Louisiana, Selma-to-Montgomery National Historic Trail, Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site and the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Sites in Alabama. She has served with distinction garnering three nominations for the highest award in interpretation, the Freeman Tilden Award. Additionally, she has been featured on the front page of the New York Times for seeking broader truths in interpretation and has served as a consultant for the Oprah Winfrey Show.

Whitfield served as vice-president of the African Historical and Genealogical Society, 1996-98, a professional organization located in St. Louis whose mission it is to protect and preserve the story of the African-American experience across the country. Mrs. Whitfield has published and lectured on untold stories and controversial history in parks, at conferences and workshops around the U.S. and beyond. In her previous positions, Mrs. Whitfield has obtained extensive experience in community engagement, gateway community planning, interpretive and general management planning, and inclusionary interpretation.

A native of Williamsburg, Virginia, Whitfield holds degrees in English literature and Chemistry from the University of Virginia. She and her husband John have one child, John, Jr.

David Zilletti, Owner of Buena Vista, Virginia Civil War Trails Site, Powhatan County

David was born and raised in Richmond on the North Side. He spent many weekends and most summers at his great grandfathers farm in the Valley of Virginia, which is how he came by his passion for working with his hands and in agriculture. His wife, Mimi is a fifth generation native of Powhatan. David recounts that “One day after Church and a visit with her (his wife’s) grandfather, we happened upon a run down house and some acreage for sale on 711 with the most beautiful views. My wife’s great grandmother had been born in the home so it was natural for us to bring it back into the family after all those years.”

From the earliest discussions of bringing the Civil War Trails program to Powhatan, David and his wife were on strong advocates. Not only was their land involved with Lee’s return to Richmond, but Mimi’s family was also involved. The Zillettis were already operating a commercial vineyard in the field near the road, so they thought a pull-off would be a nice addition to allow others to learn of the area’s history and at the same time get to see why their historic home was named “Buena Vista”.

David’s day job consists of being an owner in Sycamore Building Company, building custom homes and additions with a specialty in historical properties.

The Zillettis and their 3 sons love Powhatan and its people. David says, “Getting involved with our local community and its leaders has been a most fun and enjoyable experience which I regularly recommend to anyone, especially in a rural setting.”

We also thank our Panel Moderators:

Wanda Jeffress, Member, Board of Trustees, Southern Virginia Higher Education Center
Beverly Hawthorne, Economic Development Director, Lunenburg County (VA)
David Bearinger, Virginia Foundation for Humanities

Our Facilitated Discussion Leaders:

Randal Arno, Director, Southside Office, University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center for
Public Policy
Art Mead, Assistant Director, University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center for Public
Policy
Ben Capozzi, Coordinator, Business of Art & Design, Southern Virginia Higher
Education Center

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