



Voices from the Garden: The Virginia Women's Monument is Nation's First Monument Honoring Full Scope of Women's Achievements

*Seven bronze statues of women representing four centuries of Virginia history
to be unveiled at dedication ceremony on Oct. 14*

Richmond, VA (Oct. 1, 2019) – Historic Virginia women in bronze are gathering on Capitol Square in Richmond to share their stories, many of which had been previously lost to time. **Voices from the Garden: The Virginia Women's Monument** will be dedicated on Monday, October 14 during a ceremony starting at 11 a.m.

The program for the dedication includes special music performances, along with remarks by state officials and members of the Women's Monument Commission. The rain-or-shine event is free and open to the public.

The Virginia Women's Monument is the nation's first on the grounds of any state capitol to showcase the full range of achievements and contributions made by remarkable women in a variety of fields and endeavors. When completed, the monument's life-size bronze statues, along with a Wall of Honor inscribed with the names of 230 notable women and room to add more names in the future, will help tell the whole story about the diversity of accomplishments, ethnicity and thought that shaped the Commonwealth of Virginia over the past 400 years.

Girl Scouts representing three councils in the Commonwealth will unveil seven bronze statues at the dedication: Cockacoeske, Pamunkey chieftain; Anne Burras Laydon, Jamestown colonist; Mary Draper Ingles, frontierswoman; Elizabeth Keckly, seamstress and confidante to Mary Todd Lincoln; Laura Copenhaver, entrepreneur in the textile industry; Virginia Randolph, educator; Adèle Clark, suffragist and artist. More statues will be added as they are funded and completed.

"Like many states, Virginia has seldom recognized or elevated the significant contributions that women have made in every aspect of our great Commonwealth's history and culture," said the Honorable Mary Margaret Whipple, vice chair of the Women's Monument Commission. "I remember the day about 10 years ago when Em Bowles Locker Alsop and her friends – most of them in their 80s and 90s – lobbied the General Assembly members and advocated for a monument on Capitol Square to honor and celebrate the women of Virginia. That seemingly far-fetched proposal is now a spectacular reality that will inspire today's young

people to overcome any obstacles that stand in the way of achieving their dreams, just like the women featured in this unique monument.”

More than \$3.7 million has been raised through generous contributions by individuals, corporations and nonprofit foundations; to date, approximately \$125,000 is still needed to complete the monument. The granite plaza and the Wall of Honor were unveiled in October 2018. Each bronze statue required a financial investment of \$200,000 in order to be commissioned for sculpting by the talented team of artisans, both men and women, at StudioEIS in Brooklyn, N.Y.

For more information about the Virginia Women’s Monument, visit <http://womensmonumentcom.virginia.gov>. To make a contribution to the Virginia Women’s Monument, visit www.virginiacapitol.gov.

Additional event details: Parking meters on the street will not be enforced on Oct. 14 due to the Columbus Day holiday; live streaming available at womensmonumentcom.virginia.gov.

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About the Virginia Capitol Foundation

The Virginia Capitol Foundation is the independent, non-profit, non-partisan, tax-exempt organization supporting the ongoing restoration, preservation, and interpretation of the Virginia Capitol, Capitol Square and Executive Mansion. The VCF serves as the fiscal agent and is also responsible for managing the fundraising for the Virginia Women’s Monument on behalf of the Virginia Women’s Monument Commission. For more information about the Virginia Capitol Foundation or the Virginia Women’s Monument, visit www.virginiacapitol.gov.