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**Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation Awarded
Grant in Support of Virginia Indians Exhibit**

Virginia Foundation for the Humanities awards \$2,500 grant in support of ground-breaking exhibit

MARTINSVILLE, Va. (June 22, 2007) – The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities has awarded the Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation a \$2,500 grant in support of the upcoming special exhibit “Beyond Jamestown: Virginia Indians Yesterday and Today”. The “Beyond Jamestown” exhibit examines Virginia Indian history from Indian perspectives, and shows that Virginia Indian cultures today are vibrant and thriving. The exhibit will be at the new Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville, Virginia from June 30, 2007 through January 20, 2008.

The mission of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities (VFH) is to develop the civic, cultural, and intellectual life of the Commonwealth by creating learning opportunities for all Virginians.

In addition to funding grants for projects such as the “Beyond Jamestown” exhibit, as of July 1, the VFH will become home to the Virginia Indian Heritage Program, to include summer institutes for K-12 teachers; higher education summits to promote educational opportunities for American Indians in Virginia; a grant program for tribes, intertribal groups, museums and others to improve their interpretation of Virginia Indian history; plus continued research on Virginia Indians and a database to house the research on a VFH Web site. The new program is funded in part by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

“The new Heritage program will help redress centuries of historical omission, exclusion, and misrepresentation, and create opportunities for Virginians of all ages, as well as visitors to the state, to learn about the history and cultures of Virginia Indian people and communities, past and present,” according to David Bearinger, director of grants and public programs for the VFH. “Its benefits will touch every citizen of Virginia, especially teachers, students, and the tribes themselves.”

Additional funding for the “Beyond Jamestown” exhibit was provided by the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation. For more information about the “Beyond Jamestown” exhibit or the Virginia Museum of Natural History, call 276-634-4141 or visit www.vmnh.net.

ABOUT THE VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

The Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville seeks to increase understanding of and appreciation for the natural history of the Commonwealth through education, research, collections, publications and exhibits. The Museum – an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution – is accredited by the American Association of Museums, a distinction earned by fewer than 10 percent of museums in the United States. The Museum is a member of the Association of Science-Technology Centers, Virginia Association of Museums, Heritage Preservation, and is an agency of the Secretary of Natural Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia. With over 22 million objects in its collections, the Museum reaches nearly 1 million people annually through on-site and traveling exhibitions, classroom outreach programs, the Museum’s Web site, public events and publications.

The Museum is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sundays from Noon to 5:30 p.m. Members are always admitted free. Admission is \$7 for adults; \$6 for senior citizens and college students; \$5 for children and youth 3-18; members and children under 3 free. For more information about membership or volunteer opportunities, please call 276-634-4141 or visit www.vmnh.net.

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