

VA★250

*A Common Cause
to All*

A Convening of States

A Signature Event of the
Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Williamsburg, Virginia
March 18 - 20, 2024

A Common Cause to All

is presented by the

***Virginia American Revolution
250 Commission (VA250)***

and

***The Colonial Williamsburg
Foundation***

in partnership with

The Virginia Museum of History & Culture

and

The Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation

**VIRGINIA'S HISTORY
IS AMERICA'S STORY**

Agenda

MONDAY, MARCH 18

Unless otherwise noted, all activities take place in the Virginia Room of The Williamsburg Lodge (lower level).

- 2:00 pm Registration opens
- 5:00 pm Welcome to Virginia Reception (*Virginia Room Foyer*)
- 5:45 pm **Opening Dinner and Keynote Speakers**
The Honorable Tim Kaine, United States Senate (Virginia)
The Honorable Glenn Youngkin, Governor of Virginia
Harry Smith, NBC News Correspondent

TUESDAY, MARCH 19

- 7:00 am Breakfast buffet
- 8:15 am **Keynote Remarks**
The Honorable John Charles Thomas
Justice, Supreme Court of Virginia (retired)
- 9:30 am **Fireside Chat with Jefferson and Early American Scholars**
Moderator: Barbara Oberg, Senior Research Historian Emerita, Princeton University
Woody Holton, Professor, University of South Carolina
Jane Kamensky, President, The Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Monticello
- 10:45 am **Research Report: Approaches to Public Engagement**
Matt Williams, Managing Partner, Chief Growth Officer, Brand Federation
- 11:45 am Buffet lunch
- 12:45 pm **Keynote Remarks**
Rosie Rios, Chair, America250
- 1:00 pm **Presentation: *The American Revolution* by Ken Burns**
Paula Kerger, President and CEO, PBS
Sarah Botstein, Award-Winning Producer and Filmmaker

Agenda

- 2:00 pm Breakout Sessions (Select one session at registration desk)**
- *Reaching Teachers and Students in Schools - Tidewater Room*
Heather Nice, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (moderator)
Posie Wood, Wondrus
Leah Charles-Edouard, New-York Historical Society
Larry Paska, National Council for the Social Studies
 - *Providing Impactful Digital and Virtual Content - Colony Room ABC*
Liz Covart, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (moderator)
Kristian Weatherspoon, Atlanta History Center
John Bickers, Case Western Reserve University &
Citizen of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
Mary Mikel Stump, Washington State Historical Society
 - *2026 National Planning - Colony Room E*
Dana Tomlin, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (moderator)
Mia Nagawiecki, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Caroline Klibanoff, Made By Us
John Dictl, American Association for State and Local History
- 3:00 pm Breakout Sessions (Select one session at registration desk)**
- *Public History in Polarized Times - Tidewater Room*
Matt Williams, Brand Federation (moderator)
Scott Stephenson, Museum of the American Revolution
Stephen Seals, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
 - *Funding your 250th - Colony Room ABC*
Jamie Bosket, Virginia Museum of History & Culture (moderator)
Cassandra Coleman, America 250 PA
Todd Groce, Georgia Historical Society
Rob Kret, Connecticut Museum of Culture & History
Christine Pellerin, The Normandy Group
- 5:15 pm** States Dinner attendees gather in Arrival Hall for processional
- 5:30 pm** Processional to the Governor's Palace steps off
- 6:00 pm States Dinner with Keynote Speakers**
**Attendance must be reserved in advance*
- Danielle Allen, Harvard University*
- Carly Fiorina, VA250 National Honorary Chair*
Chair, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Board of Trustees
- 8:45 pm** Evening concludes with special presentation

Agenda

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

Note: America250 will hold a Commission Meeting in the [Tidewater Room](#)

7:00 am Breakfast buffet

8:15 am **Keynote Remarks**

Kevin Gover, Under Secretary for Museums and Culture, Smithsonian Institution

9:00 am **Fireside Chat: Reaching Diverse and Underserved Communities**

*Moderator: Christy Coleman, Executive Director, Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation
Noelle Trent, President & CEO, Museum of African American History
Ashley Jordan, President & CEO, African American Museum in Philadelphia
Marvin-Alonzo Greer, Lead Historical Interpretation & Community Engagement officer,
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission*

10:00 am **Fireside Chat: Multistate Collaboration for 250th Programs Nationwide**

*Moderator: Cheryl Wilson, Executive Director, VA250 Commission
Jonathan Lane, Executive Director, Massachusetts Revolution 250
Jonah Spivak, Communications Coordinator, Town of Bennington, Vermont
Kevin Hampton, Curator of History, The Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Steve Ladd, Artist, Scrollation*

11:00 am **Breakout Groups**

*State 250th planners - Tidewater Room
Local VA250 committees - Allegheny Room*

12:30 pm Lunch

1:00 pm **Closing Keynote**

Jeffrey Rosen, President, National Constitution Center

2:30 pm **Closing Event in Colonial Williamsburg's Historic Area**

Join the people of Williamsburg in May 1774 when "a shock of electricity" strikes the city as news of Boston's port closure reaches Virginia. The House of Burgesses, the elected body of Virginia, has called for a Day of Fasting, Humiliation, and Prayer, but Lord Dunmore, the royal governor, might have a different opinion. In this dramatization, step into a chaotic moment in Virginia's past and discover the voices of a community struggling to find a way forward.

This event begins at the [Capitol Circle](#) and then will move towards the [Raleigh Tavern](#).

Information tables are located on the Mezzanine.

Guest Speakers



**VA250 National Honorary Chair
Chair of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Carly Fiorina**

Carly has served on the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's board of trustees since 2017 and in 2020, she was elected the Chair. Carly has extensive experience in both the corporate and non-profit worlds. Beginning her business career as a receptionist in a nine-person real-estate firm, she would rise to become the first woman to lead a Fortune 50 company when she was appointed the chairman and CEO of Hewlett-Packard in 1999. Leading through the worst technology recession in 25 years, 9/11, as well as SARS, she led HP to become the 11th-largest company in the U.S. and among the world's leading innovators.

In addition to being a business leader, Carly is a philanthropist who has made significant contributions to the social sector throughout her career. In 2007, Carly founded the One Woman Initiative, a non-profit organization that aims to empower women around the world through access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. Carly has also served on the board of directors for a number of non-profit organizations, including Good360, which connects corporations with non-profits to facilitate donations of goods and services, and Opportunity International, which provides microfinance services to people in poverty around the world.

In 2017, Carly founded the Unlocking Potential Foundation with a mission to build the leadership capacity of non-profit organizations and their teams by providing those leaders with the tools and resources to strengthen their problem-solving skills. Most recently, Carly established the public charity, Pathway to Promise. Pathway to Promise connects justice-involved youth with the caring adults and community-based services they need to positively impact their daily lives, sense of possibility, and perspective about their own future so they can change their world.



The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

Guest Speakers

Harvard University

Danielle Allen

Danielle Allen, currently the James Bryant Conant University Professor and Director of the Allen Lab for Democracy Renovation at the Harvard Kennedy School's Ash Center, co-chaired the Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship. *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century*, was released in June 2020 and includes six strategies and 31 ambitious recommendations to help the nation emerge as a more resilient democracy by 2026, the nation's 250th anniversary.

Allen's leadership in rallying coalitions and building solutions resulted in policies adopted in federal legislations and a Biden executive order. Her book *Democracy in the Time of Coronavirus*, "a trenchant call for reimagining how America functions in a time of crisis" (*Publishers Weekly*), builds off this scholarship to offer a plan for creating a more resilient democratic polity—one that can better respond to both the present pandemic and future crises. Allen is also the author of several books including *Our Declaration: A Reading of the Declaration of Independence in Defense of Equality*, *Cuz: An American Tragedy*, and *Justice by Means of Democracy*.

With *Justice by Means of Democracy*, Allen offers a bold and urgent articulation of a new political philosophy: power-sharing liberalism. At a time of great social and political turmoil, Allen reconsiders the very foundations of justice and democracy. Allen's orientation towards the promise and demands of America's democracy are on full display in *Our Declaration*. Inspired by her work in justice and citizenship, and troubled by the fact that so few Americans actually know what the Declaration of Independence says, Allen set out to explore the arguments of the Declaration, reading it with both adult night students and University of Chicago undergraduates. Keenly aware that the Declaration is riddled with contradictions, Allen and her students came to see that the Declaration makes a coherent and riveting argument about equality. They found not a historical text that required memorization, but an animating force that could and did transform the course of their everyday lives. In an "uncommonly elegant, incisive, and often poetic primer on America's cardinal text," *Our Declaration* brings these insights to the general reader, illuminating the "three great themes of the Declaration: equality, liberty, and the abiding power of language" (David M. Kennedy). With its cogent analysis and passionate advocacy, *Our Declaration* affirms the relevance of America's founding text, ultimately revealing what democracy actually means and what it asks of us. *Our Declaration* was awarded the Heartland Prize, the Zócalo Book Prize, and the Society of American Historians' Francis Parkman Prize.

She is the recipient of the 2020 John W. Kluge Prize for Achievement in the Study of Humanity, an award administered by the Library of Congress that recognizes work in disciplines not covered by the Nobel Prizes as well as a MacArthur Fellowship and honorary degrees from multiple colleges and universities."



Guest Speakers



Award-Winning Producer & Filmmaker

Sarah Botstein

Sarah Botstein has produced some of the most popular and acclaimed documentaries on PBS. Her work with Ken Burns and Lynn Novick includes *Jazz*, *The War*, *Prohibition*, *The Vietnam War*, *College Behind Bars*, and *Hemingway*. "The U.S. and the Holocaust" marks Botstein's debut as a co-director. The series tells the story of how the American people grappled with one of the greatest humanitarian tragedies in history. Botstein is an original contributor to Ken Burns' UNUM, a web-based platform that highlights historical themes across the Florentine Films body of work. Botstein works closely with PBS Learning Media and WETA-TV to develop educational content for programming as part of the Ken Burns Classroom. Botstein is producing a six-part series on the American Revolution and a three-part series about Lyndon B. Johnson.



University of South Carolina

Woody Holton

Woody Holton teaches Early American history at the University of South Carolina. Professor Holton teaches graduate seminars on Colonial America and on the American Revolution. Holton's 2009 book, *Abigail Adams*, which he wrote on a Guggenheim fellowship, won the Bancroft Prize. Holton is the author of *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution (2007)*, a finalist for the George Washington Book Prize and the National Book Award. His first book, *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia (1999)*, won the Organization of American Historians' Merle Curti award.

Guest Speakers



**Under Secretary for Museums & Culture
Smithsonian Institution
Kevin Gover**

Kevin Gover is the Under Secretary for Museums and Culture at the Smithsonian where he oversees the Institution's history and art museums, its cultural centers, and the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Exhibits and the National Collections Program.

Gover, a citizen of the Pawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, served as the director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., and its George Gustav Heye Center in New York City for 14 years. He also oversaw the Cultural Resources Center in Suitland, Maryland.

Gover also oversaw the launch of Native Knowledge 360°, the museum's national educational initiative. NK360° is a set of teaching resources that provides educators and students with new perspectives on Native American history and cultures.

Gover served as Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs in the U.S. Department of the Interior from 1997 to 2000. Gover received his bachelor's degree in public and international affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University and his juris doctor degree from the University of New Mexico School of Law. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Princeton in 2001 and an honorary doctor of humane letters degree from Brown in 2016. Gover was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2020.

Guest Speakers



President, The Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Monticello

Jane Kamensky

Jane Kamensky came to Monticello from Harvard University. She is the author/co-author of seven books, including the prize-winning *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley* and *A People and a Nation*, and the co-editor of *The Oxford Handbook of the American Revolution*. A principal investigator for the social studies initiative Educating for American Democracy, Dr. Kamensky exhibits a commitment to civic education and engagement. Kamensky received her BA and PhD in History from Yale University. Before Harvard, she taught for two decades at Brandeis University. She has also served as Mary Ann Lippitt Professor of History at Brown University



President & CEO, PBS

Paula Kerger

Paula A. Kerger is president and CEO of PBS, the nation's largest non-commercial media organization. Kerger also serves as president of the PBS Foundation. Along with many other honors and awards, Kerger has been regularly included in the *Hollywood Reporter's* "Women in Entertainment Power 100", and she is regularly featured in *Washingtonian Magazine's* "Most Powerful Women in Washington." She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Women's Forum. She is a board member of the Dana Foundation and the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History. She is a director of the International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. Kerger received her bachelor's degree from the University of Baltimore. She has received multiple honorary doctorates and educational honors and fellowships.

Guest Speakers



Princeton University

Barbara Oberg

Barbara Oberg is Senior Research Historian Emerita and Senior Scholar at Princeton University's Department of History. She holds her A.B. from Wellesley College, 1964, M.A. from the University of California, Santa Barbara, 1967, and her Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara, 1973. Her primary fields of study include Eighteenth-century European intellectual history and the early national period of American history.



Chair, America250

Rosie Rios

Rosie Rios is the CEO of Red River Associates and a co-host of several reality series. She was appointed by President Joe Biden as Chair of America250, the U. S. Commission planning the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. She served as the 43rd Treasurer of the United States and was the CEO of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and the U.S. Mint. She was appointed as Visiting Scholar at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University.

Rosie is a graduate of Harvard University. She currently serves on the board of American Family Insurance, Ripple Labs, Inc., and Fidelity Charitable Trust. She is Founder and CEO of *EMPOWERMENT 2026*, an initiative that facilitates the physical recognition of historical American women in classrooms and public spaces across the country. Rosie is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and is one of USA Today's Women of the Century.

Guest Speakers



President, National Constitution Center

Jeffrey Rosen

Jeffrey Rosen is the president and CEO of the National Constitution Center, where he hosts *We the People*, a weekly podcast of constitutional debate. He is also a professor of law at the George Washington University Law School and a contributing editor of *The Atlantic*. He was previously the legal affairs editor of *The New Republic* and a staff writer for *The New Yorker*. Rosen's new book is *The Pursuit of Happiness: How Classical Writers on Virtue Inspired the Lives of the Founders and Defined America*. His other books include the *New York Times* bestseller *Conversations with RBG: Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg on Life, Love, Liberty, and Law*, as well as biographies of Louis Brandeis and William Howard Taft. Rosen is a graduate of Harvard College; Oxford University, where he was a Marshall Scholar; and Yale Law School.



Justice, Supreme Court of Virginia (retired)

The Honorable John Charles Thomas

A former justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia, John Charles Thomas graduated from the University of Virginia with a Bachelor of Arts in American government in 1972. He next attended the University of Virginia School of Law and received his Juris Doctor in 1975. Thomas joined Hunton & Williams and became the first African-American at the firm. He was admitted to the law firm's partnership in April 1982. In 1983, he was appointed to the Supreme Court of Virginia, becoming the first African American and, at 32, the youngest person to sit there. Following his retirement from the Supreme Court of Virginia in 1989, Judge Thomas practiced law in Richmond, Virginia as part of the Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP law firm. In 1995, he received the NAACP's Lifetime Image Award. In 2005, Thomas was named a member of the Court of Arbitration for Sport, which is based in Lausanne, Switzerland which hears cases arising from most world-class sporting competition and has global jurisdiction. In 2006, Thomas was appointed to the Board of Visitors of the College of William & Mary, a position to which he was reappointed in 2009.

Guest Speakers



NBC News Correspondent **Harry Smith**

Harry Smith is an NBC News correspondent who came to NBC News as a correspondent for “Rock Center” with Brian Williams in July 2011. One of television’s most distinguished journalists, Smith has been a news anchor for more than 30 years. Before joining NBC News, he hosted the CBS News morning shows “The Early Show” and its predecessor “CBS This Morning” for 17 years.

Smith served as a senior correspondent for CBS News and substitute anchors for the “CBS Evening News”, “Face the Nation” and “CBS News Sunday Morning.” He also hosted the A&E series “Biography.”

Smith has interviewed a who’s who of world leaders from Barack Obama to Margaret Thatcher. He’s reported from the Persian Gulf War, the Iraq War and the war in Bosnia. Smith reported live from Tahrir Square the night Hosni Mubarak fell from power. He covered the revolution in Libya. Smith has also reported from disaster zones in the United States as well as Japan, Sri Lanka, Haiti and the Philippines. Smith has won several Emmy Awards and an Edward R. Murrow Award, as well as numerous other honors.

He is a proud graduate of Central College in Pella, Iowa. He is married to the remarkable Andrea Joyce, a sports reporter. They are the parents of two fine young men.

Guest Speakers



**Managing Partner, Chief Growth Officer
Brand Federation**

Matt Williams

Matt Williams is one of three Managing Partners of Brand Federation, a brand and marketing consultancy. Brand Federation has helped leaders of organizations like Colonial Williamsburg, MIT, Dominion Energy, and Mercy Corps transform their brand strategy for accelerated growth and impact. Prior to joining Brand Federation, Matt spent 26 years at The Martin Agency, one of the world's most creatively recognized advertising agencies and became the fifth CEO in the agency's 55-year history. In 2018, Matt also joined the marketing faculty of the Mason School of Business at William & Mary as a Visiting Clinical Professor and Special Advisor to the Dean. Matt holds an undergraduate degree from William & Mary and an MBA from The Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

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About VA250

Join Us in Virginia as we Celebrate the Nation's 250th Anniversary

Established in 2020 to commemorate Virginia's role in the 250th anniversary of American independence, the **Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission (VA250)** aims to form a more perfect union by educating Virginians about their history and civic duty and sharing diverse narratives that capture Virginia's complete story and role in shaping the nation.

The VA250 Commission receives support from the Commonwealth of Virginia, but it is not enough to conduct the wide array of programs, events and activities that will take place from now through the end of 2026. Supporting the VA250 Commission will reinforce Virginia's global leadership in education, innovation, entrepreneurialism, tourism and economic development.

Please go to VA250.org and click on the DONATE button to support VA250 and to help Virginia maintain its position as a global leader.



Thank you for your support to honor the nation's 250th anniversary!

For more information, please contact:

Cheryl Wilson
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cwilson@va250.virginia.gov
804-967-3751

Virginia Commemorations, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit (Tax ID: 81-0703911) honoring Virginia's role in the founding of the United States 250 years ago creating a lasting impact to education, tourism, and economic development.



Notes



VIRGINIA  **250**
AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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