

News Release
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**Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau, Hampton
History Museum Association Receive Virginia Tourism
Corporation Recovery Marketing Leverage Grants**

Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau and the Hampton History Museum Association have received grants from the Virginia Tourism Corporation's (VTC) Recovery Marketing Leverage Program (RMLP), designed to help local and regional tourism entities attract more visitors by leveraging limited local marketing dollars through a local match of the state grants funds.

Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau received a \$10,000 grant that will be used to introduce the Hampton Virginia Aquaplex through partner destination marketing and to attract competitive bookings to positively influence visitation to hotels, shops, and restaurants in Hampton.

The Hampton History Museum Association received a \$10,000 grant to market and promote Coastal Virginia's Civil War Trails by working with regional partners to present a more inclusive Civil War Trails regional visitor experience.

More than \$860,000 in matching grant funds were awarded to 64 local tourism initiatives through this program. This funding cycle, local partners will provide more than \$2.2 million in-kind marketing value to match the VTC grants. The grants will ultimately impact 384 statewide tourism entities.

"VTC's Recovery Marketing Leverage Program will help extend our reach as we inform athletes and event planners about the Hampton Virginia Aquaplex," said Mary Fugere, Director of the Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau. "The Aquaplex will be the largest aquatic competitive facility in Virginia and VTC research reflects that 29% of sports-related travel in Virginia is by Virginians. We anticipate great interest from state swim and sports associations in holding meets at this sparkling new facility."

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the tourism and hospitality industries in Virginia. As the Commonwealth slowly reopens for business, VTC offered

these grant funds as the first step to re-entry into the marketplace to spur economic activity and future travel across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

“The tourism and hospitality industries have been among the hardest hit by the pandemic, experiencing decreased revenue and job loss, along with the temporary closure of many tourism-related businesses,” said Governor Ralph Northam. “These funds will help to revive Virginia’s tourism economy, which will help spur new economic activity and inject critical funds back into its communities.”

VTC offered these grant funds as the first step to re-entry into the marketplace to spur economic activity and future travel across the Commonwealth. The RMLP is designed to increase visitor spending by stimulating new tourism marketing through partnerships and extending the “*Virginia is for Lovers*” brand.

About Virginia Tourism Corporation

Virginia Tourism Corporation is the state agency charged with marketing the Commonwealth as a premier travel and film destination. In 2019, visitors to Virginia spent \$27 billion, which supported 237,000 work opportunities and contributed \$1.8 billion in state and local taxes. To learn more, visit virginia.org