

IMPACT REPORT 2024



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA



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FROM THE LIBRARIAN OF VIRGINIA

It is my great pleasure to share with you the Library of Virginia's Impact Report for 2024. In these pages you'll see stories, pictures, graphics and lists that create a narrative of a milestone year for the Library. Not only was 2024 the beginning of the Library's third century stewarding the state's records and archives, providing research support and advocating for public libraries throughout the Commonwealth, but it was also my first year as its Librarian.



This year was about milestones, certainly for me. As you'll see, the Library seeks to Empower, Engage and Excite our communities, and this report will touch on some of the ways we did that in 2024. But our story doesn't end in 2024 — that's just the beginning.

The Library seeks, first and foremost, to empower users, either on-site at 800 East Broad Street in downtown Richmond or through our online services and digital collections, and by our consultations with public libraries around the state and our LVA On the Go program.

We want to engage Virginians in both new and traditional ways. Through projects like Virginia Untold and the Virginia Newspaper Project, we're retelling long-ignored stories in digital form. We engage with partners — corporate, nonprofit and governmental, as well as individuals — to ensure that Virginians know their history, the glamorous and the gritty.

Our near-term future is shaping up to excite! In 2024, we were approved to begin designing updates to the Library's public spaces. We also made progress toward the new addition at the State Records Center in eastern Henrico County, which will add 25 years of growth capacity for our archives and records. Work on both projects is ongoing — watch this space for news soon. And we're excited to kick off our new strategy and goals for 2025–2029.

Thank you for your unwavering support for YOUR Library of Virginia. We exist solely to be of service to the Commonwealth and nation, and I am honored to be entrusted with my role as Librarian.

Sincerely,

Dennis T. Clark

EMPOWER

EXPANDING ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

The availability of recently conserved and newly digitized records within the Library's rich collections will empower both in-person and online visitors with additional historical resources.

The Gov. Thomas Nelson Executive Papers collection gained support from Americana Corner, the Virginia Daughters of the American Revolution and the Virginia Law Foundation, which helped to match an existing Save America's Treasures grant. The project involves conserving and digitizing thousands of documents from Nelson's partial term as governor of Virginia in 1781, when he confronted challenges at the end of the Revolutionary War and the daily operations of a newly formed state. Additionally, the conservation and digitization of 18th- and 19th-century legislative petitions is now underway thanks to a \$172,828 Save America's Treasures grant. Frequently consulted by historians, genealogists and other researchers, these records document contemporary opinions on various issues.

A new project launched this past year involves the digitization of 100,000 pages of historical Virginia imprint newspapers dating from 1860 to 1963. Funded through a \$235,692 National Endowment for the Humanities grant, the two-year initiative focuses on African American papers and those from Virginia's Eastern Shore and Southwest regions.

One of the Library's ongoing special projects, Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative, added over 5,000 new records to its database in 2024, including "Free Negro Registers" from localities across the

Commonwealth. This project brings to light material related to enslaved and free Black and multiracial people in our collections through digitization, indexing and education.

Volunteers from the Library's Making History program supported expansion of digital collections by transcribing more than 40,000 pages of records and historical newspapers. The volunteers, which included the 2024 cohort of Virginia House of Delegates pages, helped to enhance the searchability and usability of our online collections. This total includes more than 33,000 pages transcribed for the World War II Separation Notices Digitization Project that makes records of Virginia service members accessible online. The project is supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities and donors to the Library of Virginia Foundation.

PRESERVING HISTORIC GOVERNMENT RECORDS

The Library's Circuit Court Records Preservation Program helps local governments care for and provide access to Virginia's invaluable permanent circuit court records through preservation grants and guidance from consulting archivists. The program awarded more than \$3.2 million in grants in 2024, with most projects covering professional conservation treatment for records dating as far back as the 1690s. Examples include a 1777 Henry County Justice of the Peace Commission document and an 1806–1808 City of Fredericksburg District Court minute book. In addition, local records consulting archivists visited 87 court-houses across the Commonwealth to advise on records preservation.

SUPPORTING VIRGINIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Our Library Development and Networking Division equips Virginia's public libraries with the resources they need to serve their communities. The division administered more than \$19 million in state aid to public libraries in 2024, as well as supported public library staff members with experts in professional and stakeholder development, youth and adult services, and technical assistance. This past year Virginia communities benefitted from popular public library offerings such as summer reading programs, nature backpacks with state park passes, and a suite of databases to support users navigating job searches and military benefits, seeking homework help, and learning languages online — including American Sign Language.

AT RIGHT: Access services manager Tina Miller helped author and journalist Kristen Green use Library resources.



My library card grants me access to the Library of Virginia's rare newspaper databases, their extensive photography collections and full-text historic magazines with the kind of colorful details that really make a story pop! It would take years to explore everything LVA has to offer online!

—Meredith Henne Baker, author, educator and historian



ENGAGE

ILLUMINATING POWERFUL STORIES

The Library highlighted several meaningful stories from the past and present that are often little-known. The “Indigenous Perspectives”^{*} exhibition, which was on view through August, explored voices and experiences of Virginia’s tribal communities, as well as items from the Library’s collections. The exhibition, a collaboration between the Library and Virginia’s 11 federally and state-recognized tribes, was enriched by a series of related programs, culminating with a closing ceremony that included a drumming circle, dancing and demonstrations of traditional crafts.

In partnership with Dominion Energy, the Library hosted a reception and dinner to recognize four African American leaders as Strong Men & Women in Virginia History, celebrating their remarkable achievements and impacts across the state. As part of this initiative, a traveling exhibition featuring the honorees was displayed at community, business and educational institutions throughout the year. In addition, a Student Creative Expressions Contest invited high schoolers to share stories on contemporary issues inspired by past honorees.

In October, the Library opened its “Mapping the Commonwealth, 1816–1826” exhibition, highlighting the story of 10 years, five governors, two principal surveyors and one lead engraver — the time frame and team needed to create one of the first official state maps in the nation in the early 1800s. The exhibition, on view through June 7, 2025, presents examples from 40 manuscript maps that highlight the painstaking task of creating Virginia’s first official state map, and includes related programming.

CONNECTING TO VIRGINIANS

As part of the Library’s robust outreach to every corner of the Commonwealth, the LVA On the Go van traveled over 4,800 miles, bringing Library staff and resources to public libraries, festivals and other community partner events in 15 communities. Activities included reference tutorials, library account registration, presentations on family history research, children’s activities, and more.

In one of the Library’s most popular programs, more than 160 Virginians discovered ways to use Library records to explore their family history and other Virginia records during a series of six on-site and online genealogy workshops. Participants learned how to access early Virginia genealogy (records prior to ca. 1850), penitentiary and state mental hospital records, and other resources.

To deepen student knowledge of Virginia history, the Library’s outreach staff hosted 38 teachers in its Anne and Ryland Brown Teacher Institute^{**} in four regions of the state — Salem, Leesburg, Clarksville and Richmond — where they explored the use of primary sources and discovered new digital tools to use in teaching. Staff also worked with four Brown Teacher Research Fellows on-site to examine Virginia’s Indigenous history in support of the Library’s “Indigenous Perspectives” exhibition. Fellows pursued research, produced educational resources to support the Library’s exhibition and education program, and developed presentations on their projects.

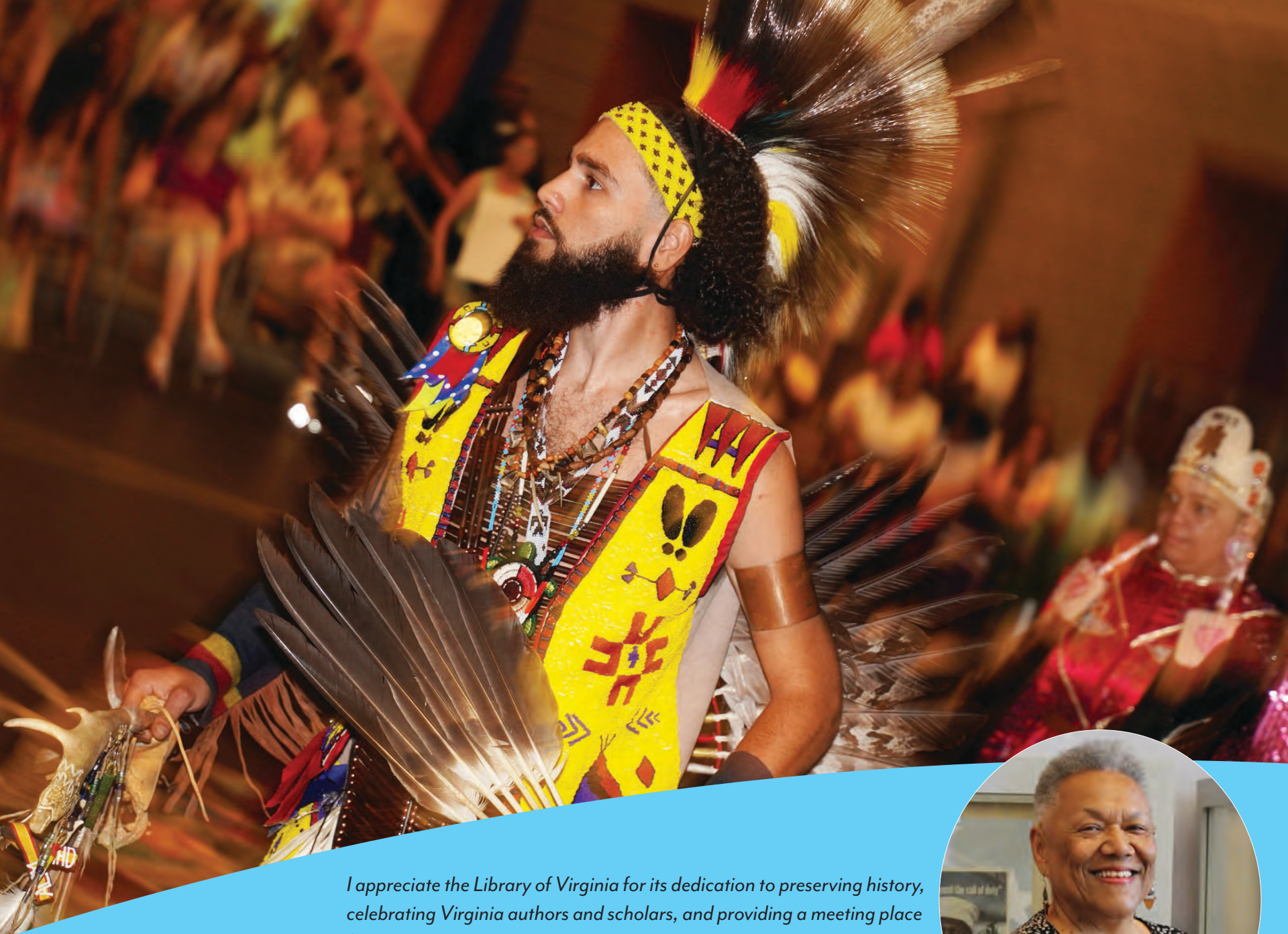
ADVANCING CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

Reflecting its mission to preserve and provide access to stories of Virginia’s people, the Library presented a variety of book talks, First Friday art events, panel discussions and other programs that attracted nearly 4,000 attendees. Among the activities was the annual Carole Weinstein Author Series, which regularly drew at-capacity crowds as Virginia authors discussed the tragic tale of the 19th-century Richmond Theater fire, Senator Tim Kaine’s memoir, the history of a Loudoun County Black community’s struggle for educational equality, and more engaging topics. Book lovers and readers also enjoyed the 27th Annual Virginia Literary Awards gala, which recognized authors Kwame Alexander, Martin Clark, Katy Hessel, Angie Kim, Sheila Johnson, Janine Joseph and Elizabeth R. Varon for literary excellence and Patron of Letters honorees Reginald Dwayne Betts and Adriana Trigiani for their significant impact on literature. The Literary Awards, the Library’s signature event, help raise critical support for conservation, education and community outreach efforts.

^{}Exhibition sponsors included Amazon, the Community Foundation, Virginia Humanities and the Anne Carter Robins & Walter R. Robins Jr. Foundation.*

*^{**}Program sponsors included Virginia Humanities, Peachtree House Foundation and the Taubman Museum of Art.*

AT RIGHT: A closing ceremony for the Indigenous Perspectives exhibition featured a drumming circle, dancing and traditional crafts.



I appreciate the Library of Virginia for its dedication to preserving history, celebrating Virginia authors and scholars, and providing a meeting place for others who value these. In the past year I have enjoyed the exhibitions, the Literary Virginia Book Group meetings, the Weinstein Author Series talks and so many other events.

—C. Robin Jones, event attendee and longtime fan of the Library



EXCITE

EMBRACING NEW LEADERSHIP

On Jan. 24, 2024, the official start of the Library's third century, a new leader took the helm to build on a storied legacy of archival and cultural excellence for the Commonwealth. Dennis T. Clark was named the 10th Librarian of Virginia following a national search. Bringing more than 12 years of senior leadership experience in academic research libraries, Clark previously served in leadership roles at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and at libraries at the University of Arkansas, the University of Virginia and Virginia Commonwealth University. He has extensive experience in library facilities, including deep involvement in programing, design or construction for over \$175 million in capital projects at Vanderbilt, Texas A&M University, VCU, UVA and Arkansas. An Association of Research Libraries Leadership Fellow for 2016–2017, he holds an MLIS from The University of Alabama and a bachelor's degree in music from Samford University.

DEFINING THE FUTURE

The Library unveiled a dynamic, new five-year strategic framework that will position it for continued growth, innovation and excellence. Engaging discussions and surveys involving employees, board members and other stakeholders offered valuable insights. Led by the new Librarian of Virginia, a team of employees from throughout the agency collaborated to develop the final framework.

Aligned with the Library's mission and vision, the strategic framework includes the following four main objectives:

- ***Become widely recognized as the leading source of information on Virginia's history, government, and people***
- ***Create experiences for Library of Virginia users that exceed their expectations, on-site and online***
- ***Strengthen civic education and engagement in Virginia***
- ***Support Virginians with the finest public library network in the country***

EXPANDING CAPACITY

A significant development this past year moved the State Records Center closer to the start of construction that will greatly expand its capacity for storing inactive, non-permanent records of state agencies and local governments. Located in Henrico County, the SRC provides environmentally controlled, secure storage for more than 76,700,000 records, representing 30% of the Library's vast collections. The facility had reached 95% capacity, prompting a need to plan for additional space. The expansion will add 21,358 square feet to the existing building, including mobile compact shelving that will supply 468,000 cubic feet of space to allow

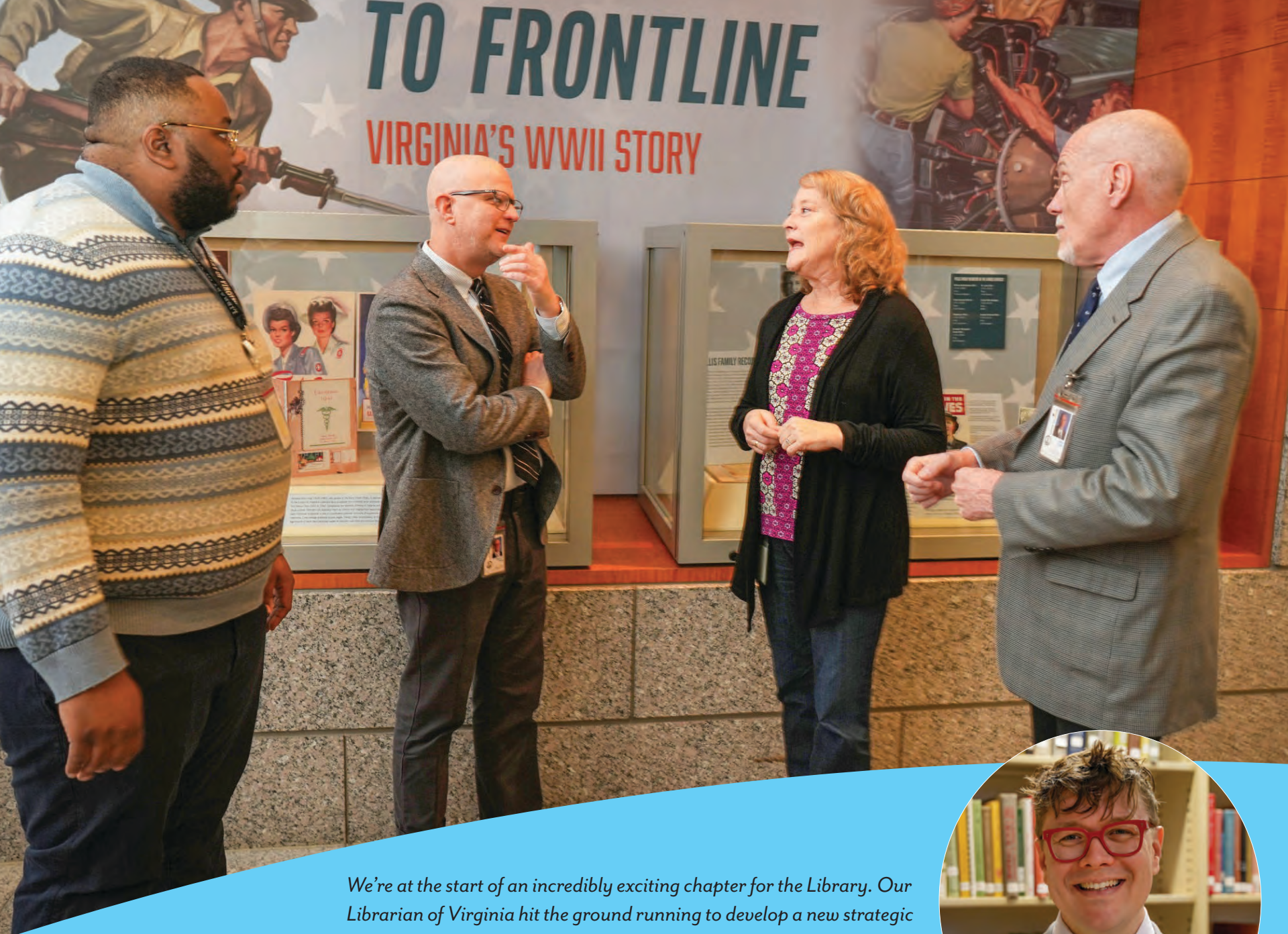
20 years of collections growth. The project also includes renovation of 9,270 square feet of administrative space. The contract to complete the addition was awarded to Trent Construction following a bid process. Construction is expected to start in 2025 and be completed by 2026.

BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS

The Library, continuing its dedication to highlighting narratives of Virginia's people, established a new partnership that will amplify a significant part of Richmond's and the nation's Black history. Through a \$269,788 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Library partnered with The JXN Project, a historic preservation nonprofit organization, to curate an exhibition on the history of the Jackson Ward neighborhood in Richmond. The exhibition, titled "House to Highway: Reclaiming a Community History,"* will highlight the historic neighborhood that was the center of Richmond's Black community through the lens of the Skipwith-Roper family. It will be presented at the Library of Virginia for 8 months starting in July 2025, and as a long-term exhibition at JXN's upcoming reconstruction site for the Skipwith-Roper Cottage in Jackson Ward, expected to open as part of the ward's anniversary week in April 2026. There will also be a traveling exhibition.

**Exhibition sponsors include Virginia Humanities and the Community Foundation for a greater Richmond.*

AT RIGHT: Left to right, AV & IT support specialist Rashad Cousins, Librarian of Virginia Dennis Clark, senior state records archivist Renee Savits and records management analyst Glenn Smith chatted in the Library's lobby prior to an all-staff meeting.



We're at the start of an incredibly exciting chapter for the Library. Our Librarian of Virginia hit the ground running to develop a new strategic framework as well as by building vital relationships and partnerships that will help the Library as it continues to grow and transform itself for the benefit of the people we serve.

—C. Paul Brockwell Jr., Chair, Library of Virginia Board



2024 by the numbers

79,802,325	State Records	809,986	Microforms (Film/Fiche)	54,892	Map Collection
41,156,896	Local Records	4,906	DVD/VHS/Audio	578,589	Visual Studies Collection
675,000	Federal Records	9,497,504	Personal Papers	573	State Art Collection
1,573,206	General Book Collection	53,024	Rare Books		



WEBSITE USERS

1,487,570

ATTENDEES AT PUBLIC EVENTS

3,954

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

ANSWERED **15,903**

USER WEBSITE SESSIONS

2,190,109

COLLECTION ITEMS CONSERVED

3,900 INDIVIDUAL ITEMS FOR
37 PROJECTS



LVA ON THE GO TRAVEL MILES

4,800+



EXHIBITION ATTENDEES

11,050

NEW DIGITAL FILES ADDED

1,810,245

LVA ON THE GO LOCALITIES VISITED

15

PUBLIC EVENTS PRESENTED

85

LIBRARY CARD HOLDERS ADDED

7,047 NEW OR RENEWED





MINUTES SPENT BY
VOLUNTEERS TRANSCRIBING
615,983 OR
10, 266 HOURS

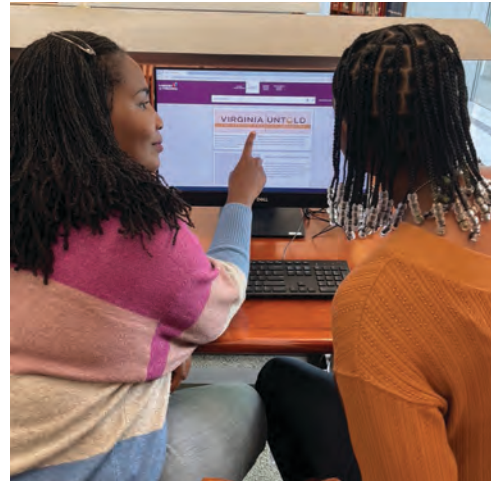
PAGES TRANSCRIBED
44,955

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER
TRANSCRIBERS
960



VIRGINIA UNTOLD DOCUMENTS
ADDED TO DATABASE

5,085



STATE AID DISTRIBUTED TO
VIRGINIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

\$19,658,974

FIND IT VIRGINIA ONLINE

USER SESSIONS RESEARCH & LEARNING
PLATFORMS FOR
PUBLIC LIBRARY USERS

2,124,445

NICHE ACADEMY ONLINE
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SESSIONS BY PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF

39,964

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

AS OF DEC. 31, 2024

FACEBOOK

17,892 

INSTAGRAM

6,569 

LINKEDIN

1,631 



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On behalf of the boards of the Library of Virginia and the Library of Virginia Foundation, we gratefully acknowledge the support of all donors to the Library. Donors with cumulative giving of \$100 or more between July 1, 2023, and Dec. 31, 2024, are recognized below.

Donors whose gifts total \$1,000 or more during this time frame are recognized as members of the Semper Virginia Society.

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Support to the collections of the Library of Virginia is vital if we are to preserve Virginia's history for research and discoveries by current and future scholars. I have collected maps for nearly 50 years and consider the impressive LVA map holdings a vital part of the collections.

—Tom Sander, Ashburn, Virginia, Fry-Jefferson Society Supporter,
 shown with his wife, Jeanne



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