



VIRGINIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Story of Virginia

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Virginia Historical Society Expands Partnership with Charlottesville and Albemarle Schools The Charles Fund, Inc. Grant Brings Award-winning HistoryConnects Program into Classrooms

Richmond, VA—The Virginia Historical Society (VHS) recently received a \$15,000 grant from The Charles Fund, Inc., to support the development and implementation of HistoryConnects programs for Charlottesville City and Albemarle County Public Schools during the 2014-15 school year.

HistoryConnects—an award-winning VHS interactive education initiative—reaches learners across the globe using internet technology.

“The HistoryConnects programs are informative and engaging experiences that bring history to life,” Evan Liddiard, VHS senior education specialist, said. “Exposing students to these programs reinforces the importance of primary source learning and historical inquiry. Educators appreciate the added benefit we are offering to their classroom environment.”

The grant represents the second partnership between the VHS, the two school systems, and The Charles Fund, a private organization based in Charlottesville. This money will be used to build on the successful local history boxes utilized during the 2012-13 school year.

The history boxes include replica artifacts and a large floor map that educators can use to immerse students in their region’s history. Material in the boxes focuses on three different aspects of daily life—communication, transportation, and education—and compares and contrasts experiences of Virginians from the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. Those boxes were designed specifically for Charlottesville and Albemarle, featuring material related to the Charlottesville Woolen Mills, the Albemarle County Courthouse, Monticello, and the University of Virginia.

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In the coming months, VHS staff will create HistoryConnects programs that mirror and expand on themes explored in the history boxes. The Charles Fund money will ensure that every school in both districts will have the opportunity to experience one of the programs. In addition, educators will have access to the full catalog of VHS HistoryConnects programs, covering such topics as the Powhatan Indians, the Westward Movement, the Civil War, and the African American experience in Virginia.

“The Charles Fund’s ability to assist in history education is worthy and beneficial to everyone,” said Joseph W. Richmond, Jr., President of The Charles Fund, Inc. “The directors are pleased to build on the success of the history box program and look forward to HistoryConnects being useful and valuable to all Charlottesville and Albemarle students.”

“The history boxes far exceeded our expectations,” Annie Evans, Charlottesville City Public Schools Coordinator of Social Studies, said. “We are excited about adding the HistoryConnects component. It will further expand the resources available to these students by giving them direct access to historians and artifacts. The VHS and Charles Fund have helped break down the four walls of the classroom and change the concept of an educational school field trip.”

“The VHS project team is excited to work with Charlottesville and Albemarle educators to create dynamic programming for their students,” Liddiard added. “The new, localized resources we are creating from this already-successful partnership will impact and benefit generations of young learners to come.”

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The **Virginia Historical Society** (VHS)—a privately funded nonprofit organization—collects, preserves, and interprets the Commonwealth’s history, linking past with present to inspire future generations. Visitors may connect with the 8.5 million objects in the VHS collection through the research library, a variety of programs, and a recently redesigned website to learn more about the unparalleled story of Virginia. Exciting plans are underway to expand and improve VHS exhibitions in 2014 to offer visitors a better experience. The transformation of gallery spaces will create even more vibrant, accessible, and engaging gateways to America’s past. The VHS is located at 428 North Boulevard in Richmond’s Museum District. Admission is free. Hours are Monday–Saturday 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Sunday 1 p.m.–5 p.m. Library hours are Monday–Saturday 10 a.m.–5 p.m. For more information, call (804) 358-4901, visit www.vahistorical.org, or connect with the VHS on Facebook and Twitter.

