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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



For more information contact:
Cherise Newsome
cnewsome@hamptonroadscf.org
(757) 622-7951

#UnmaskingHR addresses history of racism in Hampton Roads through focused dialogue, performance art, and workshops

Norfolk, Va. (Oct. 1, 2019) – Unmasking Hampton Roads ([#UnmaskingHR](#)), a three-part learning series occurring twice this fall, will examine the historic and contemporary impact of racism in Hampton Roads. #UnmaskingHR is presented by the Hampton Roads Community Foundation in partnership with Virginia Humanities.

Both Unmasking Hampton Roads series will feature shared meals, performance art, discussions and workshops. The Oct. 10, 17 and 19 series will focus on Norfolk and Virginia Beach, with the Nov. 14, 21 and 23 series focusing on Portsmouth, Chesapeake and Suffolk.

The goal of #UnmaskingHR is to help participants:

- **understand** the historic and contemporary role racism plays in the Hampton Roads region;
- **talk honestly** about the effects of racism in their lives, and;
- **learn tools** to recognize and address racial biases and disparities through professionally-facilitated workshops.

“It is important we understand the history of race and the way racism impacts our society so we can begin to heal and bring about change,” says **Vivian Oden**, vice president for special projects at the Hampton Roads Community Foundation. “Unmasking Hampton Roads is an opportunity for people from all walks of life to have a safe space to have meaningful conversations about race.”

Unmasking Hampton Roads is the second event in a new partnership between the [Hampton Roads Community Foundation](#) and [Virginia Humanities](#), [“Beneath the Surface: Race and the History of Race in South Hampton Roads.”](#) The initiative aims to deepen awareness of the role race and racism play in issues confronting the region, and lay groundwork for positive transformation. [A public conversation with Dr. Beverly Tatum](#) on May 30 was the first event in the initiative.

“Unmasking Hampton Roads is the third Unmasking Series in the state of Virginia,” says series co-creator **Samantha Willis**, a writer and project consultant with Virginia Humanities. The Unmasking series began in Richmond in 2016, continued in Charlottesville in 2018, and has now come to Hampton Roads. “The series is a timely contribution to critical local and national dialogue about race and racism,” says Willis.



There is no cost to attend #UnmaskingHR, but seats are limited and registration is required. Register and learn more: www.unmaskinghr.org. Follow the series on social media: **#UnmaskingHR**

Learn more about Hampton Roads Community Foundation at www.hamptonroadscf.org, and about Virginia Humanities at www.virginiahumanities.org.

#UnmaskingHR Community Partners:

African American Cultural Center of Virginia Beach
Council of United Filipino Organizations of Tidewater
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Coastal Virginia
Juneteenth Festival Company
Junior League of Norfolk-Virginia Beach
Teens with a Purpose
tHRive
Urban League of Hampton Roads
Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (*exclusive workshop partner*)
WAVY-TV 10 (*exclusive television partner*)
WHRO Media
YWCA of South Hampton Roads