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Contact: Kindra Greene, kindra.greene@elizabethrivertrail.org, 757.681.1405

The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation Receives Virginia Humanities Grant

\$20,000 will fund the Truth Be Told Virginia project highlighting Black stories along the ERT

NORFOLK, Va. – (October 2024) – With a second grant supporting the Truth Be Told Virginia project, the ERT Foundation has been awarded \$170,000 in total grant support to ensure stories of Norfolk’s Black resident don’t go untold. For 50 years Virginia Humanities grants support projects that explore the stories of Virginia—its history, people, communities, and cultural traditions—as well as issues and questions that impact the lives of Virginians in the present day.

Of 64 applications received across the Commonwealth, 10 were awarded grants. The \$20,000 grant award will be applied to engaging the public in community impact discussions, bringing the producers into a classroom setting and creating interactive signage along the Elizabeth River Trail. The project team has conducted extensive research on equitable public access and the use of storytelling to share lived experiences. By transforming the Elizabeth River Trail into an outdoor classroom, the Truth Be Told project leverages the humanities to offer a unique, immersive learning environment. Unlike traditional guided tours, this project provides history through the personal narratives of those who lived it, inviting trail users to literally walk in another person’s shoes.

“Telling the often-untold stories of Black communities along our trail, and being able to highlight the changemakers and stories of triumph and connection that make up this very place is core to our mission of creating an outdoor space that everyone feels welcome in,” said Kindra Greene executive director of the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation. “Creating space for these stories to come to life is an honor and I’m so grateful to Virginia Humanities for seeing the importance of this project.”

“Knowing that listeners can engage while walking in the spaces where the stories happened is the realization of the fullness of the idea for *Truth Be Told: Virginia*, and we are honored to continue our work with the support of the Elizabeth River Trail

Foundation, the National Parks Service, and Virginia Humanities,” said Hannah Sobol Founder of Heard Productions

The storytelling podcast Truth Be Told Virginia can be found wherever you get your podcasts.

The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation’s mission is to plan, program and advocate for the Elizabeth River Trail to connect from Naval Station Norfolk to the Virginia Beach Trail. The Elizabeth River Trail runs 10.5 miles through businesses, historic attractions and 28 neighborhoods within a five-minute walk. The multi-use trail is designed for walking, running, and biking. It comprises 11 sections from Norfolk State University, through Downtown Norfolk and Old Dominion University to NIT Terminals along the Elizabeth River. The Foundation has completed multiple new unique and award-winning amenities, including kayak launches, play sculpture, a double turbo challenge course in Plum Point Park, The Glowline and most recently, the installation of the first hydration station. Major sponsors include the City of Norfolk and Sentara. For more information, visit elizabethrivertrail.org.

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