

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Office of the Governor

Timothy M. Kaine
Governor

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GOVERNOR KAINE BREAKS GROUND ON VIRGINIA CIVIL RIGHTS MEMORIAL

RICHMOND – Governor Timothy M. Kaine today helped break ground on Virginia’s Civil Rights Memorial in Capitol Square. The memorial will depict and recognize the contributions of Virginians in the fight for equality and civil rights in the Commonwealth and the nation.

“This memorial will honor these great men and women, these great Virginians, who won the battle for civil rights in our Commonwealth and in our country,” Governor Kaine said. “There is no more fitting place for this tribute than the grounds of this historic capitol, designed by the man who wrote that we are all created equal.”

Governor Kaine, chair of the Virginia Civil Rights Memorial Commission, was joined in the groundbreaking by First Lady Anne Holton; Lisa Collis, former first lady of Virginia and Virginia Civil Rights Memorial Commission member; Judy Anderson, chairwoman of the Civil Rights Memorial Foundation; and two current Prince Edward County High School students, Curry Hackett and Shanika Epperson.

The four-sided memorial will depict Barbara Johns and the students of Robert R. Moton High School, who in 1951 walked out of their Farmville schoolhouse to protest its conditions. The memorial will also feature civil rights attorneys Oliver W. Hill and Spottswood W. Robinson III, who filed suit to initiate school integration on behalf of the Prince Edward students. Minister and community leader Rev. Leslie Francis Griffin, who advised and helped organize the desegregation efforts in Prince Edward, also is memorialized. The fourth panel features young Virginians marching into the future.

The Virginia Civil Rights Memorial Commission was created in 2005 by Governor Mark R. Warner and the Virginia General Assembly. The commission was to recommend to the Governor and General Assembly a subject, artist, and Capitol Square site for the memorial.

The memorial will be in the northeast corner of Capitol Square, outside the gates of the Executive Mansion. Connecticut sculptor Stanley Bleifeld was chosen for the project, which will be installed in July 2008.

The Virginia Civil Rights Memorial was made possible through many valuable private donations to the Virginia Civil Rights Memorial Foundation. The Foundation expressed its thanks for the generous support it has received to-date from corporations, foundations, organizations and individuals from across the Commonwealth of Virginia and the United States. A complete list of donors is available at <http://www.vacivilrightsmemorial.org/foundation/wall/>.

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