

Commonwealth Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Meeting Minutes

Law Subcommittee

Science Museum of Virginia

Third Floor Board Room

2500 W. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23220

November 15, 2017

Subcommittee Members Present: Hassan Ahmad (Chair), Dr. Jenny Alexander, Dr. Rosa Adkins, Chief Tonya Chapman, Senator Rosalyn Dance, Delegate Jason Miyares, Mona Siddiqui

Morning Break-Out Session (10:30am – 12:00pm)

- Mr. Ahmad led the session with identifying “leverage points” of the subcommittee members. Mr. Ahmad began the discussion with his concerns regarding immigration and U-Visas and the need for centralized information to provide to non-citizen victims of crimes.
- This prompted Dr. Adkins to raise concerns and the effect of the President’s Executive Order on banning immigration from certain countries. It has caused some uncertainty and need for guidance in dealing with students who are fearful of attending school; Charlottesville had to set contingency plans in place for when students may come home to parents who are detained by ICE. She would like to see guidelines on how to deal with these issues for all schools in Virginia so that education can be the focus.
- Ms. Siddiqui responded that the OAG has provided guidance regarding immigration and that it is up to each local school district to apply the guidance. Without a state wide mandate, it may lead to inconsistent application of the guidance and create inequities among the school districts. Ms. Siddiqui provided bathroom policies related to transgendered students as an example of guidance that should be applied state wide. She posed how can civil rights law help to integrate immigrant students and protect LGBTQ and special education students?
- Dr. Adkins stated that the subcommittee must be careful not to make schools ground zero for addressing all inequities and the subcommittee members agreed.

- Del. Miyares believes that immigration is about second chances and interested in protecting victims and advocating for victims' rights.
- Sen. Dance clarified that immigration cannot be the only focus of this group; she would like to address disparity in higher arrest rates and school discipline for people of color. Sen. Dance provided that SOL results show that students of color are reading at a lower level than other students.
- Chief Chapman would like the subcommittee to focus on building equity in the criminal justice system using evidence based practices to apply state wide including recommendations for low level, non-violent offenders to be released, development of transparent policies and increase in community policing. One of the policies to examine is decriminalization of marijuana possession.
- Dr. Alexander has concerns regarding whether option to enter into drug court is offered equitably and to focus on treatment vs. punishment, including providing assistance for post-release.
- Sen. Dance brought up the opioid crisis and the impact on all citizens of Virginia and how it relates to lack of access to healthcare for the poor and minority communities.
- Dr. Adkins sees evidence of the opioid crisis creeping in to the schools and would like legislation allowing school nurses to possess and administer opioid antidote.
- Dr. Alexander mentioned the Hope Initiative. The opioid crisis has a disproportionate impact in indigent communities and it can help connect them to treatment.
- Del. Miyares supports increasing the threshold of felony larceny to at least \$1000 and addressing suspension of driver's licenses for failure to pay fines and costs. This would help to break the vicious cycle that keep the poor and minorities communities from advancing economically.
- These discussions posed the question of how to be inclusive in public settings using civil and criminal laws?
- Sen. Dance offered providing additional useful resources such as contact information for when a person needs opioid addiction treatment at Welcome Centers for out-of-state travelers. This may be address by a different subcommittee.

- In addressing the two characteristics of a welcoming Virginia that are vital to ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion, the subcommittee concluded the following:
 1. Stopping the vicious cycle that disproportionately impact the minority and indigent communities; Ms. Davenport provided the example of when a person of color making minimum wage is stopped for a traffic violation and fails to pay a fine which leads to license suspension and trapped in a cycle because the person must drive to make a living, is stopped again by law enforcement, charged with driving on suspended license, ends up in jail, loses job, steals then ends up with a felony and is unable to overcome these obstacles for economic opportunities.
 2. Using civil laws such as anti-discrimination laws to promote treating all people fairly. Being “nice” cannot be legislated but laws can enforce anti-discrimination in public places, including the work place and address bullying in schools and social media.

Afternoon Break-Out Session (1:00pm – 2:30pm)

Subcommittee Members Present: Hassan Ahmad (Chair), Dr. Jenny Alexander, Dr. Rosa Adkins, Senator Rosalyn Dance (early departure due to other official engagements in Charlottesville), Delegate Jason Miyares, Mona Siddiqui

(Chief Chapman was not available for this session as she was to attend the Governor’s Task Force on Public Safety Preparedness and Response to Civil Unrest.)

- The group reconvened and narrowed the focus to the criminal justice system, civil justice, education, healthcare, and immigration.
- Sen. Dance began discussing ways to improve access to healthcare and raised the issue of Medicaid expansion. Medicaid expansion was put aside for further discussion at a later time.
- Ms. Siddiqui cited new research from University of Virginia that suggests disparities in pain management may be attributable in part to racial bias; one of the findings was that substantial number of white medical students and residents hold false beliefs about biological differences between black and white people that could affect how they assess and treat the pain experienced by black patients. A suggestion for a short-term recommendation was to have an Executive Proclamation that this type of bias in medical treatment will not be tolerated in Virginia. The subcommittee agreed to make this recommendation.

- Dr. Alexander stated that dentists limit the insurance they accept and asked whether the state can require dentists to accept more insurance.
- Related to healthcare and education, Dr. Adkins recommended as a short-term goal to allow school nurses to possess and administer opioid antidote; and examine the statute that allows epinephrine in schools to include opioid antidote. The subcommittee agreed to make this recommendation.
- Ms. Davenport mentioned one way to address a short-term goal by reviewing the hate crimes statute. The subcommittee considered expanding the protected class beyond race, religion and national origin. Mr. Hassan provided that Virginia law requires the reporting of hate crimes by local law enforcement agencies to the Superintendent of the Department of State Police which are not open to the public. Ms. Siddiqui explained that the Code of Virginia includes enhanced punishment for certain crimes such as assault and battery if the offender selects the victim because of the race, religion or national origin of the victim. Dr. Adkins was concerned about how this would play out in schools but Ms. Siddiqui clarified that these were offenses that already exist but would allow increased punishment if the Commonwealth can prove that the offense was a result of race, religion or national origin of the victim.
- Then the subcommittee turned to which class of people to add. Ms. Siddiqui offered adding gender, sexual orientation and sexual identity. There was a discussion about the interpretation of terms; Del. Miyares stated “sex” is concrete and biological while the term “gender” could be open to interpretation and is concerned about the law of unintended consequences. Cynthia Hudson stopped in during this discussion and mentioned the guidance offered by the OAG on the interpretation of gender in Virginia Human Rights Act and the bill that was introduced last year to expand the Hate Crimes statute.
- The subcommittee was clear in that any crimes involving hate, or any hate, cannot be tolerated but in the interest of time, the subcommittee decided to revisit this issue at another meeting and perhaps recommend as a long-term goal.
- In discussing civil justice, Ms. Siddiqui suggested for a short term strategy to mandate training on diversity and inclusion at K-12; currently, the training is optional. Dr. Adkins was concerned that requiring it at K-12 will create additional burdens on teachers and would strain the budget, which is already limited. Another concern was that making it mandatory would send a message that the teachers are not doing their job on this issue. Ms. Siddiqui clarified that is not the intent of making it mandatory; the teachers that take this optional training are teachers that are already focused on this issue and that this

training should be mandatory to fight against the tide of increased bullying and discrimination that is occurring throughout the state and the country. The subcommittee came to an agreement that the training could be mandated at teacher preparation (for licensure) and that a four-year sunset provision could be included to cover the already licensed teachers. Dr. Adkins offered that another strategy could be to examine currently mandated trainings to see if they could be expanded to include training on diversity and inclusion.

The subcommittee discussion concluded with the following recommendations:

- Short-term recommendations
 - Legislation to decriminalize of marijuana possession.
 - Legislation to eliminate suspension of driver's license for failure to pay fines and costs.
 - Legislation to raise the felony threshold for larceny.
 - Legislation to allow school nurses/officials to possess and administer opioid antidote.
 - Legislation to expand drug courts .
 - Legislation or policy and procedure to require centralized information on crimes that qualify for U-Visa application and list of law enforcement officials throughout the state that are trained to certify these offenses that is required for the application.
 - Executive proclamation for equality in medical treatment.
 - Mandated training on diversity and inclusion as requirement for licensure and include 4 year sunset provision to capture licensed teachers; review mandated programs for expansion to include diversity and inclusion.

- Long-term recommendations
 - Collect and study data to assess whether the offer of option to enter drug court is equitable.
 - Review hate crimes statute and consider expanding protected class.
 - Review ways to increase access to healthcare.

Commonwealth Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Meeting Minutes

Separation Subcommittee

Science Museum of Virginia

Executive Conference Room

2500 W. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23220

November 15, 2017

Members Present: Beth O'Connor (Chair), Shirley Ginwright, Sarah Ochs, Chief Anne Richardson

Background: Each break-out session was led by Subcommittee Chair Beth O'Connor. In the first breakout session, she asked a series of question in which the members of the subcommittee responded. In the second breakout session, the subcommittee used the issues discussed in the first breakout session and came up with recommendations on how they can be fixed.

Morning Break-Out Session (10:30am – 12:00pm)

Question: What are examples of progress you have seen in diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Commonwealth in the past decade?

- Bipartisan interest in criminal justice reform. Sentencing guidelines of crack vs. cocaine
- More Democrats elected, increased minority voting, increased election of minority candidates, women, Asian Americans, first Transgender candidate
- Increased activism and increased awareness
- Inclusion in Governor's office staff appointments
- More inclusion and diversity in the Democratic and Republican Parties
 - Example of NAACP and Republican Party meeting to discuss criminal justice reform

Question: What are your expectations for this Commission's work?

- Help state agencies be educated on how to serve all communities.
- Promote more forums and active engagement by high level elected officials and candidates to reach out and meet with all people, even those who don't often vote. Marginalized groups, low income economic groups, poor white and poor minority voters are often isolated and not listened to.
- Make sure we are speaking to communities in their language and in a way they can understand.

- Need to address gerrymandering and its effects on the country.
- Schools are one of the greatest areas of separation. A lot of the programs (STEM programs) are not offered in the economically challenged areas. Working to ensure diversity in programs that localities provide to ensure diversity in workplace, especially law enforcement.
- Need to start early with schools. Early childhood development is critical.
- Seek equity for schools between localities, ensuring teacher/administration minimum standards.
- Promote more diverse communities, where neighbors actually know each other and there is no fear.
- A main priority should be housing for low/middle income people. More of it, better financing, not predatory financing, quality public housing with support services, no slum lords paid for with tax dollars
- No public housing, but instead mixed income housing where the poor don't get locked in
- Transportation is a key issue (both urban and rural)
- Would like to see training and public forums on training for inclusivity. Great American Cookout, get people who are different in the same room. Have a public speaking circuit rider program to ensure we are bringing people of different views together. Include young people in these events.
- Restorative justice programs could be pushed throughout the state through state mandate. Alternative accountability program is what it is called through the courts.

Question: What are two characteristics of a Welcoming Virginia?

- Immigrant transition groups, welcome committees. A sponsored immigration hub office at the state and local levels for both immigrants and to help current residents know how to help welcome new residents. Must figure out way to deal with immigrants being afraid to participate in any event because of fear of federal ICE agents.
- Social Media and marketing campaign that takes the soundbites of diversity. The Virginia is for Lovers campaign and marketing campaigns by VEDP should make sure to focus on our diversity and market VA as a welcome and opening commonwealth.
- Everyone is treated equally.
- Proclamations and forums that understand how to bring people together and make them feel comfortable.
- Study ongoing work and best practices in other areas.

Question: Who else needs to be included in this discussion? How do we include them?

- Returning citizens, restoration of rights
- Take a critical look at how to listen to rural communities and white rural people. Need to discuss findings with people who don't believe in the work of this Commission.

- Find places where people of different political views and different views on diversity have come together through professional and trade associations (local government associations, health associations, example of Virginia Oral Health Coalition Summit discussing redlining). Find ways to bring this topic to areas where there is a diverse audience in terms of diverse opinions.
- Middle Resolution
- Black Lives Matter
- College Conservative Groups
- GOP campaign staff that worked for Trump or Corey Stewart
- White rural voters
- Groups that represent rural communities

Summary of Discussion

- Progress: more inclusion, more awareness, criminal justice reform.
- Expectations: Undo gerrymandering, more active engagement of all groups of people not just the powerful; equity in school funding
- Community: Low/middle-income housing
- Diverse and inclusive
- Transportation: more and better
- Public forums: Great American Cookout

Afternoon Break-Out Session (1:00pm – 2: 30pm)

The following chart outlines key issues the subcommittee identified during the afternoon session, as well as potential policy recommendations that correspond to these issues.

Key Issues	Recommendation
School to Prison Pipeline	Restorative Justice/ Alternative Accountability (Mandate)
Lack of awareness and intolerance of different cultures	Public Forums School diversity clubs Moral Mondays PR Campaign Resources for incoming immigrants Interpreter in public offices
Perception of “white fragility” and polarization	No recommendation yet: will revisit
Qualification for teachers and school officials/Discrimination and hiring practices of some teachers	Statewide standards Review of best practices and bring recommendations

<p>School Funding - <i>need to figure out where all of Virginia's school funding comes from. There may be a study/commission to show how much money is going to school districts with high incomes opposed to low incomes</i></p> <p>SOLs</p> <p>Bullying</p>	<p>Study to understand equitable distribution in schools</p> <p>Eliminate SOLs (but would lead to loss of federal funds)</p> <p>Standard bullying policy</p>
<p>Lack of quality low- and middle-income housing</p> <p>Formerly incarcerated individuals do not qualify for homes</p>	<p>A percentage of all new development must include low-income housing</p>
<p>Jobs not accessible to low income communities</p>	<p>More transportation options</p> <p>More jobs</p>
<p>Re-integration for former inmates</p> <p>End of prison labor</p>	<p>Ban the Box</p> <p>Trade skills training programs</p> <p>Work release programs</p> <p>Creating personal accounts and giving prisoners minimum wage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Debt relief ▪ Child support ▪ Money for when they are released
<p>Broadband Access</p>	<p>Funding for the "last mile"</p> <p>Promotion of federal programs</p>
<p>Healthcare Access Disparities</p>	<p>Medicaid Expansion</p>
<p>Lack of tribal recognition</p>	<p>Promotion and support of tribal history and heritage</p>
<p>Need Jobs</p>	<p>Economic Development</p>
<p>Improving Law enforcement community relations</p>	<p>Community Forums</p>
<p><i>Note: Recommendations in bold are what the subcommittee considers to be possible to accomplish in the short term.</i></p>	

Commonwealth Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Meeting Minutes

Narrative and Racial Healing Subcommittees

Science Museum of Virginia

Discovery Room

2500 W. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23220

November 15, 2017; 10:30am – 12:00pm

Members Present

Narrative Subcommittee: Dr. James Hawdon, Rabbi Amy Schwartzman, Kathy Spangler, Dr. Janet Warren

Racial Healing Subcommittee: Jonathan Zur (Subcommittee Chair), Rabbi Dovid Asher, Dr. Ram Bhagat, Bishop Lawrence Campbell, Robert Jamison, Adeola Ogunkeyede, Delegate Luke Torian

Questions for Discussion

1. What are examples of progress you have seen in diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Commonwealth in the past decade?
2. What are your expectations for the Commission's work?
3. Visioning exercise: What are two characteristics of a welcoming Virginia that are vital to ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion?
4. Who else needs to be included in this discussion? How do we include them? List specific individuals and strategies.

Opening Remarks and Introductions

- Traci DeShazor, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth and staff liaison to the Narrative Subcommittee and Racial Healing Subcommittee, began the session by discussing the purpose of holding a joint meeting. She explained that, in order to develop a new narrative for Virginia, the Narrative Subcommittee needs to understand the objectives and plans of the Commission's other subcommittees. Because of the key role that racial healing will play in efforts to construct a narrative, and vice-versa, Ms. DeShazor noted that the joint meeting would be a useful format for each group.

- Ms. DeShazor then asked members to introduce themselves and discuss how their expertise and experiences relate to the Commission's objectives:

Narrative Subcommittee

- Amy Schwartzman Rabbi at Temple Rodef Shalom, discussed her congregation's work with the Muslim community, refugee sanctuaries, and returning citizens. She explained that she was drawn to the Narrative Subcommittee because of her experience with Judaism, which, like all religions, draws its strength from compelling narratives.
- Dr. Jim Hawdon discussed his recent research on online hate groups and extremism, which involved studying how to counter the divisive narratives that extremist groups construct.
- Dr. Janet Warren spoke about her experience studying various forms of violent behavior throughout her career. She explained her current research on terrorist violence among both jihadists and the alt-right, and expressed her interest in creating a counter-narrative to address extremism. Also trained as a psychoanalyst, Dr. Warren said that narrative often influences how a person responds to certain events.
- Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of the 2019 Commemoration, discussed the major role that narratives play in the Commemoration's efforts to engage all Virginians in telling the Commonwealth's history. She said that much of the Commemoration's work will be very applicable to the Commission's objectives, and expressed her excitement to learn from the experiences of other members.

Racial Healing Subcommittee

- Robert Jamison said that his experience as an educator has heightened his interest in studying the factors that guide teachers in their interactions with students, as well as the reasons for disproportionate rates of disciplinary action for certain groups and for achievement gaps. Mr. Jamison acknowledged that students in some groups feel unsupported in schools, and he emphasized the need to build relationships so that people can engage in productive conversations about these issues.
- Dr. Ram Bhagat also discussed the disparities he has seen in his experiences as an educator. He asked members to consider what would be required in order to create schools that have real diversity. Dr. Bhagat spoke about his leadership in numerous organizations and initiatives that are relevant to the Commission's

work, including: (1) Drums Not Guns, a music program that aims to address to disproportionate number of young black males killed by gun violence; (2) The Conciliation Project, which addresses the impact of racism and oppression; and (3) emotional emancipation projects. Dr. Bhagat emphasized the importance of creating opportunities for authentic conversations and bringing people together to promote “massive resilience.”

- Jonathan Zur, President and CEO of the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, discussed the CIC’s work facilitating initiatives across the Commonwealth to promote healing. He said that recently, the organization has had to increasingly focus on rapid responses to incidents involving hate and intolerance. Mr. Zur recognized that proactive, systemic changes are necessary in order to work towards racial healing.
- Bishop Lawrence Campbell commented that the Racial Healing Subcommittee must seek the perspectives of people who are opposed to equity in order to be effective, as it is difficult to promote healing without understanding these viewpoints. Ms. DeShazor informed the groups that staff is working with the Commission Co-Chairs to identify and reach out to individuals with viewpoints that are currently unrepresented on the Commission.
- Adeola Ogunkeyede challenged members to think about whether their subcommittees are truly homogenous, and acknowledged that members may have divergent perspectives on issues despite a lack of extreme differences. Ms. Ogunkeyede said that her experiences as a lawyer have convinced her that legal changes alone cannot achieve the outcomes that the Commission was formed to pursue. Noting that the nation’s foundational legal documents, which lacked any acknowledgment of slavery, concealed the true motives of the founders, Ms. Ogunkeyede highlighted the importance of being explicit in discussing the current environment and the need for racial healing.
- Rabbi Dovid Asher discussed the effect of the Holocaust on his family and spoke about his professional motivation to protect his congregation from hate and discrimination. Rabbi Asher shared his excitement that Virginia is working to become the leading state in efforts to improve conditions for minorities and achieve racial healing.
- Delegate Luke Torian discussed the significant demographic changes he has observed in Prince William County. He commented on the challenge of

addressing people's uncertainty as a community becomes more inclusive and accepting of other groups.

Group Discussion

- Ms. DeShazor then asked members to share examples of progress in diversity, equity, and inclusion that they have observed in Virginia during the past decade.
 - To provide an example, Ms. DeShazor mentioned the increasing diversity in governors' cabinets over time, including a significant increase in the number of women in Governor McAuliffe's cabinet. She also discussed the McAuliffe administration's prioritization of diversity in board appointments.
 - Rabbi Asher said that he has observed progress in attitudes among millennials. Robert Jamison agreed, saying that, based on his observations of students, it is more socially acceptable for people of different races, as well as people of the same sex, to date. Jim Hawdon said that this same trend has been evident on college campuses.
 - Ms. DeShazor stated that students have expressed a desire to have more safe spaces on campuses in order to foster open discussions on controversial issues.
 - Rabbi Asher acknowledged that people may conflate negative changes they experience, such as a loss of jobs, with social changes that they observe.
 - Dr. Hawdon commented that a vision of progress for the Commission may be a vision of regression for others, such as people who identify with the alt-right.
 - Ms. Spangler discussed the problematic tendency of social media to amplify the voices of the most extreme, and suggested that the subcommittee identify ways to prevent these extremes from commanding space and interfering with constructive dialogue.
 - Dr. Bhagat shared information about an activity called "Take a Stand," where participants choose on a scale where they stand on a particular issue and are then paired with someone with a different perspective to discuss the issue.
 - Dr. Bhagat also expressed his view that the concept of color-blindness is problematic, as it interferes with the need to see people for who they are.

- To assist the subcommittees' in their efforts to articulate a vision, Ms. DeShazor asked members to think about how the Commission's work will impact future generations, and to consider ways to create spaces to hear from people with different perspectives as the vision is developed.
- Mr. Zur then facilitated a discussion on vision-setting. As an example, he spoke about how organizations have begun to acknowledge systemic challenges and inequities based on race, which represents a change in narrative that could facilitate racial healing.
- Members divided into small groups to discuss the following question: *What are two characteristics of a Welcoming Virginia?* Following the discussion, groups reported the following characteristics:
 - Desegregated schools
 - Positive modeling by political leaders
 - Expanded opportunities for civic engagement
 - Workforce training for meaningful and respected employment
 - Recognition that people are different and toleration of those differences
 - Recognition of the dignity of all persons
 - Historical honesty for Virginia
 - Promotion of self-determination and exposure of the lie of white superiority
- Mr. Zur then asked members to consider specific actions that the Commonwealth can take to effectuate racial healing and narrative change:
 - Encourage clergy members to play an important role
 - More white clergy members openly rejecting racism
 - Share experiences across congregations
 - Ensure that young people, who may not be as connected to faith communities, are not left out of the process
 - Update curriculum and required reading in schools
 - Utilize media, including Commonwealth websites
 - Mandatory service: would provide a possible pathway towards shared experiences
 - Create emotional emancipation circles
 - Statewide global summit to acknowledge the struggles that black Virginians have experienced
- Ms. Ogunkeyede spoke about the importance of acknowledging one's personal limitations and recognizing that personal experiences shape one's view of the world. Mr. Zur suggested that encouraging people to acknowledge their personal limitations could represent an effective narrative change.

- Dr. Warren mentioned the European education system and the status it associates with expertise in trades. She contrasted this with the U.S. education system, where status is connected to a college education. Dr. Hawdon commented that this status system is no longer feasible in the U.S., given the current economic situation.
- Rabbi Asher stated that the desegregation of schools must occur before people can truly acknowledge differences.
- Delegate Torian noted that people often intentionally segregate their communities. He said that the relocation of younger people to certain urban areas can be a positive change, but that it can also displace people.
- Ms. DeShazor stated that diversification of the teacher workforce is also an important issue.
- Prior to breaking for lunch, Ms. DeShazor notified members that the subcommittees would return to the task of identifying additional perspectives during the afternoon session. She asked them to prepare for this discussion by considering possible partners with whom the Commission can engage.

Commonwealth Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Meeting Minutes

Narrative Subcommittee

Science Museum of Virginia

Discovery Room

2500 W. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23220

November 15, 2017; 1:00am – 2:30pm

Members Present: Dr. James Hawdon, Rabbi Amy Schwartzman, Kathy Spangler, Dr. Janet Warren

Questions for Discussion

1. What are the key issues in your subcommittee's area that need to be addressed?
2. What are your recommendations for how to address them? Discuss both short-term and long-term strategies.

Major Goals

- Develop and present a key message
 - Integrate the efforts of other subcommittees into this messaging
- Leverage the 2019 Commemoration's relevant work

Topics of Discussion

Public Relations Campaign

- Primary goals of campaign: (1) Create and promote an inclusive and inviting Virginia; and (2) attract people to the Commonwealth.
- Create a compelling tagline
 - Example: 2019 Commemoration's line: "We are Virginia. We are America."
- Potential platforms
 - Radio
 - Governor McAuliffe has appeared regularly on "Ask the Governor" segments on the radio. Radio could be an effective platform for promoting the Commission's message.
 - Website Development
 - Create opportunities for people, especially young Virginians, to share their stories online.
 - Possible platforms: Commission's website, Governor's website, Commonwealth of Virginia website
 - Can share information about Commission events on the Governor's website.
 - Include a section on Virginia's history.

- Social Media
 - Students have expressed that they feel inundated by social media.
- Interactive virtual experiences
 - Example: Virtual First Amendment Wall, created through a partnership between the 2019 Commemoration and the UVA Center for Politics
- Engagement with schools
 - Focus on strategies outside of the classroom to share new Virginia narrative in schools
 - Specific ideas:
 - Essay contests for students
 - Leverage technology: virtual tours of museums
 - Increase accessibility to ensure that students from all parts of Virginia can experience museums
 - Would likely require funding from private sources or the federal government
 - State-coordinated PSA campaign in schools to promote the narrative
- Examples of effective public relations and marketing initiatives
 - Virginia Tourism
 - New Virginians Project: Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the Library of Virginia
 - Gives heightened status to Virginia's immigrant populations, telling the stories of incoming citizens.
 - PR campaign in the United Kingdom designed to deter young people from joining terrorist groups

Messaging Strategies

- Emphasize a collective narrative, history, and understanding for Virginians.
 - Could define Virginians as a collective group, as groups tend to accept differences among their members.
- Focus on selling benefits instead of labels: need a benefits-based approach in order to effectively reach people.
- Work to reach the people who may not be self-motivated to go to a museum and learn
 - Embedded messaging: find messengers who can effectively target certain groups.
 - Meet people where they are: cannot message effectively without understanding their perspectives and the experiences that inform those perspectives.
 - Example: coal communities
- Authentic voices are important and have the greatest emotional impact. Focus on first-person perspectives.
 - Personalize museum exhibits.
- Utilize existing resources.
 - Example: create a guidebook for Virginia citizens to walk through the National Museum of African American History and Culture.
- Consider state government officials and employees.
 - Develop training programs for state officials on appropriate language/terminology.

- Have members of the General Assembly proactively declare their support for the Commission's efforts in their districts.
- Attracting businesses to Virginia is also an important objective.
 - This involves efforts to promote the strength of the Commonwealth's education system.
 - Need to ensure that apprenticeships are afforded status as dignified professions.
- Invite media into Virginia to experience events.
- Ritualize the Virginia story on a regular basis across the Commonwealth.
- Create a "Virginia Day," or "Virginia Week."
 - Would provide an opportunity to coordinate multiple initiatives.
 - Could include a statewide proclamation of support.
- Community exchange programs could create opportunities for people to realize that communities have different needs and perspectives.
 - Example: Cross-community receptions
- Find salespeople at all levels: take a bottom-up approach.
 - Need to find early adopters who can help lower the threshold for seeing the world from a different perspective.
 - Send ambassadors to communities to engage in community-based events.

2019 Commemoration

- Much of the Commemoration's work, including the historical themes it addresses, will be relevant to the Commission's efforts to construct a new narrative for Virginia.
 - Examples: statewide supper; trails that share the histories of different groups and integrate these stories into the history of Virginia
- The Commemoration is actively addressing diversity, and the Commission should leverage this existing infrastructure.
- Kathy Spangler offered to collaborate with Commission staff in developing the Commission's website.
- Kathy Spangler will send materials to the subcommittee.