



NCSS Summer Leadership Institute: *Uncovering Hidden Histories, Advocating for Local Issues*

Tyler Daughtry and Bobbi Jo Taylor

The North Carolina Council for the Social Studies (NCCSS) decided last year that it was going to grow its council and set a path for advocacy, leadership and social studies growth. The best way to begin this process was to have representatives attend the National Council for the Social Studies' Summer Leadership Institute in Richmond, Virginia.

On July 10, 2023, NCCSS board member Tyler Daughtry and president Bobbi Jo Taylor (coauthors of this article) headed to Richmond for the 2023 two-day institute, "Uncovering Hidden Histories, Advocating for Local Issues." Twenty-five educators and leaders from states including Georgia, Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina,

Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin attended.

On the first morning NCSS Executive Director Lawrence Paska and NCSS President Wesley Hedgepeth welcomed us in opening remarks. Attendees then transitioned to a guided tour of Richmond, hosted by The Valentine museum (<https://thevalentine.org>). While on the tour we explored historic sites such as Arthur Ashe boulevard, Monument Avenue, Jackson Ward, Maggie Walker historic site, the African Burial Ground as well as Oakwood and Hollywood cemeteries. Each of these sites allowed attendees to form their own impressions on the subject and related events. It became clear on the

tour that how we remember the past is always changing. Additionally, how we address events in our individual states and local communities will continue to change throughout history.

When we concluded our tour, we were transported to the Virginia State Capitol, designed by Thomas Jefferson and Charles-Louis Clérisseau, one of the oldest capitols still in use. We saw the old state house, senate and the modern location of Virginia congress. We learned about the changes that had to be made when the capitol was transitioned from Williamsburg to Richmond.

In this capital city with its rich history we reflected on the importance of understanding the historical spaces we were in and the role these have in our world. We reflected on Virginia's historical leaders and how the influence of Washington, Jefferson, James Madison, Patrick Henry, and Woodrow Wilson shaped our world.

After concluding the capital tour, we returned to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and had the opportunity to interact with a panel including Virginia elected officials. The panel spoke about how humans tell their stories and advocate for issues based on individual experiences and noted that how we, as social studies leaders and teachers in our individual councils, advocate for issues will be based on the needs of our areas and our roadmap for the future.



Our first day concluded at the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia (<https://blackhistorymuseum.org>). We screened a documentary entitled "How the

Monuments Came Down," which chronicles the history and controversy surrounding historical monuments of Richmond. At the conclusion, we reflected on the film with the directors. The documentary helped us understand the next steps in our leadership journey.

On our second day, keynote speaker Ed Ayers, executive director of New American History, focused on resources educators can implement that allow students to explore events through images, maps, diagrams, and current events. These resources help students compare and contrast different historical events as well as determine the impact they have in the present.

We concluded our day back at The Valentine, exploring the museum's collections, which detail some of Richmond's historical events.

NCSS's leadership institute enables attendees to grow their leadership skills within a rich historical setting. From start to finish, we considered how the lessons of the past, in this case in Richmond, impact the future. The attending members from The North Carolina Council for the Social Studies determined that the impact of including all stakeholders in decision making and deciding solutions on topics in the present and the future was key. Although leadership styles, beliefs and values may begin individually, goals are achieved as one body. We look forward to continuing this process of learning at NCSS's annual conferences and at the next Summer Leadership Institute. 🟩



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