

AMERICAN INDIAN INITIATIVE

- > *Sharing the stories of Indigenous people in early America for a more inclusive history of Williamsburg.*



American Indians were a political and economic force in 18th-century Williamsburg and a constant presence in the colonial capital, yet their activities, influence and perspectives have not been fully reflected in the Historic Area.

The American Indian Initiative



Right: Manager of Historical Interpretation Jamie Helmick works with traditional materials, including animal pelts, at the encampment site.

Interpreters embody the stories, roles and interactions of diverse Indigenous people in the 1700s.

Below: American Indian Interpreter Nokomis Custalow demonstrates woodworking techniques while speaking with guests.

The American Indian Initiative supports research, programs, demonstrations, interpretation and a permanent encampment site that educates guests about the often-overlooked role of American Indians in early American history. The Initiative illuminates their still-thriving governments, traditions, culture and languages.

tours and more. They also illuminate the modern lives of American Indian nations from across the country, dispelling stereotypes and fostering a greater understanding of their diverse cultures.

Although they can be seen throughout the Historic Area, the interpreters regularly gather at the recently designated American Indian encampment at the intersection of Nicholson and Botetourt streets. The prominent site allows interpreters to better connect with visitors through discussions on topics such as clothing, food and trades.

The American Indian Initiative seeks funding to hire staff, develop and implement programming and purchase supplies and materials for the encampment site. By expanding its staffing, programming, visibility and impact as well as its community connections and outreach, the Initiative will ensure that Indigenous people and their stories are fully woven into the complex tapestry of 18th-century Williamsburg.

The American Indian Initiative helps the Foundation tell a fuller, more inclusive history of Williamsburg and colonial America by exploring and sharing the lives and viewpoints of American Indian people.

Interpreters embody the stories, roles and interactions of diverse Indigenous people in the 1700s through stage programs, informal interpretation, trade demonstrations, online programming,

