

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 251

*Commending the James Solomon Russell-Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives, Inc.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 9, 2026

WHEREAS, the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives, Inc., an organization with a mission to develop, organize, preserve, and promote access to a collection of archival materials and other items pertaining to the life of James Solomon Russell and the history of James Solomon Russell High School and Saint Paul's College, celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2026; and

WHEREAS, the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives was established in 2016, three years after the closing of Saint Paul's College; and

WHEREAS, with the support of the Brunswick County Board of Supervisors, the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives opened in the Brunswick County Conference Center, which was formerly the John E. Thomasson Student Center at Saint Paul's College; and

WHEREAS, the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives' collection spans records, photographs, and artifacts dating from the founding of Saint Paul Normal and Industrial School in 1888 to the closing of Saint Paul's College in 2013, while also containing material pertaining to the life of the institution's founder, James Solomon Russell; and

WHEREAS, the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives has been steadfast in its efforts to make its collection of records, books, printed materials, photographs, artifacts, and more available for the benefit of researchers, students, professionals, alumni, and the general public; and

WHEREAS, during the 2020 regular session of the General Assembly, the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives successfully advocated to establish March 28 of each year as James Solomon Russell Day in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives is a stop on the Civil Rights in Education Heritage Trail, a self-guided driving tour owned and managed by the tourism marketing consortium Virginia's Crossroads; and

WHEREAS, the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture has recognized the importance of the work and the collection of the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives and has partnered with the museum to host training classes and help catalogue and digitize certain collections at the museum; and

WHEREAS, in 2025, the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives established The Honorable L. Louise Lucas Digital History Lab; and

WHEREAS, in 2025, the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives became a member of the National HBCU Digital Library Trust, a consortium of Historically Black Colleges and Universities nationwide working to digitally preserve and provide global access to their archival collections, sustain institutional, cultural, and community memory, and ensure stories are discovered, maintained, remembered, and told; and

WHEREAS, as part of the legacy of James Solomon Russell and his community engagement, the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives serves as the Brunswick County affiliate for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and partners with Malcolm Mitchell, Super Bowl champion, author, and founder of the Share the Magic Foundation and the Read With Malcolm literacy program, to encourage reading in schools across Brunswick County and Southside Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives continues to work to preserve and make available to the public the historical artifacts, photographs, stories, and papers that cover the history of James Solomon Russell, Saint Paul's College, James Solomon Russell High School, and those who have a connection to the three; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives, Inc., hereby be commended on the occasion of its 10th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the James Solomon Russell–Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives, Inc., as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the organization's contributions to the Commonwealth.

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