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**PRELIMINARY RELEASE-
NCECA COMES TO RICHMOND
IN MARCH 2020 FOR
IMMEDIATE CIRCULATION**

**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR THE CERAMIC ARTS (NCECA)
ANNOUNCEMENT ON 2020 CONFERENCE AND HEALTH CONCERNS**

*54th Annual NCECA Conference to be held March 25-28, 2020
at the Greater Richmond Convention Center*

NCECA remains optimistic and excited for its upcoming conference in Richmond, Virginia. This has been the most successful pre-conference registration period in NCECA history and we ask all of our conference registrants and supporters to remain committed to being with us for *MULTIVALENT: Clay, Mindfulness and Memory*. As an organization devoted to connecting people through a shared love for ceramic art, NCECA appreciates the importance of gathering people from many places together to share knowledge, practices, and issues.

We understand that people are concerned about the new coronavirus (COVID-19). To date, there have been no reports of infections in the regions of Washington DC, Maryland or Virginia (as of the morning 3/10/20 there have been five presumptive or confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported by the Virginia Department of Health). While it would not be responsible to say that any public gathering is beyond risk, we are working with the Greater Richmond Convention Center to ensure that resources are present to provide the best and safest experiences for our conference attendees. At this point in time, during the conference, there will be an EMT stationed in the conference registration area of the Greater Richmond Convention Center. The EMT is in touch with emergency services and can organize any emergency needs. If someone needs immediate assistance during the conference, there will be signs posted and an advisement in the program guide as to how to most effectively locate the situation and deploy response.

NCECA is doing its best to actively communicate with representatives of the Greater Richmond Convention Center and the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Richmond to remain responsive to changing conditions in the conference region. As any new or different information becomes available that could impact decisions on the conference, NCECA will share it.

This is a season of conferences across the states. It's hard to know the range of decision making factors that others are using to make determinations as to whether to move forward with public events. Some organizations have chosen to cancel or reschedule conferences, while others have chosen not to. NCECA will continue to research and monitor the advisories of official contacts in Richmond and work to stay abreast with how other national gatherings are adjusting to evolving conditions. It's a very tough time to make good decisions when so much remains in flux about the risk of travel and exposure. We do understand that many of our international guests may have to make the difficult decision to cancel their plans this year for NCECA. Reviewing the pages of the Journal as it is getting ready to go to print makes the case that the content for the conference is rich and diverse. We remain cautiously hopeful about being able to bring the conference to fruition.

The best online resource for timely information specific to Virginia is the [Virginia Department of Health](https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/). They publish [updates to Covid-19](#) on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. As of Friday, (2/28), their website stated that there are currently no confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Virginia.

Nationally, the [CDC](#) site also provides information. Their current risk assessment states,

- For the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low.
- People in communities where ongoing community spread with the virus that causes COVID-19 has been reported are at elevated though still relatively low risk of exposure.
- Healthcare workers caring for patients with COVID-19 are at elevated risk of exposure.
- Close contacts of persons with COVID-19 also are at elevated risk of exposure.
- Travelers returning from affected international locations where community spread is occurring also are at elevated risk of exposure.

ABOUT NCECA

NCECA, the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts, is a dynamic membership organization that fosters global education and appreciation for the ceramic arts. NCECA's programs, exhibitions and public events promote and improve the ceramic arts through education, community building, research and creative inspiration. NCECA offers programs, events, and publications to support its membership of artists, educators, students, individual and organizational patrons, gallerists, curators, and providers of ceramic arts products and services. Search for **NCECA** Google Play and the App Store in February 2020 to download a free mobile device app detailing programming and exhibitions surrounding the 2020 NCECA Conference in Richmond, Virginia. Visit www.nceca.net to learn more about NCECA.