

**Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia**

**JOHN LEWIS SOCIETY**

**2026**



General Introductory Information Packet and Student Application

### **What is the John Lewis Society?**

The John Lewis Society is a youth interpretive volunteer program at the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia. The program is primarily meant for teens who are interested in history. The expectation for this program is for the JLS students to gain an appreciation of history, learn to engage with people, and learn skills that enrich their lives. Through interpretive tasks on the museum's historic farms, members will demonstrate the lifestyle, culture, day to day operations of the Museum, and accurately present historically relevant information. We are asking for JLS students to work at least two days a month and attend training sessions throughout the year. If interested, they may also participate in special events.

### **Who is John Lewis?**

The society is named for John Lewis, an early European immigrant to the Staunton area. He was a settler, surveyor, and businessman who contributed much to the early history of this area of the state.

### **What is the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia?**

"The Mission of the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia is to increase public knowledge of the formation of a distinctive American folk culture from a blending of European, African, and Indigenous people." The museum is an outdoor living history museum run by the Department of Education for the State of Virginia. These first settlers came to America during the 1600s and 1700s from communities in England, Germany, Ireland, and West Africa. The museum then shows how after arriving in the new world and interacting with the Native Americans these different cultures came together on the frontier to create a new and distinctive American culture and identity.

### **How will my child be selected for membership?**

Acceptance to the society is based on the application, references, and an interview. Membership for the upcoming year lasts from March through November 2026. We are going to be undergoing construction this year which may impact John Lewis volunteer days.

### **Are there any costs?**

There are two charges for the program, including a \$25 administration cost as well as the cost for an annual pass for the member's family. Annual passes are \$45 for a family of up to four members. By purchasing this pass, families can observe their student while interpreting. The JLS participant will receive a museum t-shirt from the Museum gift shop. The students will also need clothes that are in good condition. They can wear khaki or navy shorts down to the knee, khaki, denim, or navy pants or a knee length or longer skirt. Students and their families will be responsible for supplying the appropriate black closed toe shoes.

### **John Lewis Society expectations and responsibilities**

The John Lewis society is a program for young adults ages 13 to 16.

The students will participate a minimum of twice a month in the program. Regularly scheduled sessions will last about four hours per visit with longer pre-scheduled trainings and special events throughout the year.

There is an expectation that the John Lewis students will learn from staff, interact with the public, learn historically relevant information, demonstrate a willingness to participate in physical activities, and they are exposed to differing points of view.

In case of emergency all emergency responders and the JLS emergency contact will be called.

During the course of working in the John Lewis Society, the student's image may be taken and used to promote the museum and further its educational programs. By allowing your child to participate in this program, you are providing your consent for their image to be used.

Thank you for your interest in applying to the 2026 John Lewis Society program!

**Completed applications are due at the Museum by 5 PM on January 17, 2026.**

There will be a required training day that will be held in the spring. **(Date to be determined.)** Students will be introduced to the structure and rules of the program and be given some general historic information.

### **Example 2026 Calendar of Activities and Events**

These are some examples of past events the JLS have participated in.

January 17, 2026 – All applications due at the museum by 5 P.M.

Late February/Early March 2026 10 AM-3 PM: Introductory John Lewis Training for all members and their families. Parents presence is requested for the beginning of the meeting. Followed by the teens receiving training and a tour of the interpretive sites. The Museum will provide a pizza lunch. **(Date to be determined)**

April 2026: All John Lewis members can begin working on the farms. They will need to schedule their workdays via email and receive approval from the program leads.

May 2026: Memorial Day

June 2026: Juneteenth Celebration

July 4, 2026: Independence Day

August 2026: Historic Games

October 2026: Revolution weekend

November 2026: Mandatory John Lewis Society Presentation

### **Workshops/Training**

In addition to everyday volunteering and assisting with events, the John Lewis program will hold workshops throughout the year for participants. These are opportunities for your child to pick up skills that might not otherwise be available through regular work on their assigned exhibit. John Lewis Society members will have the opportunity to participate in these activities as they become available. Some of these opportunities are tied to other ongoing projects for the Museum. The JLS members will also be provided the historical information needed to complete their interpretive duties. Details and dates of the workshops will be provided in advance through the JLS email. Here are just a few examples of the types of workshops we've held in the past:

West African mud puddling

English historic laundry and soap making

Irish flax processing and spinning

German historic hearth cooking

American Indian fleshing and hide work

1760 American woodworking

1820 American music and dance

1850 American quilting

**John Lewis Society Application**  
(Please print)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age and Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City and State: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Emergency Contact number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/ Guardians Name(s):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Email:

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Email (if different):

\_\_\_\_\_

(We will use both email accounts to communicate with JLS members if email addresses are available. Please note “no email” if you do not have an email account.)

Parents or Guardians signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(By signing, you are accepting the expectations of the JLS program and consenting to your child’s photo being used.)

Does the participant have any medical condition that may affect their participation, such as asthma, heart troubles, epilepsy, common injuries, etc.? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain

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Does the participant have any allergies, including bee stings? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain

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Does the participant take any medications? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain

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Is the participant updated on tetanus vaccination? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Date of last vaccination \_\_\_\_\_

School You Attend:

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During your time in the JLS, you understand you may be interacting with many different visitors, museum staff and other John Lewis Society members whose opinions may differ from your own. Is your student willing and able to meet this expectation?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No and if so, why?

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Please mail your completed application:

John Lewis Society

c/o Education and Interpretation Department

Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia

PO Box 810

Staunton, VA 24402-0810

[johnlewisociety@fcmv.virginia.gov](mailto:johnlewisociety@fcmv.virginia.gov)

\*All application materials must be received by January 17, 2026 and can be mailed or dropped off at the Museum's Visitor Center.