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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ***SAMPSON COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU AWARDS GRANT TO SAMPSON COUNTY HISTORY MUSEUM***

#### ***Capital Grant supports History Museum's Military Building***

(Sampson County, NC) -- The Sampson County Convention & Visitors Bureau (SCCVB) announced today the award of a Capital Grant to the Sampson County History Museum (SCHM) in the amount of \$26,200. The grant funds awarded are dedicated to support the construction of the museum's new Military Museum. Currently under construction, the new museum will pay tribute and honor each branch of service and pay homage to the many Veterans from throughout Sampson County, as well as current military personnel that are serving in the United States Armed Forces.

The project to build a new Military Museum began as the result of extensive water damage sustained by the former facility that housed the military collection. "The SCHM Board of Directors began working in 2016 to develop plans to construct a new facility that could potentially become the new home of the Sampson County Military Museum," stated Kay Raynor, President of the Sampson County History Museum. "The former facility was home to over two centuries of military artifacts and we knew that we must work to protect and insure that these items would be available for future generations, and to allow us to continue honoring the sacrifices made by the men and women from Sampson County that served to protect the freedoms that we all enjoy today," she continued.

During the process of developing plans for the new facility, SCHM Board members and staff worked with contractors and museum consultants to create plans for the construction of a new facility which would include interior design elements aimed at enhancing each visitor's experience. It was estimated that \$189,300 would be needed to bring the project to fruition.

Once the project is complete, the 1,760 square foot facility will include military objects and artifacts from each branch of service including the US Army, US Navy, US Air Force, US Marines, and the United States Coast Guard. In addition, the new facility will include

displays as well as interactive stations that have been designed to enhance the overall experience of visitors to the museum.

Through the efforts of a dedicated fundraising committee and volunteers, led by Marshall Falatovich and Ann Knowles with the Sampson County Veterans Council, the committee has raised \$128,582 in grant and private donations to date. "Private donations have ranged from \$25 up to \$25,000, and we would certainly like to offer our most sincere appreciation to our sponsors for their contributions," stated Falatovich. Major donors to date include: Hog Slat, Inc.; Sampson County Farm Bureau; Nissan of Clinton; City of Clinton; Clinton Truck and Tractor; Southern Style BBQ & Chicken; and Performance Automotive Group.

"On behalf of the SCHM Board of Directors and our entire membership, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to the Sampson County Convention & Visitors Bureau for their contribution. Their grant award of \$26,200 reduces the amount needed to fully complete the project to approximately \$35,000," stated Kay Raynor, SCHM President.

Julie Stadig, President of the SCCVB stated, "The SCCVB Board of Directors are extremely delighted to award this grant that will assist in the completion of the Military Museum. We feel that this new addition will not only be an asset to Sampson County and its residents; but it will greatly enhance the museums ability to attract overnight visitors and day-trippers to our County, which meets the primary objective of the Capital Grant Program and fully meets the mission of the CVB."

Founded in 1997 by Fes Turlington and David King, the Sampson County History Museum is dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of Sampson County and its residents. From its humble beginnings, the museum has grown to include ten buildings and is home to a wide variety of antiques and artifacts from across Sampson County and Eastern North Carolina. Located at 313 Lisbon Street in downtown Clinton, visitors are provided the opportunity to view thousands of permanent artifacts and explore exhibits that educate visitors on the unique heritage of Sampson County.

The museum grounds include one of the oldest structures in Eastern North Carolina, the Bunting Log Cabin, which was constructed around 1750 on the David Bunting Plantation. Other structures include: The Holmes House; The Log Cabin Museum; The Grange Agricultural Museum; The Exhibit Hall; The Sampson County Law Enforcement Museum; The Wooten Store; the Sampson County Sports Hall of Fame; Blacksmith Shop; Fire House; as well as a 70+ year old outhouse, smokehouse, and authentic millstones that were used locally to grind corn into meal.

"The Sampson County History Museum holds your key to the past and we offer something for everyone, we encourage you to stop by for a free tour where you can experience and dive into Sampson County's rich history and heritage." stated Chris Woodson, Museum Director.

The Sampson County CVB is a public authority whose purpose is to promote the development of travel and tourism related activities in Sampson County, through state, regional and national advertising, marketing and promotional activities and campaigns. The SCCVB Capital Grant Program (CGP) was developed to stimulate economic growth by supporting non-profit visitor attractions in Sampson County, NC. The program allows the CVB to award grant funding to organizations whose projects are designed or developed to attract visitors to

Sampson County. Funds may be used for projects such as new brick and mortar construction, maintenance and preservation of historic attractions, cultural and historical acquisitions, conservation of artifacts, or other infrastructure that improves the CVB's ability to promote tourism within Sampson County.

"Funding for the SCCVB Capital Grant Program is provided through room occupancy taxes (ROT) that are collected by Sampson County's lodging establishments which are generated as a result of overnight lodging by visitors to Sampson County. The SCCVB annually allocates 33% of all room occupancy taxes collected to the Capital Grant Program," stated Sheila Barefoot, SCCVB Director. Organizations that can apply for funding include any legally chartered Sampson County 501-(c3) non-profit organization or any chartered municipality representing visitor attractions that includes tourism promotion among its major activities. The program uses a matching grant formula whereby organizations may be awarded one grant dollar for each dollar spent by the organization, up to \$50,000 per project.

"We are extremely proud to collaborate with the Sampson County History Museum to help make this project a reality. We know that this project will pay honor and be a great tribute to the many Sampson County Veterans who have served our Country, and it will also serve as a source of pride for our active-duty military personnel whom are serving our Nation," stated Sheila Barefoot, SCCVB Director.

To learn more information on becoming a sponsor of the Military Museum Project, to arrange a tour, or for more information about the SCHM, please contact Chris Woodson, Director at 910-590-0007, or visit: [www.sampsonhmc.com](http://www.sampsonhmc.com).

For more information about the SCCVB or the Capital Grant Program, contact Sheila Barefoot, Director at 910-592-2557, via email at [sbarefoot@visitsampsonnc.com](mailto:sbarefoot@visitsampsonnc.com). Additional travel and visitor information is available at [www.visitsampsonnc.com](http://www.visitsampsonnc.com).

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