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**AFRICAN-AMERICAN CONGREGATIONS CONNECT SPIRITUAL ROOTS WITH AFRICAN ROOTS THROUGH CHURCH-BASED DNA TESTING**

*“African Ancestry, Inc. partners with Black Churches Nationwide to Empower Self-Defining Spiritual Hubs during Black History Month and Year-round”*

From secret “*call and response*” spiritual expressions of African slaves to world-resounding influence in present-day America, black churches have not only survived, but have become a defining force in African-American culture today. African Ancestry, Inc. salutes the resilience of the Black Church by empowering congregations to take a vital “spiritual journey” that will scientifically and emotionally transport members to their present-day African country of origin and the ultimate continuation of self-definition!

African Ancestry, the only company that can trace ancestry back to the specific, present-day African country of origin, announces an unprecedented partnership with Black congregations nationwide that not only produces a more enlightened congregation, but also provides partner churches with an enriching, customizable tool to enhance existing programs such as fundraising.

“As the nation observes historic events and people of the African Diaspora each year during Black History Month, African Ancestry deepens that experience for African Americans through self-identifying science,” said Gina Paige, president of African Ancestry. “Godly worship and spirituality survived during the slave trade and we salute that resilience. The creation of a DNA-testing program for faith-based organizations underscores our commitment to enhancing lives through ancestry tracing.”

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### **Where Faith and Science Meet ... How Your Church Can Get Involved:**

1. Church-based entity accepts program and engages African Ancestry;
2. African Ancestry DNA tracing experts facilitate free workshops at partner churches to explain the process;
3. Partner churches offer DNA testing through a customizable church event where participants get specially priced DNA testing kits; Members can do their swabbing together or individually (see below for specifics on testing);
4. African Ancestry experts return to reveal the results to the congregation. This is where participants can see where they're from, who else in the congregation is from their country and join a community of thousands already tested; and
5. Each participant becomes a part of a larger online family through Africanancestry.com. Visitors can interact with people across the country and learn more about their heritage.

"For people of African descent, the ability to answer questions about our African past is a necessary part of our psycho-social healing as a people. As the world's premiere resource for African DNA testing, African Ancestry was the only choice to help the members of our church connect with their cultural roots," said Rev. Delman L. Coates, Ph.D. and Pastor of Mt. Ennon Baptist Church in Clinton, MD. "The partnership with African Ancestry has exceeded our expectations, and I recommend them without reservation," said Rev. Coates who recently learned that he shares paternal ancestry with the story-telling people of Yoruba in present-day Nigeria.

### **African Ancestry Testing Process**

Through a proprietary process led by African Ancestry geneticist and Scientific Director Dr. Rick Kittles, all DNA samples are confidential and destroyed after the results are known. Every sample in its lab is identified by a bar code and no personal information is shared. The test is executed as follows:

- Obtain a maternal and/or paternal ancestry test [online](#), via [paper order form](#) or by phone at 202-723-0900.
- In 7-10 business days after you place your order, you'll receive your test kit in the mail. Simply swab the inside of your cheek and return your DNA sample via the prepaid envelope supplied. Learn more about [taking the test](#).
- Once we receive your DNA sample, our laboratory extracts your DNA's genetic sequence. Then, scientists compare your genetic sequence to our exclusive [African Lineage Database](#) to determine your present-day African country of origin.
- In 6 weeks after you submit your DNA sample, you'll receive your results package and your journey truly begins. Find out what comes in your [results package](#).

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## **African Ancestry Additional Black History Month Highlights**

### *African Ancestry in the Airwaves ...*

- African Ancestry Geneticist and Scientific Director Dr. Rick Kittles will be featured on African Lives 2, a PBS program airing on February 15th, 16th and 23<sup>rd</sup>. The segment will also be available for an extended time on africanancestry.com. Dr. Kittles will explore what DNA tells us about who we are and who our ancestors might have been. This is part of PBS' overall program that focuses on the evolution and migration of early human beings, broadening our knowledge of how the first small bands of explorers to leave Africa changed over time to become the populations we've known historically as racial and ethnic groups. Ivillage.com's "In the Loop" program will also feature Dr. Kittles and an ancestry-reveal of host Kim Coles.

### *African Ancestry Community Strength Training ...*

- Through a unique partnership with African Ancestry, select community-based organizations will extend their respective missions and give their constituencies a life-enhancing offer of specially-priced DNA testing kits during Black History Month. These partners include 100 Black Men, Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Operation HOPE and The National Black Arts Festival. Taraji P. Henson and Charles Burnett will learn their ancestry as part of African Ancestry's partnership with the Pan African Film Festival.

### *African Ancestry Travels ...*

- American Airlines enhanced its employee relations and diversity initiatives by offering its employees an opportunity to test through African Ancestry. The testing lead by American Airlines executive Lillian Dukes will be offered to employees during a luncheon where Ms. Duke's lineage will be revealed. The Federal Aviation Administration has also invited African Ancestry to present during their annual Black History Month celebrations.

### *Africanancestry.com ...*

- African Ancestry recently launched its re-energized Web site. Africanancestry.com delivers a look, feel and educational content that makes the journey easier and more enriching for African Americans seeking to transform their lives through ancestry tracing.

## **"Praise the Roof"**

For more information on African Ancestry's faith-based initiatives or other partner opportunities, please contact Gina Paige at [gpaige@africanancestry.com](mailto:gpaige@africanancestry.com) or visit [churches@africanancestry.com](mailto:churches@africanancestry.com). For press inquiries, contact Nichole D. Taylor of Taylor Communications Group at 404.423.4276.

## **About African Ancestry**

Founded in 2003, African Ancestry, Inc. is the leading DNA-testing company offering ancestry tracing for people of African descent. African Ancestry, Inc. is headquartered in Washington, DC, and is the only ancestry tracing company whose proprietary scientific database of African DNA narrows the search to a specific, present-day country of origin in Africa and often to a particular African ethnic group more than 500 years ago. African Ancestry has connected tens of thousands of African Americans with their roots in Africa through its MatriClan™ test (maternal DNA) and its PatriClan™ test (paternal DNA). Contact us at africanancestry.com or 202.723.0900 -- TODAY -- for a life-changing journey to self definition.

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