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Contact:

Christina Crawford
ccrawford@taylorcommunicationsgroup.com

BLACK PIONEERS OF GENETICS-BASED AFRICAN ROOTS TRACING CELEBRATES 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY
100,000 Families and Counting Demystify Roots with AfricanAncestry.com
-DC, Chicago and Atlanta Top Three Enlightened Cities-

WASHINGTON, DC (March 2013) – It’s easy to forget that just 10 short years ago, African Americans had no way to accurately or reliably determine where they came from in Africa. In 2003, African Ancestry, Inc. (AfricanAncestry.com) arrived on the scene and things changed forever. Not only did the small, black-owned enterprise establish the first and only DNA-based ancestry tracing marketplace for people of African descent, but this first-of-its-kind venture went on to dramatically enhance the way African Americans see themselves and the rich influences that Africa has in their lives today.

“Our 10-year anniversary is more than a one-time reason to have a party or a fleeting marketing opportunity,” said Gina Paige, co-founder and president of AfricanAncestry.com. “This milestone marks an unprecedented, collective transformation for thousands and thousands of Black people that augments their identities in today’s America and across the world,” said Paige.

Formed by one of the country’s few Black geneticists Dr. Rick Kittles and entrepreneur Paige, AfricanAncestry.com employs the largest collection of indigenous African DNA (collected by Kittles) in a proprietary DNA matching analysis to assess present-day African countries of origins. As with all great innovators, AfricanAncestry.com has spawned a few industry copycats, however, none delivers 99+ percent accuracy in each sample tested, making African Ancestry the most trusted and reliable in the industry.

“I never imagined that my passion for African history and the movements of its people throughout the world would one day manifest in a much-needed product for African Americans,” said Dr. Kittles whose years of research on genetic variation in Africans led to the founding of **AfricanAncestry.com**, published works in more than 100 publications and break-through advancements in the field of human genetics and genetic anthropology.

FOR THE RECORD ... 10-YEAR FAST FACTS & OTHER INTERESTING TID BITS

Since its inception, African Ancestry has been on the forefront of collecting and analyzing first-time, interesting data from its test-takers. And while it’s clear that there’s a close race between people wanting to trace their **mother’s side (53%)** versus their **father’s side (47%)**, African-American women **overwhelming outnumber** men -- **two to one** -- when it comes to tracing their roots. Here’s more interesting facts from African Ancestry’s MatriClan® and PatriClan® testers from 2003 - 2013:

- **America’s Top 5 Metropolitan Cities** with the most number of test-takers include: 1) **Washington, DC**; 2) **Chicago**; 3) **Atlanta**; 4) **Los Angeles**; and 5) **Philadelphia**.
- **Maryland ranks the highest** as the state with the **most number of testers**. **South Dakota** ranks the lowest as the only state in the union with **NO** test takers ever.
- Of the Western and Central African countries traceable through AfricanAncestry.com, **Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Nigeria, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia** respectively are the **Top Five Countries of Origin** for testing African Americans.
- Of the traceable countries in its database, surprisingly, **NO** testers’ ancestries have ever traced to **Gambia, Ivory Coast or Republic of the Congo**.
- **Fifteen percent** of Black testers trace to Europe. Only **2 percent** are Native American, debunking a widely accepted myth among African Americans. **One percent** trace to the Middle East and **less than one percent** trace to Asia.
- Of the **more than 125** African-American celebrities and notables to take African Ancestry’s tests, a majority share ancestries with the people of present-day **Cameroon** with **Sierra Leone** a close second.

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10-YEAR CELEBRATION ... THE TRANSFORMATION CONTINUES

Throughout 2013, AfricanAncestry.com has a variety of engaging, informative and inspiring events scheduled to celebrate its 10 years and lay the groundwork for the next 10. "Amongst the varied activities is a central goal to help African Americans understand the connection between who they are today with the influences of Africa," said Paige. "When asked where they're from, I want as many people as possible to proudly say their African homeland alongside Chicago or New York or Memphis or any other American identity," said Paige.

- **10th Anniversary Partners:** Helping to deepen the experience and reach of the 10th Anniversary celebration, African Ancestry has aligned with major African American alliances. AfricanAncestry.com is the official ancestry partner for the Centennial Celebration for Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. African Ancestry has also partnered with Kunta Kinteh Island: "Coming Home in Shackles," a new documentary chronicling the real journey of the most celebrated African captive transported to the Americas as cargo. Visit www.africanancestry.com for partnership details.
- **African Ancestry 10th Anniversary Leader Board:** African Ancestry's expert leadership team will kick-off an engaging series of enlightening, motivational discussions designed to inspire continued interest in discovering the true you and the African in Americans. Check out Gina Paige's new *Do You Know?* syndicated column in anniversary partner vehicles such as leading Black newspaper *Washington Informer*, Delta Sigma Theta Centennial newsletter and African Ancestry's Blog. Dr. Kittles will debut a mix of interactive, online discussions about relevant science topics such as genetics ancestry matching, research and how it all works -- hosted throughout the year on African Ancestry's Facebook and other social media networks.
- **10th Anniversary Social Enrichment Experience:** Visit African Ancestry on Facebook, [Twitter](https://twitter.com/africanancestry) or its special 10th Anniversary newsletter and be treated to a monthly branch of news and topics rooted in African and African-American culture. Topics include Women, The Arts, Family, Music and Health among others. Activities include video diaries of the oldest and newest testing members, Notable interviews, fast facts and historic articles and other ancestry resources. Visit www.facebook.com/africanancestry for more details and a complete schedule.
- **Going Abroad!** In conjunction with longtime partner ARK Jammers and the African Diplomatic Corps of Brazil, AfricanAncestry.com will reveal the roots of notable Brazilians during the 50th anniversary of Africa Day -- a global observance that commemorates the formation of the African Union.
- **10th Anniversary Promotions:** Everyone can take part in special anniversary promotions and chances to win tests, t-shirts and other home-country memorabilia.

For more information on African Ancestry's 10th Anniversary Schedule of events, visit www.africanancestry.com. For press inquiries, more Fast Facts and a complete list of Celebrity Testers, contact Christina Crawford at ccrawford@taylorcommunicationsgroup.com.

ABOUT AFRICAN ANCESTRY

Founded in 2003, African Ancestry Inc. (AfricanAncestry.com) pioneered African lineage matching in the United States utilizing its proprietary DNA-database to more accurately assess present-day countries of origin for people of African descent. African Ancestry's reveals have impacted the lives of more than 100,000 African Americans including icons such as Oprah Winfrey, Isaiah Washington, Common, Condoleezza Rice, Cory Booker, Samuel L. Jackson, Ben Jealous and Andrew Young. African Ancestry also marked an historic milestone by uncovering the ancestral roots of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Marcus Garvey posthumously using the DNA of their descendants. AfricanAncestry.com has been featured on CNN's Black in America series, NBC's Who Do You Think You Are?, *TIME Magazine*, *Essence Magazine*, *EBONY* and the ground-breaking PBS specials African American Lives 1 and 2 and Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr. African Ancestry's flagship products are the MatriClan™ and PatriClan™ test kits; as well as country-of-origin memorabilia and informative resources. African Ancestry is African-American-owned and headquartered in Washington, DC. Visit us at www.africanancestry.com and join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/AfricanAncestry. For general press inquiries, contact ntaylor@africanancestry.com.

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