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*The North Carolina Rice Festival, Inc.. and African Ancestry present*

## **The 2023 Gullah Geechee Heritage “Ancestry Reveal”**

**Thursday, March 2, 2023 || Navassa Town Hall || 6 p.m.**

### *Welcome and Program Overview*

**Your MC for the Evening, Barbara Akinwole**

*North Carolina Rice Festival, Inc. (NCRFI) Board Member; Chair of the NCRFI's Genealogy Committee*

### *Greetings*

**The Honorable Eulis Willis, Mayor of Navassa**

**Victoria Smalls, Executive Director, Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission**

**George Beatty Jr., Chair, North Carolina Rice Festival, Inc., Board of Directors**

### *Presentation:*

**Amadu Massally, Founder and CEO, Fambul Tik (“Family Tree”)**

*Born in Sierra Leone, Amadu Massally formed the Sierra Leone-Gullah Heritage Association, now known as Fambul Tik in 2006. Fambul Tik seeks to reconnect Sierra Leone with her Diaspora through activities and programs in the Caribbean and the United States. In the U.S., Fambul Tik focuses primarily on strengthening the links between Sierra Leone and the African Americans known as the Gullah Geechee by exploring the similarities between the two groups’ cultures, languages, foodways, and more.*

### *“The Big Reveal”*

**Dr. Gina Paige (Hausa, Fulani), Co-Founder and President, African Ancestry**

*Dr. Paige co-founded African Ancestry with Dr. Rick Kittles in 2003 to provide the descendants of those Africans who were enslaved and brought to the Americas and elsewhere with a more accurate and reliable way to trace their African lineages using genetics. Her work has been featured on PBS’s Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates Jr., and she has helped reveal the ancestries of several leading icons including Oprah Winfrey, John Legend, Chadwick Boseman, Spike Lee, Condoleezza Rice, and The King Family.*

In this highly anticipated segment of tonight’s program, the local residents who voluntarily submitted their DNA samples to African Ancestry for genetic matching will find out—at last—which ethnic group(s) on the African Continent they and their family members are connected to.

*Will they discover a real link between their heritage and that of the people from West Africa’s “Rice Coast”?  
Are they descendants of the Gullah Geechee, and thus Gullah Geechee themselves?*

**Hold on to your seats, folks, and we’ll find out!**

### *Audience/Panelists Q & A*

### *Closing Remarks*

**George Beatty Jr., Chair, North Carolina Rice Festival, Inc., Board of Directors**

*Tonight’s Refreshments – Courtesy of Catch Restaurant and Festival Culinarian Chef Keith Rhodes*

**PRESERVE**

**EDUCATE**



**CELEBRATE**

**HISTORY**

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## **2023 Festival Events**

***March 2: "Ancestry Reveal"***  
**Navassa (NC) Community Center**

***March 3: Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Gala***  
**Leland (NC) Cultural Arts Center**

***March 4: North Carolina Rice Festival***  
**Brunswick Town/Ft. Anderson, Winnabow NC**

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**[www.northcarolinaricefestival.org](http://www.northcarolinaricefestival.org)**

a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization

