



1919 Commerce Drive
Suite 290
Hampton, VA 23666

757-722-1222
800-487-4600
fax: 757-896-4600

NEWS RELEASE

Feb. 17, 2022

Contact: Yuri R. Milligan, 757/728-5328
yuri.milligan@hamptoncvb.com

Angolan Embassy delegation visits Hampton for a tour, special ceremony

A symbolic soil-mixing ceremony will take place at the Tucker Family Cemetery

Hampton, VA - Mayor Donnie Tuck and the members of the Tucker family will host H.E. Ambassador Joaquim do Espírito Santo, Angolan Ambassador to the United States, and an Angolan Embassy delegation on Feb. 18-19. The delegation will tour Hampton, visit Fort Monroe and the Hampton History Museum and take part in a special ceremony at the Tucker Family Cemetery.

"We are honored to receive Ambassador Joaquim do Espirito Santo and the Angolan delegation in Hampton and anticipate a continued mutual effort to foster cultural understanding," said Mayor Tuck.

During a December 2021 visit to Angola, members of the Tucker Family, who are believed to be descendants of the first Africans in English North America, brought back to the United States sand from the Kwanza River, where their ancestors may have traveled after being enslaved. **On Saturday, Feb. 19 at 9 am at the Tucker Family Cemetery**, 1 Sharon Ct., Hampton, the family will mix the sand from their ancestral homeland with the soil of the cemetery –symbolically letting their ancestors know that they made it back home. The Ambassador will provide remarks during the ceremony.

"We are inspired and encouraged by this growing relationship between the William Tucker 1624 Society, Project 1619, and Angolan leadership," said Eola Dance, Superintendent at Fort Monroe. "It gives us great hope in thinking about the ways in which research, preservation, and partnership at Fort Monroe are contributing to global efforts towards healing and making an impact on the future."

In late August 1619, the first recorded Africans to be brought to English North America landed at Point Comfort, today's Fort Monroe. The first "20 and odd" Africans were brought from West Central Africa, present-day Angola. The Tucker Family Cemetery is the resting place for generations of the William Tucker Family. William Tucker, the first recorded baby of African descent baptized in English North America, was the son of Anthony and Isabella, who were among the first "20 and odd" Africans to arrive at Point Comfort aboard the White Lion in 1619.

Before arriving in Washington, Ambassador Joaquim do Espírito Santo served as the Director for Africa, Middle East and Regional Organizations in Angola's Ministry of External Relations from 2011-2018. A career diplomat, Ambassador Espírito Santo also served as Minister-Counselor at the Angolan Embassy to France from 2004-2009 and as Minister-Counselor and Chargé d'Affaires at the Angolan Embassy to Mexico from 2002-2004.

###

Partially bordered by the Hampton Roads harbor and Chesapeake Bay, Hampton, with the 344,000 sq. ft. Hampton Roads Convention Center and the award-winning Hampton Coliseum, is located in the center of Coastal Virginia and the Hampton Roads metropolitan area. Hampton is the site of America's first continuous English-speaking settlement, the site of the first arrival of Africans in English North America, and is home to such visitor attractions as the Virginia Air & Space Science Center, Fort Monroe National Monument, Hampton History Museum, Hampton University Museum, The American Theatre, among others.