



Hampton

CONVENTION & VISITOR BUREAU

Media Release

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**Project 1619, Inc. and the National Park Service to sponsor
Juneteenth Jazz Concert at the Fort Monroe Theater June 22**

Hampton, VA- Project 1619 Inc. and the National Park Service will celebrate Juneteenth with a free jazz concert at the Fort Monroe Theater on Saturday, June 22 at 7:00 p.m. The concert is free and open to the public. Fort Monroe Theater is located at 42 Tidball Road.

Performers featured in the concert include saxophonist Todd Ledbetter, bassist Herman Burney, pianist Noble Jolley Jr., trumpeter Paul Bailey, drummer Junie McDonald, percussionist Jabari Exum and soloist Christie Dashiell. Ledbetter has been a Stellar Award nominee and his album *Meditations: Hymns in the Key of Jazz* garnered critical acclaim. Burney has traveled the world by playing bass alongside noted performers including Wynton Marsalis and Natalie Cole. Noble, considered one of the best pianists of this century, performs with his own jazz ensemble, the Noble Jolley Group.

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Project 1619, Inc. and the National Park Service to sponsor Juneteenth Jazz Concert at the Fort Monroe Theater June 22– page 2

In 1776, *The Declaration of Independence* decreed, "that all men are created equal," but enslaved black men, women and children were not included in that pronouncement. It took a Civil War to right that wrong and President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation into law on New Year's Day in 1863. Word spread slowly and the last slave-holding state to receive the news was Texas.

The last enslaved to hear word of their freedom first learned of it on June 19, 1865 when Major General Gordon Granger read the *Emancipation Proclamation* on a Galveston harbor pier. On this date, after two and a-half years of a decision delayed, the last 250,000 enslaved were free, finally marking independence for all Americans and giving rise to the birth of Juneteenth celebrations around the country.

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 Center, Fort Monroe National Monument, Hampton History Museum, harbor tours and cruises, Hampton University Museum, The American Theatre, among others.

During 2019, Hampton commemorates the 400th anniversary of the first African landing in English North America at Hampton's Old Point Comfort on Fort Monroe National Monument. In addition to honoring the men and women who arrived in 1619, the city will also celebrate the contributions of African Americans have made to our city, state and nation. A commission has planned events across the entire year to recognize and celebrate African American impact, including a three-day long Commemoration event, August 23-25.

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