



## **The Florida Black Historical Research Project, Inc.**

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*Celebrating and Preserving Seminole Maroon History and Heritage*

# **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **ANNUAL BEACHFRONT REMEMBRANCE HONORS ANCESTORS**

An important South Florida grassroots tradition of more than two decades continues with the 2016 Annual Sunrise Ancestral Remembrance of the Middle Passage Ceremony, to be held on Sunday, June 19, from 5:30 – 8:00 a.m., at Historic Virginia Key Beach Park, 4020 Virginia Beach Drive, Miami, Florida 33149, off Rickenbacker Causeway (toll road; turn left at second traffic signal on Virginia Key, just before the Bear Cut Bridge to Key Biscayne).

Attendees are encouraged to arrive early, prior to lane closures on the Causeway for a cycling event that morning, which makes access to the park much less easy.

The ceremony honors the memory of all those who endured the Middle Passage (the unspeakably horrific forced migration of millions of African captives across the Atlantic aboard slave ships for nearly four centuries): those who perished, from sickness, abuse, and by leaping overboard, and those who survived to give life and love to future generations.

We also honor, as we must, the land and the countless generations of First Nations Ancestors whose wise stewardship of it in the past allows it to nurture and sustain us today.

Accordingly, the Remembrance begins, appropriately, with a Native American “Opening of the Way” prayer of thanks and blessing, followed by a traditional African Pouring of Libation ritual which honors Ancestors and Generations Yet Unborn, as the preparation for additional prayers, performances, thoughts, and expressions, as part of open “Village Talk,” in which all are welcome to contribute positively to the occasion.

Participants are encouraged (but not required) to bring drums and musical instruments, fruits, flowers, grains, and other appropriate offerings to be carried out to sea at the conclusion of the ceremony, as well refreshments to share afterwards.

The Remembrance, held in Miami each year on the Sunday closest to the first day of summer, falls this year on both Fathers’ Day (fortuitously, for the remembering Ancestors) and “Juneteenth,” the holiday recognized in several states which commemorates the true end of slavery as a legal institution in the U.S., when on June 19, 1865, the last of the enslaved population, in east Texas, received word that the war was over and that they were no longer anyone’s legal property: “Until all were free, none were free.”

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*Ancestral Remembrance, 05/27/16 (continued, page 2 of 2)*

As one of the earliest of these annual beachfront Remembrances to be established, the event in Miami has been joined by a growing number of similarly created ones both in cities around the nation, and elsewhere in the world.

These events are typically grassroots efforts, not associated with any particular religion or ideology, at which all are welcome.

The Miami event is organized by Productive Hands, Drums-N-Unity, the *Dos Amigos/Fair Rosamond* Slave Ship Replica Project, the Florida Black Historical Research Project, Inc., and the Kuumba Artists Collective, in cooperation with the Virginia Key Beach Park Trust, and has been honored for many years by the generous participation of Native American spiritual leader Carib Tribal Indian Queen Mrs. Catherine Hummingbird Ramirez.

Admission to the event is free and open to the public.

For further information, call 786-260-1246 or 305-904-7620.

