



AFRICAN ANCESTRY
TRACE YOUR DNA. FIND YOUR ROOTS.

Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau identified as present-day countries of origin for Descendants of Renown Leaders

WASHINGTON, DC (October 2010) – For the children of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and social justice icon Marcus Garvey, DNA roots tracing has confirmed they have something genetically in common: Both their paternal ancestries trace to Europe; and both their maternal ancestries connect them directly to Africa. AfricanAncestry.com, the pioneers of DNA-based ancestry tracing for African Americans, recently revealed the paternal roots of King and Garvey through their sons -- Martin Luther King III and Dr. Julius Garvey respectively – during a special DNA Reveal Dinner hosted by the Leon H. Sullivan Foundation’s African Policy Summit in Atlanta on Sept. 26.

For the King Family, AfricanAncestry.com’s results complement the paper-trail research they’ve done on Dr. King’s paternal side, which traces to Ireland. Martin Luther King III’s test also revealed his mother’s line, the late Coretta Scott King, who it was determined shares ancestry with the Mende people of Sierra Leone.

“One test can reveal the lineage of an entire family,” said Gina Paige, co-founder and president of African Ancestry. “As an African American, I’m personally proud and passionate about all the families we’ve been able to help since our inception several years ago. It is of the highest professional honor that we’ve contributed to history by tracing the ancestries of these iconic families. This is truly a milestone for us.”

While Dr. Garvey’s paternal lineage traced to Portugal and Spain in Europe, his maternal line traced to present-day Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone and Senegal. “It is actually not uncommon for paternal lineages of African Americans to trace to Europe due to the number of white male slave owners fathering children with enslaved African women,” said Dr. Rick Kittles, co-founder and Scientific Director for African Ancestry.

In addition to the Kings and Garveys, AfricanAncestry.com revealed the roots of Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed, who shares ancestry with the Igbo people of Nigeria, and Dr. Carlton Brown, president of Clark Atlanta University, who shares ancestry with the Yoruba and Fulani people of Nigeria.