



Navigating History Towards a Better Future

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Paula Mann-Agnew
860-372-8698

Mayor Bronin to Speak at Welcoming Ceremony on September 9 for *The Amistad* at Riverfront Recapture's Mortensen Plaza

September 8, 2021 - Hartford, CT – The famous tall ship *Amistad* will be on display at Riverfront Recapture's Mortensen Riverfront Plaza for a three-week visit to Hartford, beginning on September 9. The ship will be the focus of the *Amistad Journey to Freedom* - a series of free educational programs, musical events and community gatherings.

A welcoming event is planned for September 9 from 4-6 pm.

Speakers at the welcoming ceremony will include Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin, Former Mayor Thirman Milner, State Representative Bobby Gibson, Hartford Superintendent of Schools Leslie Torres Rodriguez, Pastor AJ Johnson and Riverfront Recapture President and CEO Michael Zaleski.

"We are thrilled to provide Discovering Amistad with a home for its educational programming when the *Amistad* docks at Mortensen Riverfront Plaza this month," said Michael Zaleski, President & CEO, Riverfront Recapture. "Our parks are an ideal, accessible space for the free programs being offered to Connecticut students and families. We are so pleased to play a part in this significant community engagement initiative that will bring thousands of visitors to our parks and the region."

The Amistad Journey to Freedom will commemorate the 1839 trial at Connecticut's Old State House of 53 natives from Sierra Leone who were kidnapped and illegally sold into slavery. They fought for their lives and their freedom aboard the *Amistad*. The trial, which found those involved in the Amistad Uprising not guilty, marked an early victory for Black and White abolitionists and led to the eventual return of the captives to their native land.

Paula Mann-Agnew, Executive Director of Discovering Amistad, reflected on the gravity of this momentous "return" trip to Hartford: "So much of the 1839 Amistad story took place right in Hartford. We will utilize our floating classroom to facilitate events that honor the legacy of the Amistad captives, while imparting awareness and mobilizing new, young agents of change," Ms. Mann-Agnew said.

Discovering Amistad's team of educators, assisted by student educators from Eastern Connecticut State University, will spend the month teaching at middle and high schools in Hartford, Farmington, Windsor, Bloomfield and East Hartford. Students from these districts will be brought together at a Symposium in October to discuss what they learned and to learn from each other.

For more information visit www.discoveringamistad.org or contact Paula Mann-Agnew, Executive Director - pmann-agnew@discoveringamistad.org.