

Genetic Genealogies as a novel perspective on the histories and peoples of the Caribbean

Association of African American Museums

2020 Virtual Conference

August 5-7, 2020

Jada Benn Torres, Ph.D.

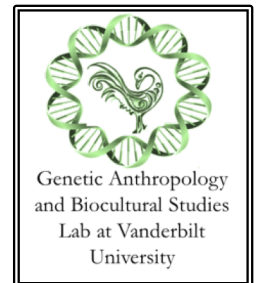
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COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
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Genetic Anthropology
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Lab at Vanderbilt
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“Genomic” Histories

What stories can our DNA tell about our past?



theindepthgenealogist.com

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Study Sheds Light on Regional Origins of Many Black Americans' Enslaved Ancestors
Researchers point to legacy of slavery in shaping DNA of Black Americans today



A man looks out from 'The Tunnel' near where slaves were shipped from Badagry, Nigeria.
PHOTO: AFOLABI SOTUNDE/REUTERS

By [Amy Dockser Marcus](#)
Updated July 23, 2020 5:54 pm ET

SAVE PRINT TEXT 244

A new study that combined the genetic data of more than 50,000 people of African and European ancestry with historical records of the trans-Atlantic slave trade found

Recent Study by Micheletti, Steven J., et al. "Genetic Consequences of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the Americas." *The American Journal of Human Genetics* (2020).

What can we learn from Genetic Ancestry Tests?

Individual perspective:

- Geographic origins of your ancestors
- Find biological kin
- Fill in gaps in genealogical records



What can we learn from Genetic Ancestry Tests?

Population Perspective:

- Migratory history of a population
- Common ancestry of all people



Types of Genetic Ancestry Tests

I. Uni-lineal Tests:

a. Mitochondrial DNA:

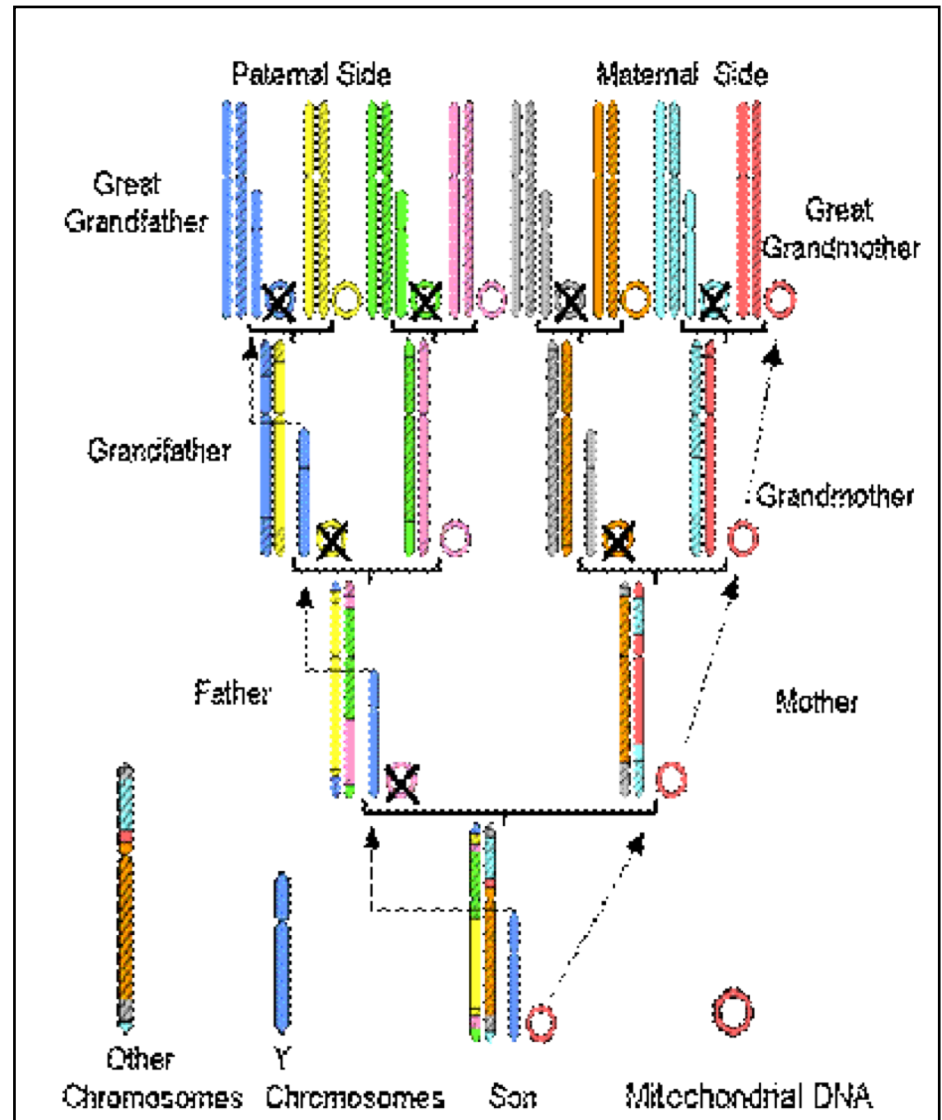
- Maternally inherited

b. Y chromosome:

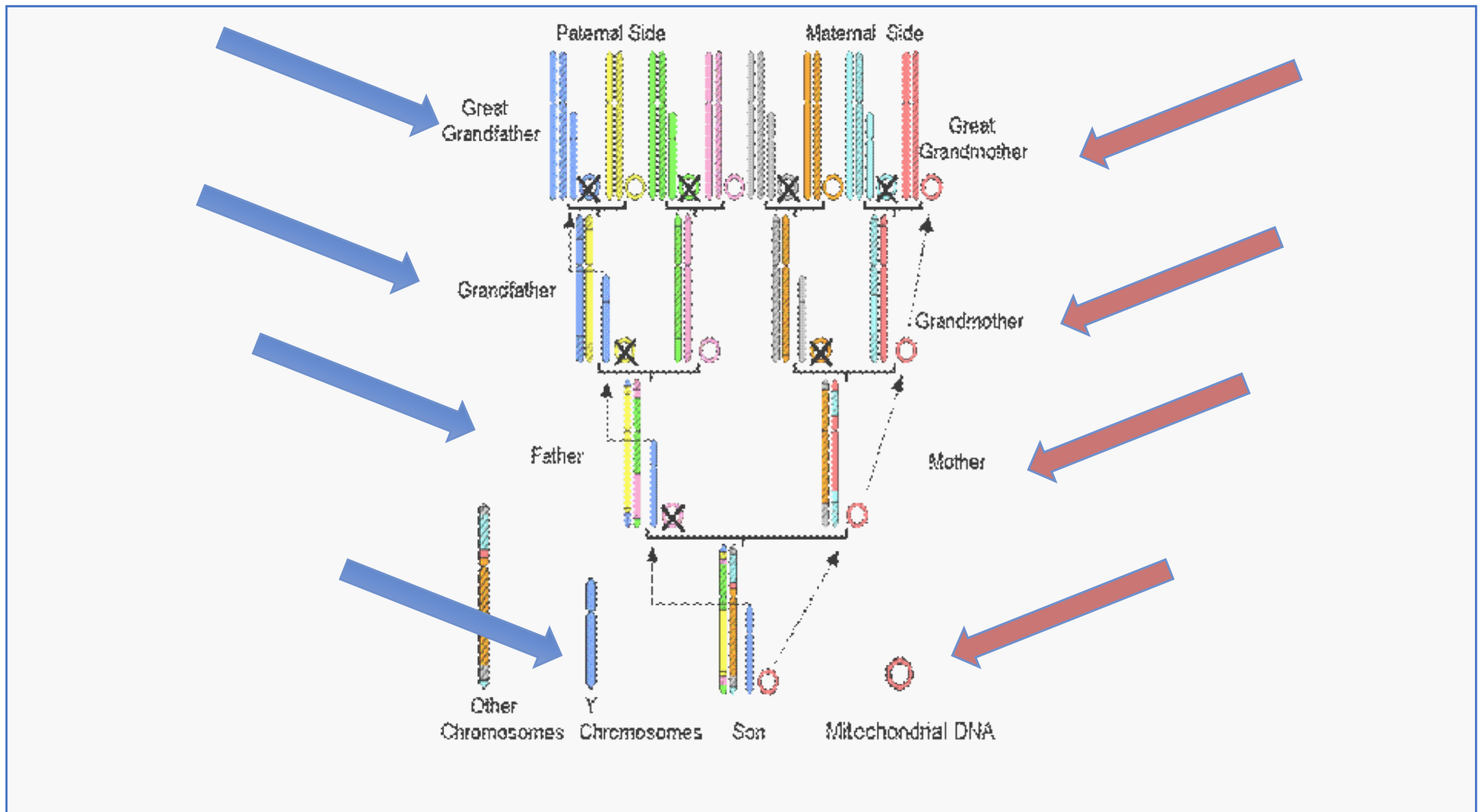
- Paternally inherited

II. Autosomal Tests:

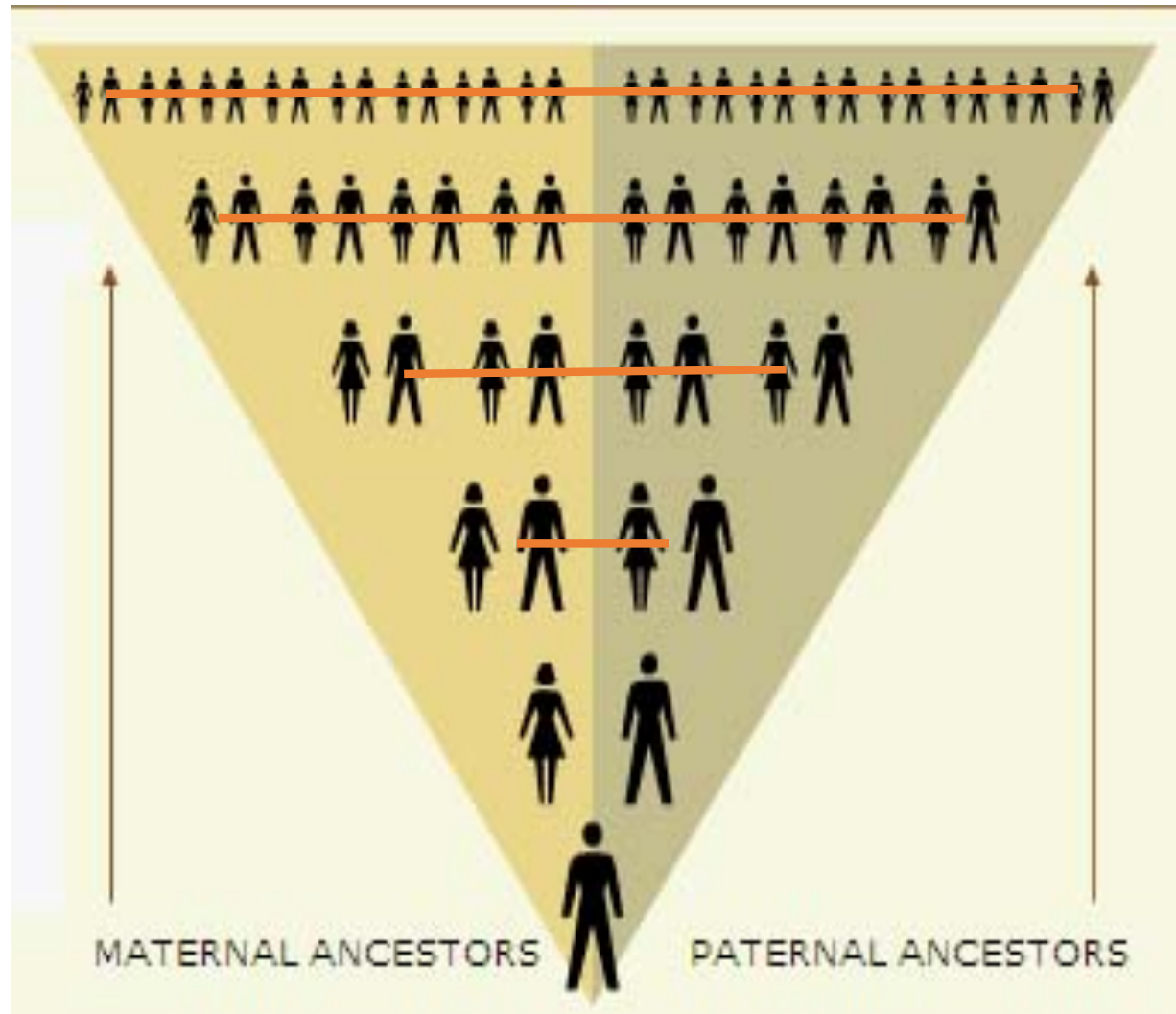
- Bi-parentally inherited



Uni-linear tests

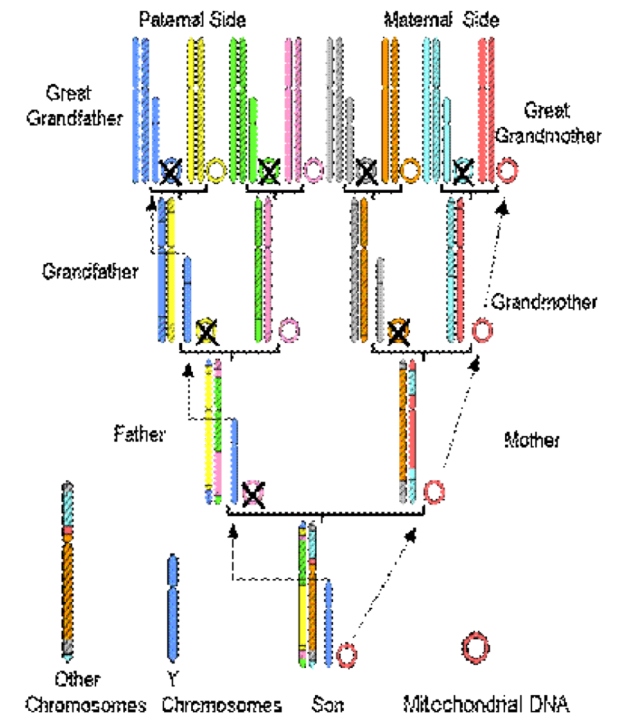
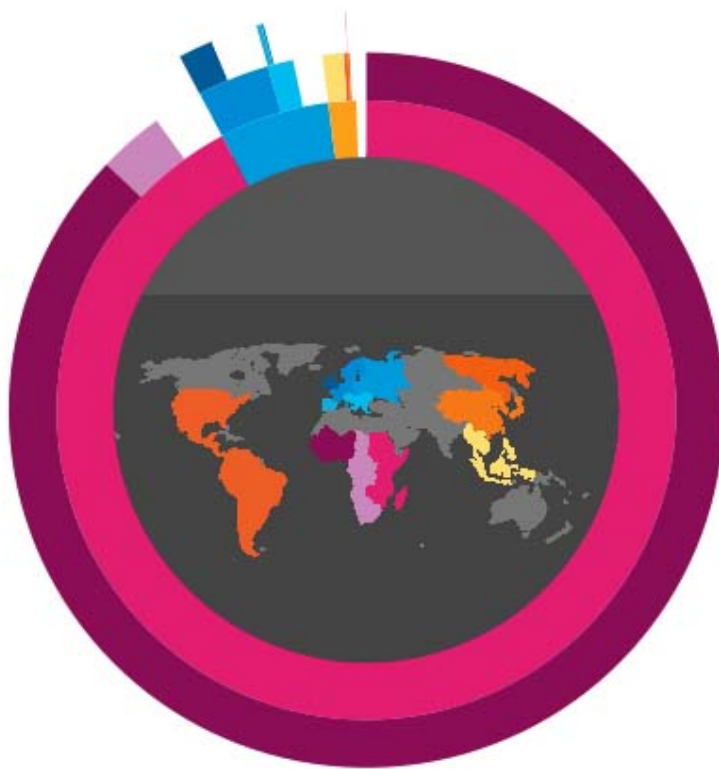


Limited Resolution of Unilineal Tests



Autosomal Tests

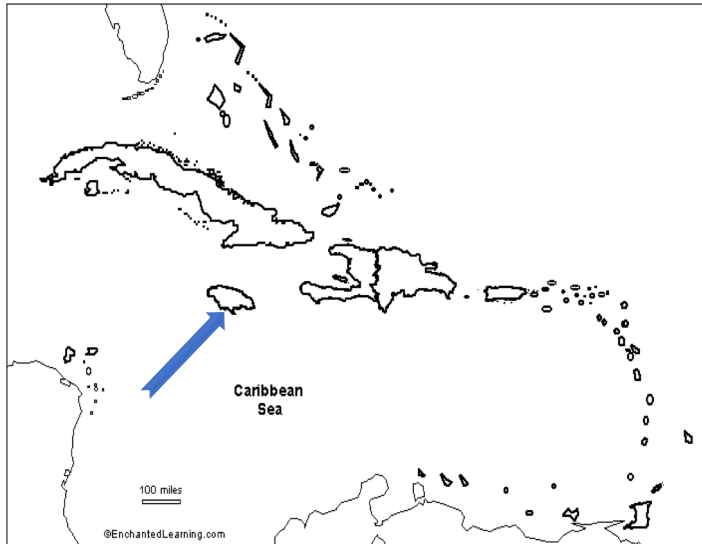
- Traces recent lineage from both sides of the family



CEnR Principles

- Recognizing the community as a unit of identity
- Building on the strengths and resources of the community
- Promoting co-learning among research partners
- Achieving a balance between research and action that mutually benefits both science and the community
- Emphasizing the relevance of community-defined problems
- Employing a cyclical and iterative process to develop and maintain community/research partnerships
- Disseminating knowledge gained from the CBPR project to and by all involved partners
- Requiring long-term commitment on the part of all partners

Accompong Maroons, Jamaica



Publications:

Madrilejo, et al., "Mitochondrial lineages of Jamaica's Accompong Town Maroons." *American Journal of Human Biology* 27, no. 3 (2015): 432-437.

Fuller, and Benn Torres. "Investigating the "Taíno" ancestry of the Jamaican Maroons: a new genetic (DNA), historical, and multidisciplinary analysis and case study of the Accompong Town Maroons." *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*/43, no. 1 (2018): 47-78.

Disseminating Knowledge

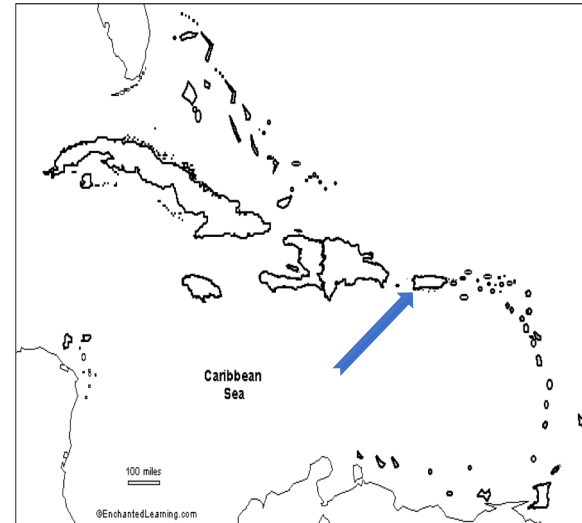


Poster presented to the Accompong Town Community Museum, January 2014

Race, Genetic Ancestry, and Discourses of Belonging in Puerto Rico



Poster by the Puerto Rican Artist Ernesto Ramos-Nieves



In collaboration with Puerto Ricans in Loiza, Piñones, and other communities, this research project we will document conceptions of race and belonging in communities that Puerto Ricans recognize as “black” yet exists within a complex national imaginary of racial blending and unity.

In collaboration with G. Torres Colon, American Studies & Anthropology, Vanderbilt University

Ancestras Maternas

Afro-Descendencia Genética

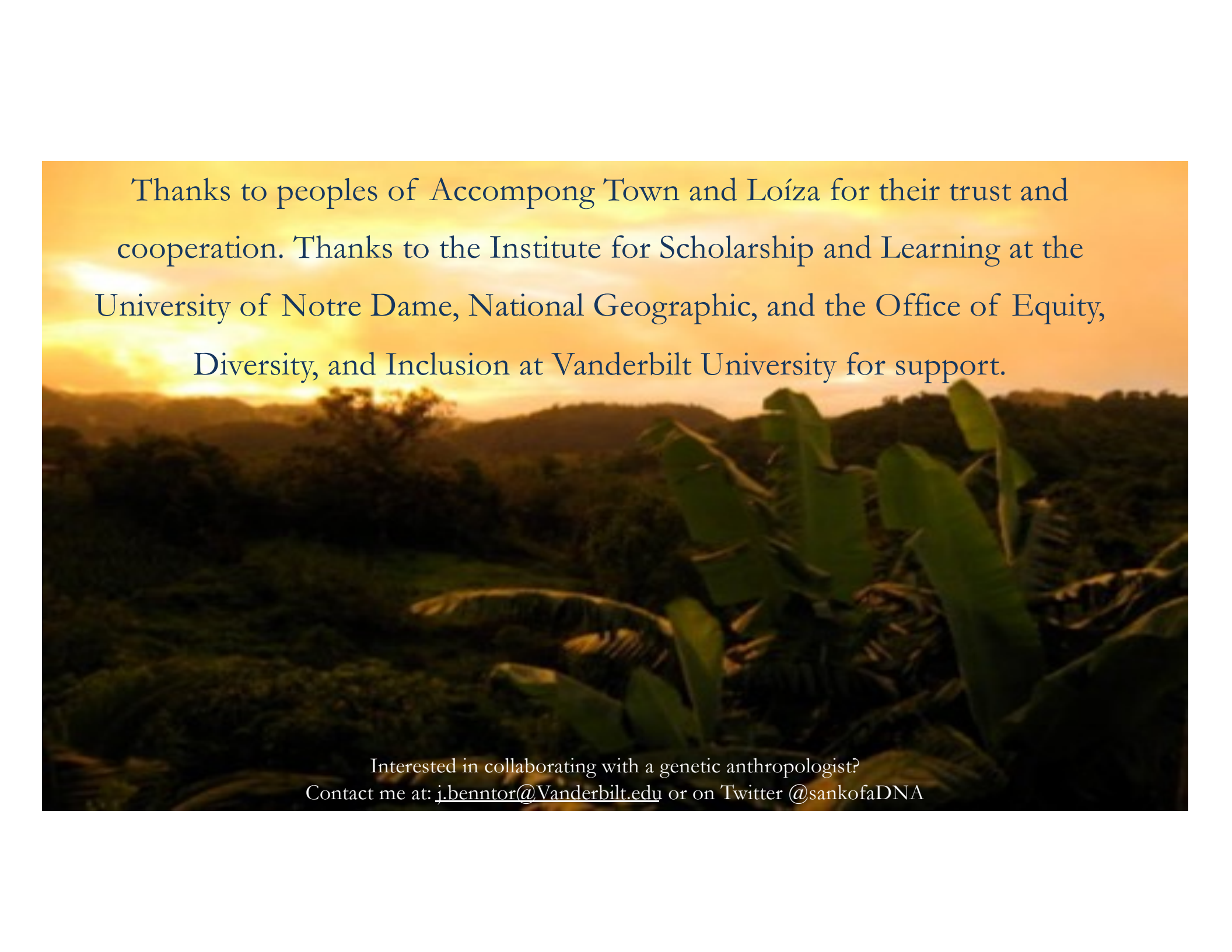
viernes 20 de marzo 2020

6:00 pm

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conversatorio
exposición
música



A photograph of a sunset over a lush green landscape. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow across the sky and the trees. In the foreground, there are large, dark green leaves, possibly from a banana plant, which are slightly out of focus. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

Thanks to peoples of Accompong Town and Loíza for their trust and cooperation. Thanks to the Institute for Scholarship and Learning at the University of Notre Dame, National Geographic, and the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at Vanderbilt University for support.

Interested in collaborating with a genetic anthropologist?
Contact me at: j.benntor@Vanderbilt.edu or on Twitter [@sankofaDNA](https://twitter.com/sankofaDNA)