FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 3, 2007

African Burial Ground National Memorial Honors Africans Departed

Since the 1991 discovery of an 18th-century African burial ground lying beneath the streets of Lower Manhattan—the New York African Burial Ground Project (NYABGP) has cast new light on the lives of African Americans in Colonial New York and brought much needed attention to the issue of neglected African American cemeteries and other sacred spaces throughout the US.

Following excavations to the site and political activism to address widespread public disregard for African American burial grounds and human remains, the federal government commissioned the development of a $5 million memorial to commemorate the 15,000 free and enslaved Africans buried and forgotten beneath the streets of Manhattan, and the countless, nameless Africans buried across the US.

Two years later, the African Burial Ground Memorial is ready to be unveiled to the public. The grand opening and dedication ceremony of the New York African Burial Project National Memorial will take place in New York City on Friday, October 5 and Saturday, October 6 at Duane Street between Broadway and African Burial Ground Way (Elk Street). See below for a complete list of memorial dedication events:

The 6.6 acre New York African Burial Ground was discovered by a team of construction workers making way for a Federal office building. The cooperation of today’s descendants availed the opportunity for researchers to conduct studies of the cemetery and archaeological site, containing the largest colonial bio-archaeological population studied in the Americas.

More than 400 human skeletal remains and their archaeological and historical contexts were analyzed by Howard University research teams, including the Institute for Historical Biology at the College of William & Mary from 1993 through 2003, when the remains were reburied in Manhattan following ceremonies in five East coast cities. The final multidisciplinary reports were completed between 2004 and 2006.

African Memorial Ground Dedication Ceremonies:

Friday October 5, 2007
1 PM - Ground Opening of the African Burial Ground National Monument
Duane Street between Broadway and African Burial Ground Way (Elk Street)

6 PM - 8 PM - Greet the Torch
Battery Park

8 PM - 10 PM - Candlelight Procession
Battery Park to Foley Square

Saturday October 6, 2007 - International Tribute Concert
11 AM - 4 PM
Foley Square

October 8 – 12
Youth Week

Information on the African Burial Ground Burial Project and the memorial dedication is available through through the national park service: www.nps.gov/afbg; and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture: http://www.nypl.org/research/calendar/prog/sch.
To delve deeper into the research and implications of the NYABGP, the American Anthropological Association is hosting a special panel at the association’s 106th annual meeting in Washington DC, November 28 – December 2, 2007:

**Revisiting the New York African Burial Ground Project:**
Noting Articulations with the Research and Political Struggles
Saturday, December 1
1:45 – 5:30 p.m.
AAA Annual Meeting - Marriott Wardman Park Hotel

During this panel—organized by Rachel Watkins, Michael Blakey and Sabiyha Prince—participants will address the research and working experience of the New York African Burial Ground Project and its relevance to ongoing research and community activism involving African American sacred spaces and skeletal remains in Washington, DC.

For more information about the AAA panel on the African Burial Ground Project or to register for the AAA Annual Meeting, please contact Jennifer Steffensen at 703-528-1902 ext. 3039, or jsteffensen@aaanet.org.

---AAA---