



Venita Benitez

Board Member

Bio

Ms. Benitez has been a member of Project 1619, Inc. National Advisory Board for many years. In 2023 she was elected to serve on the Project 1619 Inc. Board of Directors and continues to work with committee members in promoting the true history of the first African Landing since 2007. In 2009 she helped organize the Legacy of Enslavement luncheon in Hampton. Ms. Benitez has deep ancestral roots that go back to England well before the first ship carrying kidnapped Africans ever reached the shores of English North America. She is a direct descendant of England's King Henry II, King John, Henry III, Alexander the Great and William the Conqueror. She is a descendant of England's Edward Marie Wingfield, who became the first elected president of the Council of Virginia at Jamestown in 1607. She is also a descendant of Morton Deane, who was born into slavery and later served as one of the first out of five city councilmen during the reconstruction era in Richmond.

She's an advocate against human trafficking and deliberately brings awareness to National Freedom Day on her website. In 2006 the Wingfield family invited her to go to England to witness the signing of the King James Charter to America in recognition of her family's financial involvement to send the first three ships to Virginia in 1607.

