

Named an “essential blog for genetic genealogy education” by the Board of Certification for Genealogists, *Through The Trees* is a blog for genealogy enthusiasts seeking to locate and leverage new tools and emerging technologies to break through genealogical brick walls. The blog’s author, Shannon Christmas, is an experienced genealogist specializing in genetic, colonial American, and African-American genealogy in Virginia and the Carolinas. He serves as a 23andMe Ancestry Ambassador, administrator of The Captain Thomas Graves of Jamestown Autosomal DNA Project, and as a co-administrator of The Hemings-Jefferson-Wayles-Eppes Autosomal DNA Project and The Macon DNA Project. A genetic genealogy instructor on the faculty of The Midwest African American Genealogy Institute, Shannon has a special interest in harnessing the power of autosomal DNA to verify and extend pedigrees, assess the veracity of oral history, and reconstruct ancestral genomes.

Routinely invited to lecture at international genealogy conferences, Shannon was one of a select few genetic genealogists invited to participate in the American Society of Human Genetics’ Roundtable on Genetic Ancestry Inference. Shannon was tapped to investigate the genetic lineage of Governor Lawrence Douglas Wilder of Virginia and presented his findings at The 2015 Afro-American Genealogical and Historical Society’s National Conference in Richmond, Virginia. In the past, Shannon has received invitations to lecture on genetic genealogy at Andrew Jackson’s Hermitage, James Madison’s Montpelier, Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello, George Washington’s Mount Vernon, The White House, and The Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

A trained urban planning and real estate consultant, Shannon has a Bachelor of Arts in Government from Harvard University and a Masters in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.