2021 was a year of “firsts” for Discovering Amistad. Despite the pandemic, we reached more students and adults with our educational programs in 2021 than in any year since our founding.

We hired our first Executive Director, Paula Mann-Agnew, whose experience as a non-profit executive, an educator and community leader has had an immediate, positive impact. Under Paula’s leadership, we organized our first Juneteenth Celebration at Mystic Seaport Museum, which was attended by over 300 people.
The highlight of the year was our “Amistad Journey to Freedom” – a six week, three port voyage that brought our ‘freedom schooner’ up the Connecticut River all the way to Hartford – for the first time in 20 years. During our four-week stay at the Riverfront Recapture wharf, over 1,000 people visited the ship and learned about the inspiring story of the The Amistad from our highly trained educators. For the first time, we were invited to present our classroom-based instruction in five school districts – from Farmington to East Hartford – reaching over 900 students. This was made possible by a partnership with Eastern Connecticut State University which provided 6 student educators who supplemented our staff educators – another first for Discovering Amistad.

The media attention generated by the ship this year was unprecedented. In Middletown, where over 350 people visited the ship in one day, The Amistad was heralded as a “Beacon of Hope” by the Connecticut Insider. In New Haven, the Daily Nutmeg covered The Amistad’s return to her home port, calling her a “Relation Ship.” And NBC/Telemundo awarded Discovering Amistad a $35,000 “Project Innovation” grant, which underwrote our Journey.

All told, 1,933 people visited The Amistad over the span of our three-port Journey.
We also hired our **first** Ship-Keeper, RJ Lavallee, who oversaw the reinvigoration of *The Amistad* over the summer, with a hard-working corps of volunteers from throughout the state.

We hope you have enjoyed this chronicle of the year. And we look forward to welcoming you aboard *The Amistad* in 2022.