

# WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT!

Funded by a grant from the

**McCAUSLAND INNOVATION FUND**

*USC's McCausland College of Arts & Sciences*



**McCausland College  
of Arts and Sciences**  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

**Dick & Sharon Stewart  
FOUNDATION**



**ERNEST A. FINNEY, JR.  
CULTURAL ARTS CENTER**  
1510 Laurens Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29204

**Lincolnvile**  
PRESERVATION & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
BEAUFORT**

History Department - Marketing & Communications

Art Department - English Department - USCB Library

USCB Center for the Arts



**Fred Washington,  
Sr. Woman's Relief  
Corps of S.C. #1**

**SPRINGHILL SUITES®**  
BY MARRIOTT



# THIRD ANNUAL SPRING SYMPOSIUM

*Breathing Democracy Into Spaces*

# Her X Mark

Claimant's Signature



## WOMEN'S VOICES DURING RECONSTRUCTION

# APRIL 25 & 26, 2025

**USC Beaufort's Center for the Arts, Beaufort, SC**

Funded by a grant from the **McCAUSLAND INNOVATION FUND**

*USC's McCausland College of Arts & Sciences*



**INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE  
RECONSTRUCTION ERA**



*There are many people who do not know what  
some of the colored women did during the war.*

*Susie King Taylor, Reminiscences of My Life in Camp*

Women, in various roles, are key figures in the history of the **1st South Carolina Volunteers of African Descent (33rd US Colored Troops)**, the first regiment of Black Soldiers deployed in a combat role during the Civil War.

ISRE's 2025 symposium celebrates the many women associated with the 1st South Carolina VAD such as **Susie King Taylor, Laura Towne, Esther Hill Hawks, Charlotte Forten Grimke** and others, as well as the impact made by women throughout South Carolina during Reconstruction Era.

*I can do much good and give much advice that is wanted....  
I see every day why I came and what I am to stay for.*

*Laura Towne, Letters & Diary of Laura M. Towne*



“Her X Mark” refers to the “x” or mark that many illiterate women used as their signature on legal documents in the late 19th century, as well as **the mark made by these women on their families, communities and society-at-large** during the Reconstruction Era.

# THIRD ANNUAL SPRING SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

**Friday, April 25th – 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm**

Performance & Keynote Presentation  
*“My Unbounded Joy”: Susie King Taylor and the War of Jubilee*

**Saturday, April 26th – 9:00 am to 3:30 pm**

**9:00 - 9:20** Welcome

**9:20 – 9:45** Opening Remarks

**9:45 -10:25** Session 1

*The Elizabeth Hyde Botume Collection & Poetic Echoes of the  
Reconstruction Era: Ellen Murray's Reflections*

**Break (10 mins.)**

**10:40 – 11:20** Session 2

*Esther Hill Hawks: Doctor, Educator, Abolitionist*

**Complimentary Lunch 11:20 am – 12:20 pm**

**12:20 – 1:05 Breakout Panel Discussions (select one)**

(1) Education (2) Legacy (3) Service - see descriptions next page.

**Break (10 mins.)**

**1:15 – 1:55** Session 3

*Antebellum Experiences of the Men & Women  
of the 1<sup>st</sup> SC Volunteers of African Descent*

**1:55 – 2:35** Session 4

*Documenting Resilience: Women's Voices in  
the USCT Pension Records*

**2:35 – 3:15** Session 5

*Inherited Strength: The Enduring Echoes of Women's Legacies*

**3:15 - 3:20** Closing Remarks



# SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

## ***'My Unbounded Joy': Susie King-Taylor and the War of Jubilee***

**Dr. Hermina Glass-Hill, Executive Director**

**Susie King Taylor Women's Institute & Ecology Center**

The Civil War was at the front door of Georgia's hostess city, Savannah, perched on high ground on the south bank of its namesake river. Urban city dwellers including hired out slaves like Dolly, a washerwoman, and her twelve-year-old granddaughter Susannah, nicknamed Susie, were within earshot of the rumble and roar of the advanced weaponry being used in the siege of Fort Pulaski. The rising smoke signaled an opportunity that would alter the course of young Susie's life forever.

## ***The Elizabeth Hyde Botume Collection***

**Nathan Betcher, Integrated Resources Program Manager**

**Reconstruction Era National Historical Park**

Elizabeth Botume was a teacher who established a school in Port Royal, teaching from 1864-1904. In October 2024, her family donated part of her papers and photographs to the Reconstruction Era NHP.

## ***Poetic Echoes of the Reconstruction Era: Ellen Murray's Reflections***

**Samantha Mischke, Park Ranger, Reconstruction Era National Historical Park**

Ellen Murray, one of the founders of the Penn School, published poetry in numerous newspapers throughout her time in Beaufort, South Carolina. This presentation will highlight a few of her poems while bringing in historical context of the time period.

## ***Esther Hill Hawks: Doctor, Educator, Abolitionist***

**Jennifer Marler, PhD Candidate - History, University of South Carolina**

This presentation will explore the dynamic career of Esther Hill Hawks, a physician and educator affiliated with the 1st South Carolina Volunteers. Through her recordkeeping—including diaries and correspondence—we learn more about the lived experiences of the men and women of the 1st South Carolina VAD, illuminating the scope and importance of their efforts. Her writings also offer insight into how women navigated male-dominated fields such as medicine and education during the nineteenth century.

## ***Documenting Resilience: Women's Voices in USCT Pension Records***

**Elizabeth Laney, M.A., Research Associate**

**Institute for the Study of the Reconstruction Era**

The US Colored Troop Pension Records are a rich resource for learning about the lives of women before, during and after the American Civil War. Interviews with women of various backgrounds provide detailed first-hand accounts of the lives of these women & chronicle the history of their families and their communities.

## ***Inherited Strength: The Enduring Echoes of Women's Legacies***

**1st SCVAD Veteran Descendants**

**Jane Ball Groom, Julia Groom & Stacey Bell with Dr. Larry Watson**

Join USCT Descendants as they share compelling stories of the women who came before them, their own personal stories researching the lives of their USCT ancestors & how to get started on researching a USCT connection in your family.

## **Breakout Panel Discussions (select one to attend)**

### ***(1) Education in Beaufort from the Port Royal Experiment to Present***

*Dr. Robert L. Adams, Alvesta Roberson, Bradley Tarrance, Donna Kimelman*

What challenges were overcome to bring education to the Lowcountry during Reconstruction? What are the challenges & benefits facing teaching Reconstruction in modern classrooms? Engage with our expert panel on these questions and more.

### ***(2) Supporting the Legacy of the 1st SCVAD***

*James Morrall, Linda Robinson, Dr. James Shinn*

How is the legacy of the 1st SCVAD and other local USCT regiments being commemorated today? What are the challenges & benefits of making the public more aware of these unique histories? Engage with our expert panel on these questions and more.

### ***(3) Honoring the Service of the Men & Women of the 1st SCVAD***

*Ben Hodges, Rory McGovern, Jennifer Marler, Dr. Najmah Thomas*

Why is it important to acknowledge the service of the 1st SCVAD as the beginning of continuous black military service in the US Army? What is the regiment's legacy to the modern military? How were women a part of that history? Engage with our expert panel on these questions and more.



**SUPPORT**

## Robert Smalls Leadership Academy Choir

*Ms. Andrea Jones, Robert Smalls Leadership Academy*

The Robert Smalls Leadership Academy Choir features the voices of 4th—8th grade students. The choir recently performed at the Beaufort County School District's annual Black History Conference.

## HIST B492: Atlantic Slavery & Antislavery

*Dr. James Shinn, Asst. Prof. of History, USC Beaufort*

In Hist 492 students explore the rise and fall of racial slavery in the Atlantic World, as well as the rise of antislavery activism and the death of Atlantic slavery in the 19th century.

For their final project students were offered the chance to create a portfolio based on USCT pension records. In addition to gaining first-hand experience working with primary documents, they are using pension records to complete a biography of a USCT veteran or their wife, create a social media post, and write an essay linking their subject to the history of slavery in the Atlantic.

**INSPIRE**

## ARTS B215, B100 & B315 Beginning, Intermediate & Workshop in Printmaking

*Joanna Angell, Ass. Professor of Art, USC Beaufort*

Students from various disciplines and experience levels receive an introduction to printmaking, along with intermediate relief and intaglio techniques and the execution of original works.

After a presentation from ISRE staff, students used the stories and images of women from the Reconstruction Era such as Susie King Taylor and Diana Grayson to inspire a design for a copper plate etching which can be used to create multiple printed copies of the image.

Help us **SUPPORT, ENRICH & INSPIRE** local students! Use the QR code to leave a message for the incredible students sharing their voices, art and research with us!



**ENRICH**

## INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE RECONSTRUCTION ERA

*The Institute for the Study of the Reconstruction Era was founded in 2019 to develop programs that grow out of the extraordinary history of the Reconstruction Era, especially the fundamental role played by Beaufort and the South Carolina Lowcountry.*



**USCBISRE**



**USCBISRE**



**[www.uscb.edu/isre](http://www.uscb.edu/isre)**



**[isre@uscb.edu](mailto:isre@uscb.edu)**



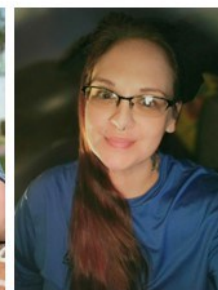
Scan the QR Code  
for Speaker Bios  
Reading Guides &  
other Digital  
Materials.

### ISRE Board of Visitors

#### Co-Chairs

Mary Anne Fitzpatrick  
Christopher C. Thompson

N'Kia Campbell  
Angela Dore  
Gordon & Lillian Haist  
Dan Littlefield  
John McCardell  
Lawrence Roland  
Pamela Simon-Beasley  
Victoria Smalls  
Dick Stewart  
Larry Watson



## ISRE STAFF

Dr. Valinda Littlefield, Interim Director  
Rhonda Carey, Coordinator of Projects & Programs  
Elizabeth Laney, Research Associate  
Anna Ard-Roberts, Admin. Asst. ISRE & Academic Affairs