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Funded by a grant from the  
**GULLAH GEECHEE NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR**  
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History Department - Marketing & Communications

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# Fourth Annual Spring Symposium

## Breathing Democracy into Spaces



Securing the

## ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS



of Citizenship

US Direct Tax Commissioner Maps, National Archives

# March 20-21, 2026

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

Funded by a grant from the **GULLAH GEECHEE NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR** with additional support from the **ACE MELLON HUMANITIES PROGRAM**.



INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE RECONSTRUCTION ERA

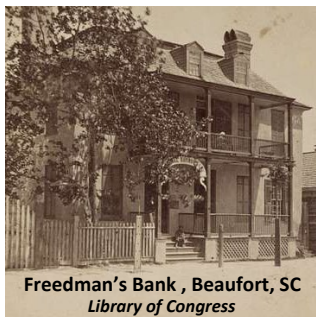
Wm Henry Brisbane & others  
 16 3/4 Head of Family Land Certificate  
 Thomas Woodruff. No 988.  
 This certifies that on this twenty ninth day of  
 September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred  
 and sixty six the United States of America by Wm Henry Brisbane

"This certifies that on this twenty ninth day of September in the year of  
 our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty six the United States of  
 America... for and in consideration of the sum of fifteen dollars... sell  
 to Thomas Woodruff... lot no. 16, containing ten acres more or less..."

1866 Head of Family Land Certificate #988, Beaufort County, South Carolina

For millions of African Americans in the postwar South, the transition from enslaved laborer to citizen was contingent upon more than the ratification of the 14th Amendment - it was about the right to own their own land, earn wages, build communities, secure political rights, and economic independence. The veterans of the **1st SC Volunteers of African Descent / 33rd US Colored Troops** and their families in the SC Lowcountry provide a window to address Beaufort, SC's "Rehearsal for Reconstruction" as well as their efforts to pursue rights to receive financial assistance from the government for their service during and after the Civil War.

ISRE's 2026 symposium theme, **Securing the Economic Foundations of Citizenship**, explores topics such as the struggle for land ownership, the promise and failure of the Freedman's Bank and the financial advantage afforded by US Colored Troop pensions and more.



Freedman's Bank, Beaufort, SC  
Library of Congress

The hardest blow to her was the failure of the Freedmen's Savings Bank in Savannah, for in that bank she had placed her savings, about three thousand dollars, the result of her hard labor and self-denial..."

Susie King Taylor on her grandmother,  
*Reminiscences of My Life in Camp*

## 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**



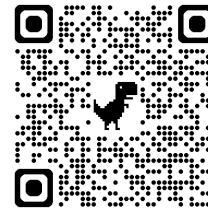
**USCBISRE**



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**isre@uscb.edu**



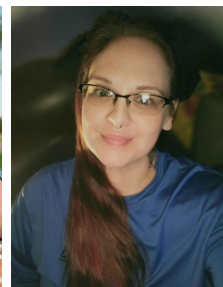
Scan the QR Code  
 for Digital Program,  
 Reading Guides &  
 other Digital  
 Materials.

### ISRE Board of Visitors

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## 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

## STUDENT POSTER SESSION (FRIDAY)

### **Land and Equality: The Impacts and Outcomes of Land Ownership in the Sea Islands**

*Cadet Evan Sawyer, American History Major*

*US Military Academy (West Point), Major Ashley Mohr*

### **Military Service and the Struggle for Citizenship (#1)**

*Cadet Dana Lee, American History Major*

*US Military Academy (West Point), Major Ashley Mohr*

### **Military Service and the Struggle for Citizenship (#2)**

*Cadet Thomas Siry, American History Major*

*US Military Academy (West Point), Major Ashley Mohr*

### **Recording and Preserving the Legacy of the Mather School**

*Madeline Jones & Elizabeth Guilarte*

*USC Beaufort, Dr. Timothy James*

### **Cyrus Hawkins Pension Claims Recover Package**

*Mae Carson, Allison Corbett, Samatha Thomas, Gabby*

*Reichelmann and Ella Sandstedt*

*USC Beaufort, Dr. Mollie Barnes*

### **Henry McIntyre Pension Claims Recover Package**

*Keyra Varn, Gail Garner-Toney, Madison Manning and Kennadi Land*

*USC Beaufort, Dr. Mollie Barnes*

### **Kitt Chisolm Pension Claims Recover Package**

*Dolly Sikora, Saxon Campbell, Walker Campbell, Cole Baptiste*

*and Chester Willis*

*USC Beaufort, Dr. Mollie Barnes*

### **Diana Washington Pension Claims Recover Package**

*Isabella Casler, Mckenzie Scarberry and Camryn Anson*

*USC Beaufort, Dr. Mollie Barnes*

### **Scipio Haywood Pension Claims Recover Package**

*Abigail Jones, Moriah Johnson, Adam Munoz, Kaylee Jeffcoat*

*and Yomi Gonzales-Meza*

*USC Beaufort, Dr. Mollie Barnes*

### **Tecumseh Young Pension Claims Recover Package**

*Dennis Anderson, Nathan Tocharoen and Lacosta Warren*

*USC Beaufort, Dr. Mollie Barnes*

## FOURTH ANNUAL SPRING SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

### Friday, March 20th – 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

**6:00 - 7:00** Student Poster Session, Exhibitors

**7:00 - 7:25** Welcome & USC Press

**7:25 - 8:00** Special Performance *All of Us: A Community Pursuing the Economic Foundations of Freedom*

### Saturday, March 21st – 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

**9:00 - 9:20** Welcome & Special Presentation

**9:20 -10:00** Session 1

*The Quest for Freedom & Citizenship in a New Landscape*

**10:00 – 10:40** Session 2

*Lincolntville, SC—159 Years from Reconstruction to Today!*

**10:40 – 11:00** Session 3

*Mapping Reconstruction*

### Lunch 11:20 am – 12:20 pm

Lunch on your own. Food Trucks available outside. Check out **Magnolia Café, Sister Sister Deli** or **Rain & Bagels**.

**12:00 – 1:00 Breakout Panel Discussions (select one)**

(1) Land (2) Archives (3) Pensions - see descriptions next page.

### Break (10 mins.)

**1:15 – 1:55** Session 4

*The Freedman's Bank in Beaufort and Beyond*

**1:55 – 2:35** Session 5

*Hastings Gantt: Black Philanthropist*

**2:35 – 3:15** Session 6

*Company I, 54th Massachusetts Reenactment Group*

# SESSIONS & SPEAKER BIOS

## ***The Quest for Freedom and Citizenship in a New Landscape***

**Michael Allen, Community Partner Specialist—Tastee Treat Enterprises**

Allen has been a community activist for most of his professional life. He has a deep-seeded interest in our nation's spiritual growth as it relates to history and culture. He has been involved in designing exhibits and presenting interpretive programs that involve local communities and history, and designed to attract non-traditional audiences to the National Park Service and other historic sites.

## ***Lincolville, SC - 159 Years from Reconstruction to Today!***

**Dr. Pernessa Seele, President—Lincolville Preservation & Historical Society**

Seele, a descendant of a founder of Lincolville, is the Founder/President of the Lincolville Preservation & Historical Society and Founder/CEO of The Balm In Gilead. Dr. Seele is well known for her extraordinary vision and ability to create national and global partnerships in support of service to people.

## ***Mapping Reconstruction***

**Eric Ellis, Historian—National Park Service**

Ellis enlisted in the US Navy after high school. After which he attended New Mexico State University, receiving his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Public and US History. Eric has spent his last two years with the National Park Service studying Black landownership in Beaufort County.

## ***The Freedman's Bank in Beaufort and Beyond***

**Chris Barr, Chief of Interpretation - Reconstruction Era National Historical Park**

Barr is the Chief of Interpretation at Reconstruction Era National Historical Park, where he coordinates the day-to-day visitor services, programs, and staffing of the park sites across Beaufort County. He has been at Reconstruction Era National Historical Park since 2019.

## ***Hastings Gantt: Black Philanthropist***

**Dr. Robert Adams, Director—Penn Center**

Adams is an anthropologist by training, focusing on the intersection between race and culture. He has conducted research in Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, and North America.

## ***Special Performance***

**Company I, 54th Massachusetts Reenactment Regiment**

A reenactment group from across South Carolina including Donald West, Ernest Parks, Terry James and Jarad James.

## ***Master of Ceremonies - Dr. Hermina Glass-Hill***

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

Glass-Hill is an award-winning public historian, museum curator, environmental activist, and ocean conservationist. She is the premier scholar on Susie King Taylor - a freedom seeker, Civil War laundress, teacher, nurse with the 1st SCVAD. She is the founder and executive director of the Susie King Taylor Women's Institute and Ecology Center and the Susie King Taylor Gullah Geechee Museum in Liberty County, Georgia.

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

### ***(1) Land, Legacy, and Stewardship - Auditorium***

*Tony & Belinda Jones, Morning Glory Homestead with Dr. Francena F.L. Turner*

A discussion of the profound legacies of local landownership and the vital importance of education and community preservation.

*Tony and Belinda Jones, Gullah descendants with deep family roots in the Gullah Geechee Heritage Corridor. Tony's ancestor, Pompey Coaxum, a veteran of the 1st SCVAD, was enslaved on the McTureous Plantation, the same land where they now own and operate Morning Glory Homestead Farm. Coaxum purchased nearly 40 acres and serve on local committees that protected Black landowners. His land has remained in the family, providing lasting security and legacy, and inspiring Tony and Belinda's continued commitment to stewardship, education, and community preservation.*

### ***(2) Navigating the Archives - Classroom 102***

*Beaufort County Library Grace Cordial with Dr. James Shinn*

Learn how to access Reconstruction Era records and discover why preserving these historic documents remains essential today.

*Ms. Cordial has managed the local history unit of the Beaufort County Library system for more than 25 years.*

### ***(3) Unlocking USCT Pension Records - Classroom 101***

*ISRE Research Associate Elizabeth Laney with Dr. Mollie Barnes*

Discover how to find, access, and interpret US Colored Troop pension records to uncover the stories within.

*Elizabeth Laney, M.A., is a historian and genealogist with 20+ years experience in state parks, historic sites and museums. She specializes in the history of the Reconstruction Era and of the State of South Carolina with a particular focus on African American communities and South Carolina's Black military legacy. She has worked for ISRE since 2022.*