

Institute for the Study of the Reconstruction Era (ISRE)

2026 Spring Symposium Schedule

March 20 - 21, 2026

USCB Center for the Arts

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

6:00 - 7:00 pm Student Poster Session (Lobby)

7:00 pm Welcome (Auditorium) & Michael McGandy, Director, USC Press

7:20 pm *All of Us: A Community Pursuing the Foundations of Freedom & Citizenship*, a special performance by local K-12 students.

Saturday, March 21 – 9:00am to 3:00pm (doors open at 8:30 am)

9:00 - 9:20 am Welcome & Opening Remarks

Hermína Glass-Hill, Founder & Executive Director

Susie King Taylor Institute

Dr. Valinda Littlefield, Interim Director

USCB's Institute for the Study of the Reconstruction Era (ISRE)

9:20 - 10:00am Session 1

The Quest for Freedom and Citizenship in a New Landscape

Michael Allen, Community Partner Specialist - Tastee Treat Enterprises

10:00 – 10:40am Session 2

Lincolnton, SC - 159 Years from Reconstruction to Today!

Pernessa Seele, President - Lincolnton Preservation & Historical Society

10:40 - 11:00am Session 3

Mapping Reconstruction

Eric Ellis, Historian - National Park Service

Saturday, March 21st – 9:00am to 3:00pm (continued)

Lunch 11:00am – 12:00pm

Lunch on your own - [Gullah Express](#) & [Grub at Jay's](#) food trucks will be available at the event. There are several restaurants within walking distance including [Rain & Bagels](#), [Sister Sister Deli](#) and [Magnolia Cafe](#). Just present your ISRE Symposium program for a discount at the restaurants.

12:00 – 1:00pm Breakout Panel Discussions (please select one to attend)

Breakout #1 - Land, Legacy & Stewardship

Tony & Belinda Jones of Morning Glory Homestead, moderated by Dr. Francena Turner

Breakout #2 - Navigating the Archives

Grace Morris Cordial of the Beaufort County Library, moderated by Dr. James Shinn

Breakout #3 - Unlocking USCT Pension Records

Elizabeth Laney, ISRE Research Associate, moderated by Dr. Mollie Barnes

Break (10 mins.)

1:10 – 1:50pm Session 4

Freedom Through Finances: The Freedman's Bank in the Lowcountry and Beyond

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

1:50 – 2:30pm Session 5

Hastings Gantt, Black Philanthropist

Robert Adams, Jr., PhD., Executive Director - Penn Center

2:30 – 3:00pm Session 6

Company I, 54th Massachusetts Reenactment Group

3:00pm Closing