

## Press Release Symposium

### VFTE Chautauqua Symposium: With A Torch in Their Souls

#### The United States Colored Troops (USCT) in the Civil War - September 1864.

The community is invited to engage, observe, and explore the ideas historical figures Frederick Douglass, Martin Delany, Capt. Luis Emilio, and Robert Smalls as Voices from the Earth, a traveling historical theatre company presents a series of historical symposiums September 26, 27 and 28. These symposiums commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> year of the Battle for Freedom in the American Civil War and by featuring scholars and storytellers who explore ideas about equality, justice, race, class and gender in 1864. These symposiums are free and open to the public.

The first symposium will be held Thursday, September 26 at Fairmont State University in Colebank Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The Greater St. Paul AME Church will host the second symposium on Friday, September 27 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at its location on 61 Beechurst Avenue in Morgantown. The final symposium is hosted by the Marion County Historical Society on Saturday, September 28 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Fleming Memorial Presbyterian Church, 1493 Locust Avenue, in Fairmont. These programs are supported by the West Virginia Humanities Council and Fairmont State Student Affairs.

Each day includes historical portrayals, lectures, a scholars' panel, and small and large group discussion. These Chautauqua-style symposiums are led by Capt. Hari Jones, Col. James Armstead, Professor Charles Everett Pace, Baba Jamal Koram and Joey Madia., seasoned professors and teachers as well as engaging storytellers and actors. Have you ever wanted to listen in on the conversation of famous people from the past? Here is a chance to be able to listen in. For additional information, contact...304-463-4561. [www.vfte.org](http://www.vfte.org).



Charles Everett Pace  
As Frederick Douglass



Col. James Armstead  
as Maj. Martin Delany



Baba Jamal As Koram  
as Robert Smalls



Joey Madia  
as Capt. Luis Emilio

## **About Voices From the Earth Chautauqua**

**V**OICES FROM THE EARTH CHAUTAUQUA (VFTE CHAUTAUQUA) brings history and culture to life through creating humanities programs which invite lifelong learning, inquiry, and critical thinking. In this way we strengthen and preserve the best of our Appalachian and Affrilachian community. VFTE emphasizes the diversity and history of American culture through storytelling and scholarly presentations. Scholars do extensive research of primary source documents, journals and diaries to reveal the wealth of our American history and bring that history to life in the form of first person narratives and historical portrayals, seminars, workshops and symposiums. VFTE pursues the opportunity for ongoing civil discourse about freedom, justice, and equality in America. Our current theme is the Journey of Freedom in America.

### **VFTE CHAUTAUQUA**

VFTE Chautauqua revives culture and community through humanities programs. VFTE Chautauqua's mission: to educate, to enlighten and to empower through scholarly presentations, community conversations and cultural experiences.

### **THE VFTE CHAUTAUQUA SCHOLAR/STORYTELLERS**

Chautauqua Scholars are seasoned professors and teachers as well as engaging storytellers and actors. The topical material selected by Chautauqua Scholar may be presented as an historical portrayal, lecture, story, or monologue. It becomes the basis of a structured discussion first in small groups and then in a large group. The Chautauqua Scholars panel is led by a moderator who interviews and Historical figures from 1864 and facilitates the audience in conversation with them.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR VFTE CHAUTAUQUA PROGRAMS**

- Introduce audience to race, class and gender diversity issues in Civil War Appalachia
- Introduce biographical story as a significant component of Affrilachian/Appalachian culture
- Demonstrate ways stigmatized individuals or groups address cultural bias, discrimination and stereotyping
- Provide opportunity to explore diversity and cultural differences through stories presented in first person narrative
- Introduce audience to impact of culture race, class and gender expectations and stereotypes

### **VFTE CHAUTAUQUA 2013 THEME AND SETTING**

The timing of the presentation is set to commemorate a significant date in American history: September 22, 1862, the date 151 years ago when President Abraham Lincoln signed the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation.

## **VFTE CHAUTAUQUA PROGRAMS DESCRIPTION**

A scholar will portray a figure from the past telling their story in first person – stepping into the role of storyteller. Then they will then take time to answer questions of the audience as that character may have, using their knowledge of the person, their life and times as well as their circumstances. Then the scholar will step out of the role of the historical personage to answer questions that that person may not have been able to answer.

## **THE VFTE CHAUTAUQUA SYMPOSIUMS**

VFTE Chautauqua symposiums are designed to encourage, stimulate, and give participants the opportunity to practice civil discourse, to think and engage different ideas in a civil manner.

## **THE VFTE CHAUTAUQUA SCHOLARS PANEL**

### **Roll Call Port Royal**

The setting for the symposium is Port Royal, SC, September of 1864, one year after President Lincoln signed the emancipating proclamation into law followed by even stronger language bringing men of African descent into the federal military and arming them. The Department of the South became the staging ground for a radical rehearsal for reconstruction of the social and moral fabric of the South. The Treasury Department called it “The Port Royal Experiment.” The Port Royal Experiment was the test trial for equality and justice, social and political independence and true democracy; the opportunity for Abolitionists to prove that a free labor system was superior to a slave labor system both morally and economically. Have the ideals which created the Port Royal Experiment proven themselves to be sound? What happened between September of 1862 and September of 1864? Have you ever wanted to listen in on the conversation of famous people from the past? Here is your chance.