



## Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network

Preserving History & Culture Across the Regions

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) Reenactment Unit & Living History Association provides a historic flair for opening day of Legislative Session**

Members of the 2nd Infantry Regiment United States Colored Troops (USCT) Reenactment Unit and Living History Association will bring history to life during opening day of the 115th Legislative Session, in commemoration of the 150-year anniversary of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. The USCT Reenactment Unit will provide the ceremonial presentation of colors on Tuesday, March 5th beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the chambers of the Florida Capitol.

The USCT Reenactment Unit & Living History Association's mission is to protect, preserve, promote, educate and honor the presence of African Americans in Civil War battles and their significant involvement in the fight for freedom. The unit also plays an active role of increasing awareness about historic events, such as the emancipation of enslaved persons and the abolition of colonial slavery following the American Civil War. Through reenactment events, such as Florida's first reading of President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation at the local Knott House museum, the organization is able to significantly preserve black history and culture throughout the State of Florida. Tuesday's opening session will culminate with an insightful exhibit in the Capitol Gallery entitled, "*A Route in Search of Roots*" highlighting the significant role of African Americans in the Civil War and in shaping 500-years of Florida history.

The USCT is an affiliate of the Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network (FAAHPN), Tuesday's appearance was initiated by Representative Alan Williams, an avid supporter of the unit and the FAAHPN's efforts to teach and preserve the untold stories about the contributions of African-Americans throughout history. *"I am honored to have the USCT troops participate in the opening day of the 2013 Legislative Session,"* said Williams. *"The USCT unit plays a central part and has a rightful place in Florida and American history. The acceptance of the Black soldier had a major impact in determining the outcome of several historic battles."*

The FAAHPN is a professional association organized in 2001 to serve as an informational and technical assistance resource in response to a growing interest in preserving Florida's African American culture, that of the African Diaspora and that of other related ethnically diverse historic resources globally. In addition to producing high-quality statewide publications that promote tourism and economic development, the Florida Network was selected to serve as the state's partner in promoting the significance of the African Diaspora and other notable contributions of African Americans throughout Florida's 500-year history during the 2013 Statewide Viva Florida commemoration. The

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