This winter scholar Erika Slocumb has embarked upon a project titled *Black Holyoke: Uncovering the History of the Black Community in the Paper City* in partnership with Wistariahurst. The purpose of this project is to research the stories of the black community in Holyoke, from the time the area was settled in 18th Century to the present. “We will work to uncover the problems, the joys, the pain, and the struggles black people in Holyoke faced in their daily lives,” says Erika. The goal of the project is to make that history available to the public through archival collections, talks, and exhibits.

Since December of 2017, Slocumb, along with a team of Wistariahurst volunteers and interns, has been researching and indexing existing content in our archives related to *Black Holyoke* thanks to a Research Inventory Grant from Mass Humanities. As we secure a better understanding of the material which already exists in our local repositories, we are now embarking upon a call to community members to add their own knowledge and material to that historical record. The new Pathfinder, which guides researchers through the collections in order to more easily access information, is now available on Wistariahurst’s website.

This project is being headed up by Erika Slocumb, a native of Springfield, MA. She is a mother, an artist, scholar, community organizer, world traveler and an advocate for social justice. Funding for the creation of the archival Pathfinder was provided by Mass Humanities, which receives support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and is an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.
2018 Specialty Tours:
In addition to old favorites like bike tours and cemetery tours, we have these new offerings on the schedule!

**Belle Skinner’s Wistariahurst:**
On this tour, we will explore Belle’s Wistariahurst and examine her life and times, her extensive philanthropy on both sides of the Atlantic. Come see Belle’s Wistariahurst come alive for you.

**Chauffeurs & Housekeepers: A Servant’s Perspective**
At its peak in the early 20th Century, 32 servants and support staff kept Wistariahurst running. On this imaginative tour, hear from some of the historical figures who took part in the behind-the-scenes workings of the Skinner Estate.

**Wistariahurst Garden Tour**
A little bit of history and a little bit of horticulture. Join us as we explore the three acres of grounds designed over decades by Sarah and Belle Skinner.

**Downtown Holyoke Bus Tour**
Hop on the bus and learn more about the landscape of Holyoke, from Victorians of Fairfield Ave to the oldest standing worker housing in the Flats.

**Darkened Hallways**
Join us for an evening tour of Wistariahurst, where you will hear haunting tales of the building’s past.

**Holyoke Veteran’s Tour**
This tour will shed light on the history of Holyoke’s community efforts to honor its veterans who served in various military branches. This tour has been created in conjunction with the Soldiers’ Memorial Commission and Veterans Services and explores the monuments and collections they preserve.

Full Schedule of Tours can be found at [www.Wistariahurst.org](http://www.Wistariahurst.org)

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**George E. Whitaker**
This historical research was written by Matthew Czepiel, Holyoke High School Volunteer.

These photographs show George E. Whitaker and his Civil War Uniform that resides in the Wistariahurst Textile Collection. George E. Whitaker was born in Holyoke, Massachusetts and is one of many from Holyoke who volunteered and served for the Union during the brutal Civil War. We were not able to uncover much about his personal life, but we discovered in Holyoke city directories that he worked as a reed manufacturer and lived on Race St in Holyoke.

During the Civil War he served in the 46th regiment of the Massachusetts infantry (Militia) which was organized in Springfield on September 25th to October 30th, 1862. The regiment moved to Boston and from there they left for Newberne, North Carolina and arrived there December 19th, 1862. Skirmishes occurred at Deep Gully for two days after which the unit then moved back up to Plymouth, Massachusetts arriving on March 26th 1863 and would stay there until May. They started an expedition towards Kinston, Gum Swamp, and Batchelor’s Creek all in the month of May. They would go on more expeditions and on July 12th to the 13th, they marched to Funkstown and join the 1st Army Corps. They then were in pursuit of General Robert E. Lee from the 14th to the 15th. They moved to Boston on July 15th to the 17th, to Springfield where they finally mustered out July 29th, 1863. The 46th regiment lost a total of 36 troops - one was killed by the confederates while the other 35 died by disease.

Whitaker survived and ranked out as a corporal.

This winter we had two students from Holyoke High volunteering at Wistariahurst. High School Volunteers choose an area of our work to explore and spend several weeks working with us side-by-side. Matthew worked alongside Penni Martorell, City Historian, in our archives.

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For a complete listing of Art, Music & History events visit [WISTARIAHURST.ORG](http://WISTARIAHURST.ORG)
Annual Plant Sale
Saturday, May 19, Gates open at 9 a.m.

Wistariahurst’s Annual Plant Sale is hosted by our Volunteer Gardeners, who spend spring, summer, and fall creating and maintaining the magical, historically inspired gardens at Wistariahurst.

All proceeds from the sale go straight back into the care and maintenance of the gardens. For the best selection, make sure to come early!

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

**Diana Alvarez & Pamela Means in Concert**
With opening Poet: Nicole Young
Saturday, June 16, 8 p.m.
Tickets $15
Singer, guitarist, poet, and video sound artist Diana Alvarez will join singer/songwriting, jazz musician, and educator Pamela Means in the historic Belle Skinner Music Room at Wistariahurst. The evening will open with a piece by playwright, poet and theater artist Nicole Young.

**The Great Gatsby**
Saturday, May 5, 1:30 p.m.

Hosted by OneHolyoke CDC and MIFA, The National Players Traveling Company will present a one-time show of *The Great Gatsby* in the historic Belle Skinner Music Room at Wistariahurst. The evening will present a unique opportunity for theater immersed in our Gatsby-era historic home.

The proceeds from the performance will fund a workshop and performance for Holyoke Public School Students.
More information at mifafestival.org

**Museo Casa Cautiño-Insúa:**
Romance, Arquitectura y Economía
Opening Reception Thursday, April 5, 6 – 8 p.m.

Walk through the doors of Wistariahurst and be transported into the central plaza of Guayama, Puerto Rico and the museum and historic site of Casa Cautiño as you journey through an immersive installation created by a collaborative team led by Curator Alvilda Sophia Anaya Alegria, artist, economist, and Professor at Cambridge College.

The exhibit is co-curated by Aníbal Ernesto Rodríguez Ayala, ICP Museum Educator, Penni Martorell, Wistariahurst, with translation support from Professor Alba Martinez and research assistance from Mabel Martinez. Photography by Sergio Gómez Velázquez, and brochure design by Angel David Santos. Special thanks to Commissioner Martínez Gómez who accepted being part of this team representing the Autonomous Municipality of Guayama.

On view at Wistariahurst April 5 – May 25, 2018, Sundays – Wednesdays, 12 – 4 p.m. Curator-led tours available Sundays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. Pre-scheduled Curator’s tours available for groups.

Please visit our website for additional programs and lectures.

The Institute of Puerto Rican Culture (ICP) is an institution of the Government of Puerto Rico responsible for the establishment of the cultural policies required in order to study, preserve, promote, enrich, and diffuse the cultural values of Puerto Rico. These include 18 Museums and a Ceremonial Taíno Indigenous Archeological Park.

April – October 2018
Gardens: Open Dawn till dusk each day
Visitor’s Center: Sundays, 12 – 4 p.m.
Monday – Friday, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Self-Guide of the Mansion: Sunday – Wednesday, 12 – 4 p.m.

See website for schedule of guided tours and for research archive hours

Register for programs, buy tickets & become a member online WISTARIAHURST.ORG
Holyoke League of Arts and Crafts Spring Show
Coming June 2018

Organized in 1923 to promote the arts in the community, the Holyoke League of Arts and Crafts holds monthly meetings to conduct artist demonstrations, critiques, and group art activities. Their annual spring exhibition at Wistariahurst features pieces from a variety of genres and media created by League members. The Wistariahurst exhibition will be on view Sunday—Wednesday, 12–4 p.m. in June.

An opening reception will be held on June 3rd, 2–4 p.m.

Become a Member to Support Local Art, History and Music!

For as little as $30 annually, start enjoying the benefits of museum membership and become part of a growing community of individuals who take interest in local history, art and music! Wistariahurst, as an established resource for local memory and creative expression, provides opportunities for local artists to exhibit their work and provides educational programs, exhibits, special events and a variety of lectures and events for people of all ages.

Your membership supports our dual mission of preserving the history of Holyoke and supporting an appreciation of history and culture through educational programs, exhibitions and special events.

For more information, visit www.wistariahurst.org.