

**CONSTITUTION DAY**  
SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>

**NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **CONSTITUTION DAY 2006 CELEBRATED AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER**

Philadelphia, PA (August 14, 2006) – September 17, 1787 is one of the most important days in the history of our nation, marking the historic signing of the U.S. Constitution, which established our government and has served as a model for other democratic nations. Keeping with its mission of encouraging active citizenship, the National Constitution Center leads the charge for national constitutional education and engagement year-round and during the days surrounding the anniversary of the signing.

This year's Constitution Day celebration will feature a variety of free programs and events that provide children and adults with a better understanding of the continued significance of the Constitution. These initiatives are under the auspices of the Constitution Center's Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, and are funded by a generous grant from the Annenberg Foundation.

The festivities will begin with a student presentation of *America Reads the Constitution* on Friday, September 15 at 1:00 p.m., when representatives from nearly all 50 states recite the Constitution from the Preamble to the final words of the 27<sup>th</sup> Amendment. These students, and others from their schools, will participate via Internet video conference. The general public is invited to watch live by following <http://commonsvcg.oar.net/MAGPI>. Click on "American Reads the Constitution" under the live conferences category. If you have difficulties connecting, please see the information in [MAGPI's Streaming Policy](#). The live webstream will not be available until

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## ADD ONE/CONSTITUTION DAY 2006

15 minutes prior to the event. This event is presented in cooperation with MAGPI from the University of Pennsylvania.

On Saturday, September 16 and Sunday, September 17 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., visitors can join in the Constitution's Birthday Bash! President George Washington, who was president of the Constitutional Convention, will make a special appearance to help cut the Constitution Cake. Visitors can also participate in the Preamble Scramble, the giant Constitution board game where they are the game pieces, and the *Citizenship Trivia show: Do you have what it takes to be an American?* Other activities include the chance to make feather pens and tri-corner hats. The National Constitution Center will also hold some of these festivities during the *National Constitution Day Celebration on the Mall* in Washington, D.C. on Sunday, September 17 at 11:45 a.m.

The Center's annual Constitution Day ritual, *America Reads the Constitution*, will also take place on Sunday, September 17 at 2:00 p.m. This public reading of the Constitution will feature area religious leaders celebrating religious freedom in our founding document and in our country today. Participants include Cardinal Justin Rigali, Archbishop of Philadelphia; Rev. Isaac Miller of the Church of the Advocate; Abby Stammelman Hocky, head of the Multifaith Center of Greater Philadelphia; Rabbi Richard Hirsh, head of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association; Peter Lillback, President of Westminster Theological Seminary; Sister Gloria Coleman, Interfaith Leader; and others.

The celebration will continue on Monday, September 18 with the opening of Constitution High School, a Philadelphia School District city-wide admissions high school created in partnership with the National Constitution Center and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP is also a leading collaborator and supporter. By engaging students with an appreciation for history and an understanding of the democratic principles embodied in the United States Constitution, this unparalleled college preparatory high school will develop the next generation of

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## ADD TWO/CONSTITUTION DAY 2006

engaged citizens and civic leaders in government, public policy, and law. At 10:00 a.m., the freshman class of 113 students will officially open the new school located at 18 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

The public is also invited to observe a naturalization ceremony at the National Constitution Center at 10:00 a.m., during which dozens of foreign-born people will take the Oath of Citizenship to officially become citizens of the United States.

Additionally, on September 18, the students of Constitution High School will become the first people in the nation to recite the new annual Oath of Citizenship. Written by the acclaimed presidential aide and writer Ted Sorenson, the oath was developed by leaders of the National Conference on Citizenship, who will be meeting on September 18 in Washington, D.C. The conference will hook up live with the students and also be available through videocasting to schools and communities nationwide. Visitors are welcome to witness this historic event at the National Constitution Center at 1:00 p.m. This event is presented in conjunction with WHYY.

Following the Oath of Citizenship, Ken Paulson, editor of the nation's largest newspaper, *USA Today*, will participate in a coordinated, nationwide recitation of the Preamble to the Constitution at 2:00 p.m. Paulson will also interact with students during a Q & A session following the reading.

The National Constitution Center is also pleased to present two *USA Today* special events. From 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., *USA Today* will bring *Freedom Sings*, a critically acclaimed multi-media experience that tells the story of almost three centuries of banned or censored music in America and invites audiences to take a fresh look at the First Amendment. Featuring an all-star cast of musicians and an "only-in-America" story line, the presentation is certain to enliven audiences. *USA Today* will also offer a number of events at the Center in partnership with area colleges, including voter registration, the introduction of a Constitution Blog, and a *USA Today*/Gallup poll from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

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## ADD THREE/CONSTITUTION DAY 2006

On the evening of September 18, the Center will present *We the People Stories*, a conversation with a diverse group of people who will discuss the role the Constitution plays in their professional and creative lives, and how it affects the everyday lives of all Americans. The participants will speak to different facets of the Constitution. *Black Hawk Down* author Mark Bowden will talk about freedom of the press. Judge, author and news analyst Andrew P. Napolitano will discuss the importance of an independent judiciary. Mary Ann Meloy, former Associate Director of the White House Office of Public Liaison will discuss the right to bear arms. Fatou N'Diaye, Chef-owner of Fatou & Fama restaurants will talk about the privileges of citizenship. Alex Crane, co-inventor of the omni-directional wheelchair will address promoting the general welfare. Bioethics professor Arthur Caplan will speak to the front-page issues surrounding science and civil rights. And Major Philip Romanelli, Bronze Star winner for his service in Operation Iraqi Freedom, will discuss our duty to protect and defend our country. Audience members will be invited to tell their stories and discuss the issues with the participants.

On a national level, the National Constitution Center serves as America's resource for constitutional education. In 2004, Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia passed legislation requiring that all schools and colleges receiving federal funds offer education programming involving the Constitution. The Center, in partnership with the Annenberg Foundation, American Bar Association, Court TV, C-SPAN, and others, is offering educational and programming materials to schools, federal agencies, and civic groups nationwide to help them organize events to commemorate Constitution Day. These materials are available at the Center's revamped Constitution Day website, [www.constitutionday.us](http://www.constitutionday.us).

### **About the Annenberg Foundation**

The Annenberg Foundation, established in 1989, is the successor corporation to the Annenberg School at Radnor, Pennsylvania founded in 1958 by Walter H. Annenberg. It exists to advance the public well-being through improved communication. As the principal means of achieving this goal, the Foundation encourages the development of more effective ways to share ideas and knowledge. The Foundation's primary grant-

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making interests are in education, culture, the arts, and community and civic life. It provides funding for programs likely to produce beneficent change on a large scale. For more information, visit [www.annenbergfoundation.org](http://www.annenbergfoundation.org)

### **About the National Constitution Center**

The National Constitution Center, located at 525 Arch St. on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the ideas and values it represents. Opened on July 4, 2003, the Constitution Center is a museum, an education center, and a forum for debate on constitutional issues. The museum dramatically tells the story of the Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education and debates, and is a partner of NPR's "Justice Talking," a program of the Annenberg Public Policy Center. Also, serving as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional discourse, the Center presents – without endorsement – programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

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*EDITOR'S NOTE: A complete Constitution Day 2006 calendar follows.*

**NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER**  
**CONSTITUTION DAY 2006**  
**Calendar of Events**

The National Constitution Center, America's only museum and education center dedicated to explaining the U.S. Constitution and its relevance in our everyday lives, is presenting a wide array of programs and events in celebration of **Constitution Day 2006**. All events are located at the National Constitution Center unless otherwise noted. These initiatives are under the auspices of the Constitution Center's Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, and are funded by a generous grant from the Annenberg Foundation.

**Updated Website:** [www.constitutionday.us](http://www.constitutionday.us)

Our enhanced website for Constitution Day, created in partnership with several organizations, includes tools and resources to help schools, federal agencies, and civic groups organize events to commemorate Constitution Day, September 17.

**Friday, September 15:**

**Event: *Student Presentation of America Reads the Constitution***

**Friday, September 15, 1:00 p.m.**

**Event Admission: FREE**

Representatives from nearly all 50 states will recite the Constitution from the Preamble to the final words of the 27<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Schools from each of the states will connect via Internet video conference. This event utilizes Internet2, a national non-profit advanced network for research and education. The general public is invited to watch live by following <http://commonsvcg.oar.net/MAGPI>. Click on "American Reads the Constitution" under the live conferences category. If you have difficulties connecting, please see the information in [MAGPI's Streaming Policy](#). The live webstream will not be available until 15 minutes prior to the event. This event is presented in cooperation with MAGPI from the University of Pennsylvania. Additional support for the event has been provided by The Ohio State University and the Internet2 Commons.

**Saturday, September 16:**

**Event: *Constitution's Birthday Bash!***

**Saturday, September 16, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

**Event Admission: All lobby programs are FREE; programs in the main exhibit space are FREE WITH MUSEUM ADMISSION**

Come join in a Birthday Celebration for the 219<sup>th</sup> birthday of the U.S. Constitution! A special appearance will be made by George Washington, who will help cut the Constitution Cake. Visitors can also participate in the Preamble Scramble, the giant Constitution board game where they are the game pieces, and the *Citizenship Trivia show: Do you have what it takes to be an American?* Other activities include the chance to make feather pens and tri-corner hats. Bring the whole family and celebrate the birth of our government!

**Sunday, September 17:**

**Event: *Constitution's Birthday Bash!***

**Saturday, September 16, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

**Event Admission: All lobby programs are FREE; programs in the main exhibit space are FREE WITH MUSEUM ADMISSION**

Come join in a Birthday Celebration for the 219<sup>th</sup> birthday of the U.S. Constitution! A special appearance will be made by George Washington, who will help cut the Constitution Cake. Visitors can also participate in the Preamble Scramble, the giant Constitution board game, where they are the game pieces, and the *Citizenship Trivia show: Do you have what it takes to be an American?* Other activities include the chance to make feather pens and tri-corner hats. Bring the whole family and celebrate the birth of our government!

**Event: *National Constitution Day Celebration on the Mall***

**Sunday, September 17, 11:45 a.m.**

**Location: Washington, D.C.**

**Event Admission: FREE**

To help honor and commemorate the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, The National Education Project, Inc. is hosting a *National Constitution Day Celebration on the Mall*, which will take place on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. on Constitution Day, Sunday, September 17, 2006. The National Constitution Center will have a tent on the National Mall where it will feature both a stage performance as well as numerous children's activities.

**Event: *America Reads the Constitution***

**Sunday, September 17, 2:00 p.m.**

**Event Admission: FREE**

This presentation of *America Reads the Constitution* will be a public reading of the Constitution by area religious leaders, celebrating religious freedom in our founding document and in our country today. Participants include Cardinal Justin Rigali, Archbishop of Philadelphia; Rev. Isaac Miller of the Church of the Advocate; Abby Stammelman Hocky, head of the Multifaith Center of Greater Philadelphia; Rabbi Richard Hirsh, head of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association; Peter Lillback, President of Westminster Theological Seminary; Sister Gloria Coleman, Interfaith Leader; and others.

**Monday, September 18:**

**Event: *Constitution High School Ribbon Cutting Ceremony***

**Monday, September 18, 10:00 a.m.**

**Location: Constitution High School, 18 S. 7th Street, Philadelphia**

**Event Admission: FREE**

Constitution High School will officially open on September 18, 2006 with an enrollment of 113 ninth graders. Constitution High School is a unique collaboration among the School District of Philadelphia, the National Constitution Center, and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. By engaging students with an appreciation for history and an understanding of the democratic principles embodied in the United States Constitution, this college preparatory high school will develop the next generation of engaged citizens and civic leaders in government, public policy, and law. This ribbon cutting is sponsored by Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP, a lead supporter of the school.

**Event: *Naturalization Ceremony***

**Monday, September 18, 10:00 a.m.**

**Event Admission: FREE**

The public is invited to observe a naturalization ceremony, during which dozens of foreign-born people will take the Oath of Citizenship to officially become citizens of the United States. The event will be held in the Kirby Auditorium.

**Event: *Citizenship Oath Ceremony***

**Monday, September 18, 1:00 p.m.**

**Event Admission: FREE**

Visitors to the Center can participate in the debut of this new annual Oath of Citizenship. Written by the acclaimed presidential aide and writer Ted Sorenson, the oath was developed by leaders of the National Conference on Citizenship, who will be meeting on September 18 in Washington, D.C. The conference will hook up live with students from Constitution High School, who will be the first in the nation to recite the oath. The event will also be available through videocasting to schools and communities nationwide. Tune in or join us on the Overlook to witness this historic event. This event is presented in partnership with WHY?.

**Event: *Reading of the Preamble***

**Monday, September 18, 2:00 p.m.**

**Event Admission: FREE**

The Preamble to the Constitution will be read by Ken Paulson, editor of the nation's largest newspaper, *USA Today*. The reading will take place in a coordinated, nationwide recitation on Monday, September 18 at 2:00 p.m. After the reading, Paulson will discuss the role of a free press in a free society, followed by a Q&A session. The event will be held on the Overlook.

**Event: *USA Today Collegiate Constitution Day***

**Monday, September 18, 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

**Event Admission: FREE**

*USA Today* will also be offering a number of events in partnership with area colleges, including voter registration, the introduction of a Constitution Blog, and a *USA Today*/Gallup poll. All events will be held in the National Constitution Center Grand Hall Lobby.

**Event: *Freedom Sings***

**Monday, September 18, 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**Event Admission: FREE**

*USA Today* will bring *Freedom Sings*, a critically acclaimed multi-media experience featuring an all-star cast of musicians and an “only-in-America” story line to the National Constitution Center. The presentation tells the story of almost three centuries of banned or censored music in America and invites audiences to take a fresh look at the First Amendment.

**Event: *We the People Stories***

**Monday, September 18, 6:00 pm**

**Event Admission: FREE, Advance Reservation Required, 215.409.6700**

The National Constitution Center will hold a unique conversation with a diverse group of people who, with brief, engaging stories, will demonstrate the everyday relevance of the Constitution, including how it has affected them, how they use it in their livelihood, and how it protects them. Panelists include Mark Bowden (author of *Black Hawk Down*), Judge Andrew P. Napolitano (Fox News Senior Judicial Analyst), Mary Ann Meloy (Former Associate Director of the White House Office of Public Liaison), Fatou N'Diaye, (Chef-owner of Fatou & Fama restaurants), Alex Crane (rising freshman at Drexel University and co-inventor of the omni-directional wheelchair), Arthur Caplan (Chair of the Department of Medical Ethics at the University of Pennsylvania), and Major Philip Romanelli (Bronze Star winner for his service in Operation Iraqi Freedom). The group will engage in this conversation with area teachers and students, as well as the general public.