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NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER



THE STORY OF WE, THE PEOPLE.

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**NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER PRESENTS  
EDUCATION MATERIALS  
IN CONJUNCTION WITH *AMERICA I AM* EXHIBIT**

Philadelphia, PA – Presented in conjunction with the ***America I AM: The African American Imprint*** exhibition, the National Constitution Center's Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach is providing a variety of educational materials that are available from the Center's website at [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

Supporting the exhibition, the Center's Winter edition of *The Exchange: A Marketplace of Student Ideas* will ask the question: *Is the Constitution Colorblind?* Schools from across the country will connect via internet video conferencing on January 14, 2009 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to deliberate that question. The concept of a colorblind Constitution was first put forth by Justice John Marshall Harlan to dismantle legal discrimination against African Americans in his opinion of the landmark 1896 case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*. This same concept has come to the forefront of the debate over affirmative action, with some arguing that if the Constitution is indeed colorblind, then the government should not show preferential treatment to one race over another. All schools can become part of *The Exchange's* ongoing, online community at [www.constitutioncenter.org/exchange](http://www.constitutioncenter.org/exchange), where students can participate in ongoing forums and chats, view Constitution-related news, and learn about upcoming programs.

**America I AM** education materials include:

**Constitution Center Lesson Plans**

The Center's library of lesson plans include several that will work particularly well when used in conjunction with a visit to the **America I Am** exhibition. Topics include President-elect Barack Obama's Race Speech at the Constitution Center, the

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## ADD ONE/EDUCATION MATERIALS

Emancipation Proclamation, *Is the Constitution Colorblind?* (supporting material for *The Exchange*), and *The Future of Race*. The lesson plans are self-contained educational units for grades K-12, and can be downloaded at no charge from the Center's website at [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

### **Direct Links to the Center's Interactive Constitution**

Teachers and students will be able to see the direct connection between the African American imprint on our country's constitutional history via hyperlinks to the Center's Interactive Constitution.

### **America I AM Classroom Materials**

Teachers can download the following for use in their classrooms: an Emancipation Proclamation mini-poster, a 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment mini-poster, and a version of one of the Constitution Center's signature Town Hall Walls related to *The Exchange: Is the Constitution Colorblind?*

### **America I AM Podcasts**

These programs previously held at the Center are available for download for use in the classroom:

#### **Eyes on the Prize**

From 1954 to 1965, America experienced one of the most tumultuous and momentous periods in its history. Senior NPR reporter and commentator Juan Williams joins the Center to reflect on the civil rights era, which continues to have resonance in a country where debates about social and political equality endure.

#### **What I Know for Sure**

The National Constitution Center and *The Philadelphia Tribune* present media personality, author, and *America I AM* presenter Tavis Smiley for a Citizens' Constitutional Conversation to discuss his memoir, *What I Know For Sure: My Story of Growing Up in America*.

#### **Dred Scott, 150 Years Later**

Writing the majority opinion for The Supreme Court in the infamous Dred Scott v. Sanford case of 1856-1857, Chief Justice Roger Taney asserted that African Americans were not and never could be citizens of the United States. To mark the 150th Anniversary of the Dred Scott v. Sanford decision, and to discuss the essential historical context and its enduring legacy, the National Constitution Center presents three leading scholars and experts to share insight on the case that would ultimately lead the United States into civil war.

#### **Slavery and the Literary Imagination**

Fiction and non-fiction writers have different constraints on what stories they tell, but the story-telling techniques they sometimes share are powerful tools for stimulating the historical imagination. "Slavery and the Literary Imagination" features Lorene Cary, educator, social activist, and author of *The Price of a Child*; Lawrence Hill, critically-acclaimed author of *Someone Knows My Name*;

## ADD TWO/EDUCATION MATERIALS

and Beverly Lowry, director of the Creative Nonfiction Program at George Mason University and author of *Harriet Tubman: Imagining a Life*.

### **Delta Blues**

As part of its year-long series commemorating the end to the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the National Constitution Center presents musician and historian Ted Gioia in a program featuring recordings from the Mississippi Delta and a discussion of how the Blues helped give shape to contemporary music and culture. Leading the discussion is Jonny Meister, host of "The Blues Show," an award winning radio program on WXPN.

### **Educator Events**

Educators are invited to attend the following events, where they will receive teaching materials and information about the **America I AM** exhibition:

#### **Educators Open House**

On February 3, 2009, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., the Center is hosting a free night for educators. The evening will include access to **America I AM** and the Center's permanent exhibition, *The Story of We the People*. The Center's Education and Exhibits staff will also present classroom materials to support the teaching of the **America I AM** exhibition.

#### **Workshop for the School District of Philadelphia**

On February 5, 2009, the National Constitution Center's Education and Exhibits staff will present a full day workshop for high school and middle school teachers in the School District of Philadelphia. The workshop will be held during the District's professional development day, and will include guest speakers and demonstrations of model lessons to support the **America I AM** exhibition.

From January 15 through May 3, 2009, the National Constitution Center will host the world debut of **America I AM: *The African American Imprint***, celebrating nearly 500 years of African American contributions to this country. The exhibition will present a historical continuum of pivotal moments in courage, conviction, and creativity that solidifies the undeniable imprint of African Americans across the nation and around the world.

Featuring more than 200 artifacts culled from every period of U.S. history, the exhibit will include objects, texts, religion, music, narration, and media. An interactive component of the exhibition will allow visitors to leave their own video "imprints," and this collection will grow throughout the life of the exhibition with the potential to become the largest recorded oral history project in U.S. history.

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## ADD THREE/EDUCATION MATERIALS

Admission to **America I AM** is \$17.50 for adults, \$15.50 for seniors ages 65 and up, and \$9 for children ages 4-12. Group rates are also available. Admission to the Center's main exhibition, *The Story of We the People*, including the award-winning theater production "Freedom Rising", is included. Active military personnel and children ages 3 and under are free. There is no upcharge for school groups to tour **America I AM**. iPod audio tours are also available and cost \$2 for members and \$3 for non-members. For ticket information, call 215.409.6700 or visit [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

The exhibition is developed in partnership with Tavis Smiley, and organized by Cincinnati Museum Center and Arts and Exhibitions International (AEI). **America I AM** is made possible by Walmart Stores, Inc., which serves as its presenting sponsor. The exhibition is sponsored by Northern Trust and is presented locally by Coca-Cola. CBS 3 is the official media partner for the Center's showing of **America I AM**.

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. The Center serves as 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. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

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