

# NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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## **NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER ANNOUNCES \$6.4 MILLION DOLLAR GRANT FROM THE ANNENBERG FOUNDATION**

*Grant To Support Seven National and Regional Civic Education and Engagement Programs,  
including a Peter Jennings Institute for Journalists and a Constitutional Convention*

Philadelphia, PA (February 22, 2006) – The National Constitution Center is receiving a landmark five-year, \$6.4 million grant from the Annenberg Foundation to support seven programs under the Constitution Center’s Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, further positioning the Center as a national leader in constitutional education and programming, and civic engagement. This groundbreaking grant and the four new and three existing programs being supported by it were announced in a news conference at the Constitution Center this morning.

“The Annenberg Foundation was a major contributor to the National Constitution Center’s capital campaign, and we are thrilled that they have chosen to support the Center’s continued growth as a national engine for civics with this extraordinary grant,” said President and CEO Richard Stengel. “Mrs. Annenberg and the Foundation are great believers in the importance of national civic education, and it is through their generosity that we will be able to create these seven civic and public initiatives that will that will help us truly live up to the ‘National’ in our name.”

Gail Levin, Executive Director of the Annenberg Foundation, said at the announcement, "With this grant to fund seven important programming initiatives of the National Constitution Center, the Annenberg Foundation is tapping into the very core of Walter and Leonore Annenberg's philanthropic work; this gift is yet another way for them to answer the call of citizenship, to build civic engagement and prepare the next generation of civic leaders, and to extend their generosity to as many people as possible."

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## National Constitution Center Announces Grant from Annenberg Foundation/Add One

The four new programs announced include the following:

- **Peter Jennings Institute for Journalists and the Constitution;**
- A **Great Debates** series;
- An annual **Constitutional Convention**; and
- **National Teacher Institutes.**

Existing programs which will also benefit significantly from the grant include the following:

- **Constitution Day;**
- **The Pennsylvania Coalition for Representative Democracy (PennCORD);** and
- Curriculum development for the new **National Constitution Center Partnership High School.**

Named in honor of the late, award-winning news anchor and friend of the National Constitution Center, the **Peter Jennings Institute for Journalists and the Constitution** will be an annual two-day conference for professional and student journalists. Featuring leading national journalists and legal scholars, the Institute will hold seminars, workshops and case studies exploring a range of constitutional issues and concerns.

Jennings' wife, Kayce Freed Jennings, who attended the announcement, spoke eloquently about her late husband's admiration for the Constitution. "Peter always had a love and respect for America. But in the last years of his life, he developed an even greater affection for his adopted home, one that grew in part through his increasing admiration for the Constitution and a fascination with the men who created it. The copy of the Constitution he carried in his back pocket was dog-eared and frayed from his reading and re-reading it. He was, after all, a Canadian who chose to become an American. So Peter's children, Elizabeth and Chris, and I are grateful to the Annenberg Foundation, and tremendously excited at the prospect of collaborating with the National Constitution Center to develop a program in Peter's name, one that would reflect his values, character and passion, and one that would make him proud."

The Annenberg grant will also support the planning, creation and presentation of three annual **Great Debates** on current constitutional issues, held at the National Constitution Center. These will be classic-style debates for high school and college age people with well-respected leaders

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## National Constitution Center Announces Grant from Annenberg Foundation/Add Two

in America on such topics as “Faith and the Constitution”, “Privacy Rights and the Constitution”, and “Civil Liberties in Wartime”. Curriculum and lesson plans will be created on each topic for educators’ use throughout the school year.

Another new initiative is an annual, two-day **Constitutional Convention** at the National Constitution Center during Constitution Week – the week surrounding the anniversary of the signing of the document on September 17, 1787. This will be a meeting of national leaders and youth delegations from all 50 states to discuss and debate the greatest constitutional issues of the day. Participants will also develop a national “Report Card on the Constitution” to evaluate the health of constitutional practices in the country. Sessions will be recorded, and related curricular materials will be developed and distributed to educators nationwide.

The Constitution Center will present two annual **National Teacher Institutes**, each for 40 elementary-through-high school teachers. These free, week-long institutes will feature outstanding university faculty who will be leading seminars about how to teach the Constitution and the civic values that the Constitution promotes. The Constitution Center will offer a pilot of the National Teacher Institute in summer 2006 supported by a Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshops for Teachers grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The National Constitution Center will use a portion of the grant to create new initiatives and enhance existing **Constitution Day** programs, including the development and distribution of free teaching materials, and the continued enrichment of its successful Constitution Day web portal for schools, government-funded colleges and federal agencies. This grant would also support such signature Constitution Center programs as “America Reads the Constitution” and “I Signed the Constitution” activities at schools, federal agencies, military bases, libraries, community centers and other places across the country.

The Annenberg grant will also support the operations and growth of **The Pennsylvania Coalition for Representative Democracy (PennCORD)**. PennCORD is a coalition of state and national organizations committed to implementing civic education in classroom and extracurricular environments in every Pennsylvania community. Lead partners in the coalition include the Office of the Governor of Pennsylvania, under the leadership of First Lady Marjorie

## National Constitution Center Announces Grant from Annenberg Foundation/Add Three

Rendell, the National Constitution Center, the Pennsylvania Bar Association, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Its mission is a three-stage initiative to return the teaching of the Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship to Pennsylvania's classrooms. To achieve this, PennCORD is currently teaching youth, parents and teachers how to advocate for change at the district level, and will compile the best practices in civic learning in a downloadable format on a new PennCORD web site, and train teachers how to integrate civic learning across the curriculum.

In September of 2006, the National Constitution Center and the School District of Philadelphia will open a new magnet high school whose focus will be on law, democracy, and civic engagement. With this Annenberg Grant, the Center will be able to bring together the best and brightest minds from the fields of history, civic education, law and education to create a curriculum for the new **National Constitution Center Partnership High School**. The school, which will be located at Seventh and Market Streets, is a partnership with the School District of Philadelphia and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of New York, a national leader in history and civic education.

### **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 215.409.6600 or visit [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

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National Constitution Center Announces Grant from Annenberg Foundation/Add Four

**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-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)

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