

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER PRESENTS SPECIAL ACTIVITIES AND EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Philadelphia, PA (January 10, 2007) – In honor of Black History Month, visitors to the National Constitution Center in February can learn about the influence of African Americans' role in our nation's history through the Center's interactive permanent exhibition and special events throughout the month.

Every day in February, visitors can participate in the Center's *Famous Firsts Show* in the Domestic Tranquility section of the permanent exhibit. Guests will take an inside look at Thurgood Marshall, Bessie Coleman, Jackie Robinson, and other extraordinary African Americans throughout history. Visitors will see what issues they faced and the rights they gained for all African Americans, and even have the chance to experience some "famous firsts" for themselves. The *Famous Firsts Show* is free with regular museum admission. Times may vary, so visitors should check the Center's daily programs sheet for the schedule.

On Saturday, February 24 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., the Center will also have games, crafts, and activities available in the Grand Hall Lobby for a "Celebrate Black History Month" event. A special story time will be held for children of all ages at 1:00 p.m.

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ADD ONE/BLACK HISTORY MONTH

In addition, visitors will have the opportunity to stop by the Delegates' Restaurant, which will feature "Soul Food February" every Friday throughout the month and on Saturday, February 24 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The Center has also highlighted special artifacts and sections throughout its permanent exhibit to draw the attention of visitors to events and time periods related to African Americans in history and their struggle to become recognized as an integral part of "We the People."

Visitors can learn about African Americans' impact on the Constitution in the "American National Tree", which highlights 100 people who have helped shape the Constitution over the last 200 years. The Tree includes information about influential African Americans such as Rosa Parks, Muhammad Ali, Jackie Robinson, Barbara Jordan, Booker T. Washington, and Harriet Tubman. The stories of these great individuals echo and illustrate diversity and opportunity in America.

Visitors can also examine the exhibit panels on the Dred Scott Decision, the Emancipation Proclamation, voting rights, and the 1960s Civil Rights movement, which includes pertinent details about the *Brown v. Board of Education* case, the March on Washington, and the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The permanent exhibition also explores Reconstruction and the subsequent amendments to the Constitution: the 13th, abolishing slavery; the 14th, providing equal protection of the law; and the 15th, guaranteeing all citizens the right to vote.

Special artifacts on display recognizing these achievements include slave shackles and a key from the 1820s; a second proof copy of the Emancipation Proclamation; a button from the March on Washington; John Lewis' pen used to sign the Voting Rights Act; a Freedom to the Slaves broadside from January 5, 1863; a poll tax receipt from Travis County, Texas; and an NAACP Voters Guide and Poster from 1965.

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ADD TWO/BLACK HISTORY MONTH

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. 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.

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