

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CELEBRATE CONSTITUTION DAY SEPTEMBER 17 AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

Free admission to the museum, courtesy of Beneficial Bank

Highlights include Channel One education program and Twitter Convention conclusion

Philadelphia, PA (September 2, 2010) – The signing of the U.S. Constitution on September 17, 1787 is one of the most important and influential events in American history, establishing the many rights and freedoms "We the People" enjoy today. On Constitution Day, Friday, September 17, 2010, the National Constitution Center – located only steps away from Independence Hall, where the signing took place – will celebrate the 223rd anniversary of this remarkable day in history with a wide array of inspiring and educational activities. Admission to the Center is FREE on Constitution Day, courtesy of Beneficial Bank.

Highlights of the Center's Constitution Day celebration include a special broadcast of the Center's distance learning program, *Constitution Hall Pass*, with an introduction by Sandra Day O' Connor, to more than six million students across the country through Channel One News, as well as the dramatic conclusion of the Center's Twitter Convention, as the identity of the mystery tweeter from the Constitutional Convention is finally revealed.

"We encourage active citizenship year-round at the National Constitution Center, but Constitution Day provides an ideal opportunity to instill a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the Constitution," said National Constitution Center President and CEO David Eisner. "The Constitution is just as relevant today as it was when our Founding Fathers first crafted it 223 years ago."

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ADD ONE/CONSTITUTION DAY 2010

“As the oldest and largest bank headquartered in Philadelphia, we are proud to partner with the National Constitution Center to provide free admission to the Center to every American that wants to come together to celebrate this significant day in our nation’s history,” said Gerard P. Cuddy, President and CEO of Beneficial Bank. “As an education company, Beneficial Bank shares the National Constitution Center’s mission of educating citizens about our nation’s history and how our Founding Fathers’ ideals continue to shape who we are as a country today. I encourage all residents to visit the National Constitution Center, free of charge, on September 17 and partake in the wide-range of educational events planned for Constitution Day.”

The festivities will begin at 8:30 a.m. with **223: The Preamble Challenge** on the Center’s Rooftop Terrace, which offers a spectacular view of the Preamble of the Constitution etched on the façade of the building. Two hundred and twenty three students from Constitution High School will gather to recite from memory the Preamble, in honor of the 223rd anniversary of the signing of this historic document.

At 10:00 a.m., **Susette Kelo**, known for her courageous role as the plaintiff in the Supreme Court Case against eminent domain abuse, *Kelo vs. New London* (2005), will join the Center to have her name added to the **American National Tree**, a popular exhibit inside *The Story of We the People* that tells the stories of more than 100 Americans whose actions have helped write the story of the Constitution. Although Kelo lost her case against the city of New London, Conn., she sparked a national movement against the use of eminent domain for economic redevelopment, leading eight state supreme courts and 43 state legislatures to strengthen private property laws. The Center, in partnership with Scholastic Inc., the global children’s publishing, education, and media company, and the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers, the nonprofit that administers the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, selected high school student Nick Liu of North Carolina as the winner of the 2010 M.R. Robinson National Constitution Center American National Tree Award. Liu will author the biography of Kelo that will be featured in the exhibit. Following the ceremony, visitors are invited to the Grand Hall Overlook at 10:30 a.m. for a special reading by Liu of his winning essay on Kelo, as well as a question and answer session with Susette Kelo and Scott Bullock, Senior Attorney at the Institute for Justice in Washington, D.C., who represented Kelo’s Supreme Court case.

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ADD TWO/CONSTITUTION DAY 2010

During a **Preamble Printing** workshop, guests can visit the Center's old-fashioned print shop, complete with a replica printing press from the 1700s, to create a copy of the Preamble in the same way Claypool and Dunlap did when they printed the Constitution. Visitors can also join in **Calligraphy Demonstrations**, and learn about the Copperplate printing technique used to sign the Constitution. These activities will be available in the Grand Hall Lobby between 10:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

In addition, between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., visitors can join in a **Constitution Celebration!** Guests will learn about the three branches of government during the "Balance of Powers Demonstration" and the "Separation of Powers Show." They can also participate in a special "Decoding the Document Workshop" to discover more about the Pennsylvania Packet printing of the Constitution, which is on display in the Center's core exhibition, *The Story of We the People*. In addition, visitors can compete in a race to reassemble the words of the Preamble during the "Preamble Scramble." The Center will also offer special tours of *Signers' Hall* that highlight the leadership styles of the Founding Fathers.

At 11:00 a.m., a public **Naturalization Ceremony** will take place in the Center's F.M. Kirby Auditorium, during which immigrants from across the globe will take the Oath of Citizenship to officially become citizens of the United States. Opening remarks will be made by naturalized citizen Louis Thompson, Esquire, Assistant Dean for Graduate & International Programs at Temple University Beasley School of Law. The Honorable Mary A. McLaughlin, federal judge on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, will preside. This moving ceremony is a meaningful welcome to our newest citizens, providing an opportunity to honor the talents, skills, and cultural heritages they bring to our nation.

Since May 25 – the day the Constitutional Convention began in Philadelphia – the Center has been reenacting the events of the Convention on Twitter (at www.twitter.com/SecretDelegate) through the perspective of a secret delegate intent on giving the public a glimpse into the private proceedings. Visitors will have the opportunity to join Benjamin Franklin in *Signers' Hall* at noon, as the **Twitter Convention** concludes with the reveal of the secret delegate. National Constitution Center President and CEO David Eisner and Beneficial Bank President Gerry Cuddy will participate in the announcement.

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ADD THREE/CONSTITUTION DAY 2010

Following the reveal in *Signers' Hall*, visitors are invited to a **Constitution Birthday Party** at 12:15 p.m. on the Grand Hall Overlook, complete with cake! To commemorate the Constitution's 223rd year, local teenage blind jazz singer Rocco Fiorentino will lead guests in singing "Happy Birthday" and "The Star-Spangled Banner." An award-winning humanitarian, Fiorentino has made a tremendous impact on the lives of other children who are blind and visually impaired, enacting his constitutional rights by impacting legislators and affecting the vote to increase Braille services in the State of New Jersey.

At 12:45 p.m., the winners of the "We the People 9*17" contest, hosted by **Constituting America**, a non-profit organization dedicated to education about the U.S. Constitution, will be honored in a ceremony in the F.M. Kirby Auditorium. Actress Janine Turner and Cathy Gillespie, co-chairs of Constituting America, will award scholarships and prizes to twelve students from across the country who submitted essays, short films, public service announcements, and original songs on the U.S. Constitution. Throughout the day, the Center will feature the winning entries in the Grand Hall Lobby and the Grand Hall Overlook.

Students who cannot visit the Center on Constitution Day can still participate in the celebration with the Center's distance learning program, **Constitution Hall Pass**. Classrooms around the country can join the Center via webcast on www.constitutioncenter.org/constitutionday throughout the day for a special demonstration in *Signers' Hall*. During *Constitution Hall Pass*, Sandra Day O'Connor will introduce the session with a message to student viewers about the creation of the Constitution and its relevance today. Then, the Center's education staff will bring the Constitution to life for students by detailing the stories of the Founding Fathers and explaining the controversies and compromises that resulted in our nation's founding document. Beginning at 9:00 a.m. EST, a member of the Center's staff will be available live online throughout the day to provide additional content and answer students' questions. On Constitution Day, Channel One News will provide a 15-minute version of the virtual tour, featuring the introduction by Sandra Day O'Connor, for classroom use via Channel One Connection, a commercial-free educational programming resource available to member schools, and will also feature a segment on the Constitution during its daily broadcast. Additionally, information about *Constitution Hall Pass*, along with supplementary educational resources focused on Constitution Day, will be available on Channel One's award-winning website at www.ChannelOne.com.

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ADD FOUR/CONSTITUTION DAY 2010

The Center continues to serve as the nation's central resource for education on the Constitution through its Constitution Day website at www.constitutioncenter.org/constitutionday. This interactive site provides a variety of resources to help educators, students, community leaders, and government officials fulfill the national mandate sponsored by the late Senator Robert Byrd, requiring all schools receiving federal funding and all federal agencies to provide constitutional education on or around September 17. The website includes educational resources and lesson plans, online versions of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' naturalization test, video clips of Constitution Day events at the Center, and the "Which Founder Are You?" quiz, which allows users to compare his or her personality traits with the men who wrote the Constitution.

Additionally, educators can purchase the Center's "To Sign or Not to Sign" Constitution Day lesson plan, which teaches students about the revolutionary document that established our nation's government. With activities designed at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, the lesson invites students to role-play as delegates to the Constitutional Convention and analyze arguments for and against ratification. The lesson plan is part of the Center's Constitution Day Kit, which also includes a 31-inch by 55-inch laminated copy of the Constitution's original articles and its 27 Amendments, a "Creating the Constitution" DVD, and a special marker for signing the Constitution. The kit costs \$30 in the museum store and \$35 at www.constitutioncenter.org/constitutionday.

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. Also, 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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Please see attached agenda for a complete schedule of events for Friday, September 17.

CONSTITUTION DAY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2010

8:30 a.m.	223: The Preamble Challenge	Rooftop Terrace (Rain location - Grand Hall Overlook)
10:00 a.m.	American National Tree Induction Ceremony	<i>The Story of We the People</i> core exhibition
10:30 a.m.	American National Tree Question and Answer Session	Grand Hall Overlook
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Preamble Printing and Calligraphy Demonstrations	Grand Hall Lobby
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Constitution Celebration	Grand Hall Lobby
11:00 a.m.	Naturalization Ceremony	F.M. Kirby Auditorium
12:00 p.m.	Twitter Convention Conclusion	<i>Signers' Hall</i>
12:15 p.m.	Constitution Birthday Party	Grand Hall Overlook
12:45 p.m.	Constituting America's "We the People 9*17 Contest" Award Ceremony	F.M. Kirby Auditorium
All Day	Virtual Field Trip: <i>Constitution Hall Pass</i>	Available Online