

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONSTITUTION HIGH SCHOOL TO OPEN IN SEPTEMBER IN PHILADELPHIA'S HISTORIC DISTRICT

Philadelphia, PA (July 20, 2006) – Continuing their efforts to promote civic education and active citizenship, the National Constitution Center, in partnership with the School District of Philadelphia, and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, with additional support from Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP, will open Constitution High School on Thursday, September 7, 2006. The school is located at 7th and Market Streets in the former Balch Institute of Ethnic Studies, in the heart of Philadelphia's historic district and within walking distance to the National Constitution Center. It is the only Philadelphia School District high school with a Civics Education and American Studies theme.

"Taking advantage of leading institutions like the National Constitution Center, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and the law firm of Ballard, Spahr, Andrews & Ingersoll, we have built a unique learning institution focused on American history, law, and government," said Paul Vallas, CEO of the School District of Philadelphia. "Located a few blocks from Independence Hall and the National Constitution Center, students will have access to an unparalleled set of resources that will allow us to create a living campus within one of the nation's most historical sites."

"We are thrilled to be a part of this partnership to open the trailblazing Constitution High School," said National Constitution Center President and CEO Joseph M. Torsella. "Our goal as a museum has always been to encourage active citizenship and to inspire young

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minds with a deeper appreciation of the Constitution and its history. I can think of no better way to further this mission than through the innovation and breadth of opportunities provided by Constitution High School. We look forward to seeing the students grow as they learn more about our fundamental commitments as Americans.”

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 engaged citizens and civic leaders in government, public policy, and law. The freshman class of 113 students reflects the diverse demographics of the school district. These students will develop a practical understanding of the ideals of citizenship embodied in our nation’s founding documents to instill appreciation and respect for values such as liberty, equality, and justice.

The unique modes of student learning at Constitution High School include interdisciplinary studies, the use of primary historical documents, research writing, active civic engagement, problem solving (as it relates to societal issues), public presentations, and an exceptional role in school governance.

Unique features for students include:

- School location in close proximity to Independence Mall
- Summer freshman orientation, located at the National Constitution Center
- History scholars’ instructional visits to school
- Yearly community service requirement
- Mentor relationships with Constitution Center staff
- Creation of historical artifacts exhibits at school
- Small class sizes
- Enrollment in two social science classes each year
- Major historical field trips each year, including the opportunity to travel abroad
- 90 minute classes
- Advanced Placement classes and college courses (for college credit)
- Utilization of the resources of the National Constitution Center, as well as other Philadelphia institutions, promoting student learning and engagement
- Heavy emphasis upon the performing arts leading to possible internships and employment at the National Constitution Center
- Interdisciplinary Senior Research Project fulfilling social science and English credit requirements

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ADD TWO/CONSTITUTION HIGH SCHOOL

As a leading collaborator, Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP will provide opportunities to mentor the students and offer job shadowing and internships. They will also coach moot court teams, offer legal expertise, and develop opportunities for students interested in pursuing a legal career.

Constitution High School will be led by Principal Dr. Thomas Davidson. Dr. Davidson has a wealth of experience working in schools, having served as both Principal and Educator throughout the region. Dr. Davidson served as superintendent of South Hunterdon Regional High School in Lambertville, NJ for more than ten years. Before joining Constitution High School, Davidson was Principal of the Stoddart Fleisher Middle School in Philadelphia. He previously worked as the Principal of Lawrence Middle School, Assistant Principal of Washington Township Middle School, and Vice Principal of Delsea Regional Junior-Senior High School. In addition, he has taught social studies to students in grades 7-12.

The Constitution High School is 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 a leading collaborator and supporter. Located at 7th and Market Streets, the Constitution High School will feature a curriculum grounded in American history, law, and government that is designed to foster active civic engagement. Unique curricular material and extra-curricular opportunities will be developed by the School District in partnership with the National Constitution Center, the Gilder Lehrman Institute, and Ballard Spahr. Students will also benefit from on-site educational experiences at the Constitution Center throughout the school year. The curriculum development has been funded in part by a National Constitution Center grant from the Annenberg Foundation.

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.

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ADD THREE/CONSTITUTION HIGH SCHOOL

About the Gilder Lehrman Institute

Founded in 1994, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History promotes the study and love of American history. Increasingly national and international in scope, the Institute targets audiences ranging from students to scholars to the general public. It creates history-centered schools and academic research centers, organizes seminars and enrichment programs for educators, partners with school districts to implement Teaching American History grants, produces print and electronic publications and traveling exhibitions, and sponsors lectures by eminent historians. The Institute also funds awards including the Lincoln, Frederick Douglass and George Washington Book Prizes and offers fellowships for scholars to work in history archives, including the Gilder Lehrman Collection. For more information, visit www.gilderlehrman.org.

About Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP

Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP is a national law firm with over 460 lawyers and eight offices in the mid-Atlantic corridor and the western U.S. Ballard Spahr combines a broad scope of practice with strong local market knowledge to represent companies, individuals and other entities. Diversity is both a core value and a call to action that is part of the daily practice at the firm. Ballard Spahr knows that the firm is better--stronger, livelier, tougher, and ultimately more perceptive in its judgments and far-reaching in its achievements--for being diverse. Ballard Spahr seeks to solidify its investment in the firm's future and provide current and future clients with richer representation by actively engaging in many diversity-related initiatives, including the new partnership with the Philadelphia School District and National Constitution Center. Ballard Spahr believes this project will benefit the students at Constitution High and help to increase diversity in the legal profession by offering its students the opportunity to learn about the practice of law from legal professionals at all levels. Ballard Spahr looks forward to a long and successful affiliation with Constitution High School. For more information about the firm, please visit www.ballardspahr.com.

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