

# NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## STUDENTS AND TEACHER FROM CONSTITUTION HIGH SCHOOL RECOGNIZED AS NATIONAL HISTORY DAY CONTEST FINALISTS

Philadelphia, PA (June 1, 2010) – National Constitution Center President and CEO David Eisner praised Constitution High School students and faculty at the Mayor’s National History Day press conference today. Constitution High School freshmen **Charmira Nelson** (age 15, of North Philadelphia) and **Brian Cornel-Mamodou** (age 16, of South Philadelphia) have been selected as one of four Pennsylvania teams from among more than half a million entrants across the country to compete in the **2010 Kenneth E. Behring National History Day Contest**, marking the first time Constitution High School will be represented in the national competition. Also recognized is **Marc Brasof**, founding history teacher from Constitution High School, who was named “2010 Patricia Behring History Teacher of the Year” for Pennsylvania and will compete with other state winners for the national teaching award.

“We are incredibly proud of the students and faculty of Constitution High School and the other teams from Philadelphia, who will serve as ideal representatives of Pennsylvania at the national contest,” said National Constitution Center President and CEO David Eisner. “We look forward to watching these young students grow into the next generation of active and engaged citizens.”

Each year, middle and high school students nationwide participate in the National History Day contest, creating exhibits, performances, documentaries, papers and websites on historical subjects featuring an annual theme. This year’s theme was *Innovation in History: Impact and Change*. Projects are entered into competitions at local and state levels, where they are evaluated by professional historians and educators. The program culminates with the national contest at the University of Maryland, College Park from Sunday, June 13 through Tuesday, June 17, 2010. To enable all of the competing Philadelphia students to attend the national contest, the National Constitution Center matched the \$2,000 raised through the National History Day Philly program.

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## ADD ONE/NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Created in partnership with the National Constitution Center, Constitution High School is a national model for experiential education, with distinctive modes of student learning that include mentor relationships with Constitution Center staff and utilization of the resources of the National Constitution Center, as well as other Philadelphia institutions.

In preparation for their National History Day project, Charmira Nelson and Brian Cornel-Mamodou participated in a theater workshop with the Center's Senior Theater Programs Producer Nora Berger-Green, who demonstrated the Center's unique use of theater to promote history and civics. The students' 10-minute group performance, "The Gradual Abolition Act: Freedom by Degrees," highlights the importance of Pennsylvania's role in the struggle to end slavery, as the first state in the western hemisphere to enact a legal process to begin an abolition of slavery. The audience is taken on a historical tour from the auction block to freedom as the two student actors portray several characters, including early Quaker abolitionists Anthony Benezet and John Woolman, and fictional enslaved African Americans, Ms. Ella and Mr. James.

### About Marc Brasof

Marc Brasof has taught social studies at Constitution High School since 2005. His efforts have been recognized with the 2009 Christian R. and Mary F Lindback Award for Distinguished High School Educators and the 2006-07 History Teacher of the Year for National History Day Philadelphia, among numerous other awards and honors. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from the University of Pittsburgh, a Masters of Education degree in Secondary Social Studies from the University of Pennsylvania, and is currently completing a Doctorate degree in Education Leadership from Temple University.

### About Constitution High School

Constitution High School launched in September 2006 in an effort to promote civic education and active citizenship. The history and civics-themed Philadelphia School District magnet school was created in partnership with the National Constitution Center and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, with additional support from Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP. It is the only Philadelphia School District high school with a Civic Learning and American Studies theme.

## ADD TWO/NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

### About National History Day

National History Day is a highly regarded academic organization for elementary and secondary school students. For more than 25 years, National History Day has promoted systemic educational reform related to the teaching and learning of history in America's schools. Its mission is to provide students with opportunities to learn historical content and develop research, thinking and communication skills through the study of history, and to provide educators with resources and training to enhance classroom teaching.

### 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. 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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