



NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CIVIL RIGHTS ICON, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JOHN LEWIS TO RECEIVE
NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER'S 2016 LIBERTY MEDAL**

Rep. John Lewis, the only surviving "Big Six" leader of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, to be honored on September 19 in Philadelphia

Philadelphia, PA (June 2, 2016) – The National Constitution Center's Liberty Medal will be awarded to United States Representative John Lewis during the 28th Annual Liberty Medal Ceremony on Monday, September 19, 2016 at 7 p.m. Representative Lewis, who, along with Hosea Williams, led the 1965 march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama on "Bloody Sunday," will be recognized for his courageous dedication to civil rights and the Constitution. The event will also be broadcast on local ABC affiliate, WPVI-TV/6abc.

The National Constitution Center's Liberty Medal, established in 1988, annually honors men and women of courage and conviction who strive to secure the blessings of liberty to people around the globe.

The selection of Representative Lewis comes as the National Constitution Center commemorates the 150th anniversaries of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments, a series of constitutional amendments known as the Reconstruction Amendments.

"Through his heroic leadership on behalf of civil rights and the Constitution, Representative Lewis has helped to extend the blessings of liberty and equality to all Americans. Under his leadership, the Civil Rights Movement helped this nation move toward the creation of the 'more perfect union' promised by President Lincoln at Gettysburg," said Jeffrey Rosen, President and CEO of the National Constitution Center, adding, "As we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the 14th Amendment, which guarantees the equal protection of the laws, the National Constitution Center is thrilled to honor Representative Lewis with the 2016 Liberty Medal."

"Representative Lewis is an inspiration to people all over the world," said Mayor Jim Kenney. "On behalf of the City of Philadelphia, I am thrilled to welcome him back to our city and to help showcase his achievements with the Liberty Medal."

Representative Lewis is the only surviving "Big Six" leader of the Civil Rights Movement, a group of prominent civil rights leaders which included Martin Luther King, Jr., James Farmer, A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins, and Whitney Young.

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In 1963, Lewis was named chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and delivered an address at the March on Washington. He was the youngest speaker at the event. In addition to leading the march on “Bloody Sunday” in 1965, he participated in the Nashville lunch counter sit-ins and the Freedom Rides. In 1981, he was elected to the Atlanta City Council and in 1986 to Congress. He still currently serves as a U.S. Representative of Georgia’s Fifth Congressional District. Representative Lewis holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Religion and Philosophy from Fisk University and a degree in divinity from American Baptist College.

National Constitution Center Trustee, Ira Lubert of Lubert Adler, will sponsor the Liberty Medal Prize in 2016, as he has for the past nine years. Citizens Bank, which has sponsored the Liberty Medal since 2006, returns as the Chairman’s Reception Sponsor. Stradley Ronon, LLP will also return as the President’s Reception Sponsor for the fourth consecutive year.

Sponsorships and individual tickets to the Liberty Medal Ceremony and Gala Reception are currently available for purchase at constitutioncenter.org/libertymedal/support. In addition, a limited number of complimentary Ceremony-only tickets will be made available to current Members of the National Constitution Center beginning at 10 a.m. on August 16, 2016. To become a Member of the National Constitution Center, please visit constitutioncenter.org/membership.

A limited number of complimentary Ceremony-only tickets will be made available to the general public beginning at 10 a.m. on August 17, 2016. For more information on ticket availability, please contact Bianca Cavacini at (215) 409-6715 or bcavacini@constitutioncenter.org or visit constitutioncenter.org/libertymedal.

About the Liberty Medal

The Liberty Medal was established in 1988 to commemorate the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution. Given annually, the medal honors men and women of courage and conviction who strive to secure the blessings of liberty to people around the globe. Seven recipients of the medal subsequently have won the Nobel Peace Prize.

About the National Constitution Center

The [National Constitution Center](http://constitutioncenter.org) in Philadelphia inspires active citizenship as the only place where people across America and around the world can come together to learn about, debate, and celebrate the greatest vision of human freedom in history, the U.S. Constitution. A private, nonprofit organization, the Center serves as America’s leading platform for constitutional education and debate, fulfilling its Congressional charter “to disseminate information about the U.S. Constitution on a non-partisan basis.” As the **Museum of We the People**, the Center brings the Constitution to life for visitors of all ages through interactive programs and exhibits. As **America’s Town Hall**, the Center brings the leading conservative and liberal thought leaders together to debate the Constitution on all media platforms. As a center for **Civic Education**, the Center delivers the best educational programs and online resources that inspire, excite, and engage citizens about the U.S. Constitution. For more information, call 215-409-6700 or visit constitutioncenter.org.

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EDITOR’S NOTE: A complete list of Liberty Medal winners follows.

Past Recipients of the Liberty Medal

2015	His Holiness the Dalai Lama
2014	Malala Yousafzai*
2013	Hillary Clinton, former U.S. Secretary of State
2012	Muhammad Ali
2011	Robert M. Gates, former U.S. Secretary of Defense
2010	Tony Blair, former British Prime Minister
2009	Steven Spielberg
2008	Mikhail Gorbachev, former Soviet Leader
2007	Bono and DATA
2006	George H.W. Bush and William J. Clinton, former U.S. Presidents
2005	Viktor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine
2004	Hamid Karzai, President of Afghanistan
2003	Sandra Day O'Connor, U.S. Supreme Court Justice
2002	Colin Powell, U.S. Secretary of State
2001	Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General*
2000	James Watson and Francis Crick, Co-Discoverers of the Structure of DNA
1999	Kim Dae-jung, President of South Korea*
1998	George J. Mitchell, former U.S. Senator and Irish peace negotiator
1997	CNN International
1996	King Hussein I of Jordan and former Prime Minister of Israel Shimon Peres
1995	Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
1994	Václav Havel, President of the Czech Republic

- 1993** F.W. de Klerk, President of South Africa* and Nelson Mandela, President of the African National Congress*
- 1992** Thurgood Marshall, U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice (retired)
- 1991** Oscar Arias Sanchez, former President of Costa Rica and Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders)*
- 1990** Jimmy Carter, former U.S. President*
- 1989** Lech Walesa, Co-Founder of Solidarity, Poland

* Subsequent Nobel Peace Prize Recipients