

**TWEET IT:** Happy 227th Birthday, U.S. Constitution! Admission [@ConstitutionCtr](#) is FREE on 9/17! <http://bit.ly/JY723r> #ConDayNCC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACTS:	Lauren Saul Director of Public Relations 215-409-6895 <a href="mailto:lsaul@constitutioncenter.org">lsaul@constitutioncenter.org</a>	Sarah Fergus Public Relations Manager 215-409-6759 <a href="mailto:sfergus@constitutioncenter.org">sfergus@constitutioncenter.org</a>
-----------	---	--

**CELEBRATE YOUR GUARANTEED FREEDOMS  
THIS CONSTITUTION DAY  
AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER**

*Free admission to the museum on September 17, courtesy of the PNC Foundation*

*Constitution Day marks the launch of a new program, 'Courts in the Community,'  
in partnership with federal judges who serve on the Third Circuit*

*Events also include public reading of the Preamble, a moving naturalization  
ceremony, and appearances by famous Founding Fathers*

Philadelphia, PA (August 22, 2014) – Did you know that the powerful introductory phrase “We the People of the United States” was an 11th-hour addition to the U.S.

Constitution’s preamble by Pennsylvania delegate Gouverneur Morris? Or that at 4,400 words, it is the shortest and oldest written Constitution of any major document in the world? This **Constitution Day, Wednesday, September 17, 2014**, the **National Constitution Center**—the Museum of We the People, America’s Town Hall, and a leading center for civic education—will honor the 227th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution with a daylong celebration of the freedoms afforded to us by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights—from fun, educational activities to timely constitutional conversations with federal judges to an inspiring naturalization ceremony.

**Admission to the museum is FREE on Constitution Day, courtesy of the PNC Foundation.** Last year, over 3,600 students, teachers, and other guests visited the museum on Constitution Day.

**NEW THIS YEAR**

The Constitution Center is pleased to partner with federal judges serving on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit for a new program, **Courts in the Community**. This new joint venture officially launches on Constitution Day with a discussion at 12:30 p.m. with an esteemed panel of judges that will give students and visitors a better

-MORE-

## ADD ONE/CONSTITUTION DAY

understanding of how the Constitution influences their role and responsibility in the courtroom as well as in their daily lives. The discussion will be followed by a Q & A opportunity with the audience. Throughout the day, students will have the opportunity to speak with judges about the justice system during special talks inside the museum's main exhibition. Courts in the Community will continue at the Constitution Center throughout the school year. Teachers will be able to add special talks with judges and their students to their Constitution Center visit.

Also, new this year, the museum is participating in the [Civics Renewal Network](#)—an alliance of 26 organizations, including the Constitution Center, committed to working together to increase the visibility of civics education across the country. These organizations share the belief that understanding the U.S. Constitution plays a vital role in helping young people become responsible and engaged citizens. For Constitution Day, the network and the museum are inviting schools across the country to take a special [Preamble Challenge](#), submitting creative, fun videos and photos of their classrooms reciting those 52 words starting with the powerful phrase “We the People.”

Teachers can register to receive a FREE Preamble Challenge Toolkit, providing them with a bevy of tools to help teach the Constitution and recite the Preamble in their classrooms. Contents include a printable poster, the “To Sign or Not To Sign” lesson plan (differentiated for elementary, middle, and high school grade levels), the Preamble Challenge lesson plan and instructions, and a Preamble printout, designed for printing and ironing on t-shirts.

### **TIMELINE OF CONSTITUTION DAY EVENTS**

Visitors of all ages are invited to join in the Constitution Day celebration at the Constitution Center on September 17 and enjoy FREE admission courtesy the PNC Foundation. In connection with the museum's upcoming exhibition featuring one of the 12 surviving copies of the [Bill of Rights](#) (opening in October 2014), the overarching theme of this year's Constitution Day festivities will feature a strong focus on this

-MORE-

## ADD TWO/CONSTITUTION DAY

document—not only the foundation of the groundbreaking freedoms the Bill of Rights provides but also the actions of the American people to ensure their strength.

“There is no better investment in our community than helping young students celebrate our nation’s history and Philadelphia’s founding role,” said Paula Fryland, PNC Bank regional president for Philadelphia-Southern New Jersey. “It’s a privilege to join with the community in celebrating our freedom and the founding principles of our democracy as seen through the exhibits at the National Constitution Center.”

To kick off the celebration, all museum visitors can take the **Preamble Challenge** on the museum’s front lawn at 8:30 a.m., immediately followed by a special flag raising by the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution.

At 10 a.m., visitors can join in a special ceremony in honor of the latest addition—Elizabeth Jane Cochran aka Nellie Bly—to the museum’s popular American National Tree exhibit, which features interactive touch screens that tell the stories of 100 Americans who have shaped our constitutional history. Bly was a pioneer in the field of investigative journalism in the late 1800s. The new addition was determined by the winning essay of the **M.R. Robinson National Constitution Center American National Tree Contest**. The National Constitution Center, in collaboration with [Scholastic, Inc.](#) and the [Alliance for Young Artists & Writers](#), selected the essay of rising high-school junior Isabelle Breier from the Hopkins School in New Haven, CT. Breier will receive a \$1,000 scholarship and will appear in person to read her essay at the museum.

At 10:30 a.m., a **Naturalization Ceremony** will be presided over by United States Federal Judge John R. Padova and feature a keynote address by **Dr. Nina Ahmad**, Executive Vice President, Government Affairs, for JNA Capital, Inc. Dr. Ahmad is a naturalized citizen from Bangladesh and Chair of the Philadelphia Commission on Asian American Affairs. She was recently appointed by President Barack Obama to the President’s Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Fifty immigrants from over 25 countries will take the Oath of Allegiance to officially become

-MORE-

## ADD THREE/CONSTITUTION DAY

citizens of the United States. Special remarks also will be made by [Philadelphia Bar Association](#) Chancellor-Elect Al Dandridge, Esq. The ceremony is co-presented by the Mayor's Office of Immigrant and Multicultural Affairs as part of [xCultural \(Multicultural\) Passport to PHL Week](#).

Guests can enjoy a slice of cake and sing “**Happy (227th) Birthday**” at 12 p.m. on the museum's Grand Hall Overlook. This celebration will include a special appearance by President George Washington and live music.

What really happened behind closed doors during the Constitutional Convention? Visitors will hear “firsthand” from some very special guests during a **Kids Town Hall** at 1 p.m. Famous Founding Fathers (in the form of reenactors) will discuss the debate surrounding adding a Bill of Rights to the Constitution and why it was initially left out when the Constitution was signed.

Throughout the day, the museum will be brimming with hands-on activities and craft workshops in the Grand Hall Lobby, including special calligraphy demonstrations, where visitors can learn about the copperplate technique used to create the official, ‘handwritten’ Constitution. Then, using their newly acquired calligraphy skills, guests can sign a giant replica version of the U.S. Constitution, adding their signatures alongside those of the Founding Fathers.

In addition, during special interactive programs, guests can put their knowledge of the Constitution to the test at a fast-paced, Bill of Rights-themed game show; a high-energy *Separation of Powers* show, which teaches students about the three branches of government; and an engaging *Pass the Citizenship Test* show, which spotlights the rights and responsibilities of American citizenship.

The Constitution Center will host several partner organizations to help celebrate Constitution Day, including Arcadia University, Pennsylvania State Society Daughters of the American Revolution, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution,

-MORE-

## ADD FOUR/CONSTITUTION DAY

Pennsylvania Society Sons of the American Revolution, and National Society Sons of the American Revolution, Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, James Madison's Montpelier, and Progressive Business Publications.

More events are being added and details will be announced soon.

### **CELEBRATE IN THE CLASSROOM**

Students across the country can join in the celebration and meet their Constitution Day education requirement by tuning in to the National Constitution Center's popular FREE online video lesson series, ***Constitution Hall Pass***, available starting September 10, 2014, at [constitutioncenter.org/constitutionday](http://constitutioncenter.org/constitutionday). The brand-new episode, "**Constitution Day 2014: The Bill of Rights**," provides a behind-the-scenes look at how the Constitution's fiercely-debated first 10 amendments were created and continue to be interpreted. Members of the museum's education staff will be available for online live chats with students and teachers from September 10 – September 23, 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. EDT (live chat on weekdays only).

As the nation's leading Constitution Day resource, the Constitution Center website also includes [educational tools and lesson plans](#), online versions of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' [naturalization test](#), previous [Constitution Hall Pass](#) episodes, and the "[Which Founder Are You](#)" quiz, which allows users to compare their personality traits with those of the men who wrote the Constitution. The museum's social channels—[Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#), [Google+](#), and [YouTube](#)—offer opportunities for followers to learn about some of the famous and lesser-known [Founding Fathers](#), test their Constitution knowledge, and go behind the scenes on September 17.

Additionally, educators can purchase the museum's [Constitution Day Kit](#), which includes a 31" x 55" laminated copy of the Constitution; 35 folding pocket Constitutions; a *Constitution Hall Pass* DVD; the "To Sign or Not To Sign" lesson plan (differentiated for elementary, middle, and high-school grade levels); and a dry erase marker for signing the Constitution. The kit costs \$35.

-MORE-

## ADD FIVE/CONSTITUTION DAY

A handy interactive [Constitution App](#) for iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch also is available for download by visiting iTunes.

### About the PNC Foundation

The PNC Foundation actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it has a significant presence. The foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes the arts and culture. Through Grow Up Great, its signature cause that began in 2004, PNC has created a \$350 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life. For more information, visit [www1.pnc.com/pncfoundation/](http://www1.pnc.com/pncfoundation/).

### About the Civics Renewal Network

The Civics Renewal Network is an alliance of 26 organizations that provide free online classroom resources for civics education. A core group of these organizations gathered in April 2013 during a Civics Summit convened at the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania. Sharing the belief that understanding the Constitution plays a vital role in creating knowledgeable and engaged citizens, they agreed to work together as the Civics Renewal Network to raise the visibility of civics education and to make high-quality resources more accessible to teachers through a one-stop website. For more information, visit [civicsrenewalnetwork.org](http://civicsrenewalnetwork.org).

### About the National Constitution Center

The [National Constitution Center](#) in Philadelphia is the Museum of We the People, America's Town Hall, and a Headquarters for Civic Education. As the **Museum of We the People**, the National Constitution Center brings the United States Constitution to life for visitors of all ages and inspires active citizenship by celebrating the American constitutional tradition. The museum features interactive exhibits, engaging theatrical performances, and original documents of freedom. As the only institution established by Congress to "disseminate information about the United States Constitution on a non-partisan basis," the National Constitution Center serves as a **Headquarters for Civic**

-MORE-

ADD SIX/CONSTITUTION DAY

**Education**—offering cutting-edge learning resources including the premier online Interactive Constitution. As **America's Town Hall**, the National Constitution Center hosts timely constitutional conversations uniting distinguished leaders, scholars, authors, and journalists from across the political spectrum. For more information, call 215-409-6700 or visit [constitutioncenter.org](http://constitutioncenter.org).

###