

# NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## SOCIAL MEDIA: THE NEW POLITICAL BATTLEGROUND

***Top digital experts come to the National Constitution Center to discuss the role of social media and its impact on the 2012 presidential campaign***

Philadelphia, PA (March 30, 2012) – For Franklin D. Roosevelt, it was radio. For John F. Kennedy, it was television. And for presidential candidates in 2012, the key to communicating with the masses and garnering votes on Election Day is social media. Political strategists and social media/technology experts **Maria Cardona, Andrew Rasiej, Daniel Sieberg, Alex Torpey** and **Todd Van Etten** will join the National Constitution Center to take a hard look at the role of social media and its impact on the 2012 presidential campaign. **Jonathan Capehart** of *The Washington Post* will moderate the discussion. The event takes place on **Thursday, April 19 at 6:30 p.m.** Admission is FREE but advanced registration is required and can be made by calling 215.409.6700 or online at [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org). This event is part of Election 2012, the Center's programming series on the key issues facing Americans during this important election year.

The current presidential race is arguably the first to fully reflect a major strategic political shift to the digital world. Tim Pawlenty announced his run for the 2012 Republican presidential nomination on Facebook. Newt Gingrich and Mitt Romney announced their presidential campaigns via Twitter. President Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign was considered a major win for social media, and the social media savvy president recently made headlines for creating user profiles on both Pinterest and Spotify. Will candidates who don't show up on this digital playing field be left in the dust?

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The panelists at the National Constitution Center will address ways in which social media impacts the political process, weighing in on recent social media mobilization around issues such as the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA), the Susan B. Komen Foundation funding fallout, and the death of Florida teenager Trayvon Martin.

This program is presented in partnership with the Kal and Lucille Rudman Media Production Center at Temple University and the Kal and Lucille Rudman Institute for Entertainment Industry Studies at Drexel University.

**Jonathan Capehart** is a member of *The Washington Post's* editorial board and writes about politics and social issues for the PostPartisan blog. He is also an MSNBC contributor, appearing regularly on "Morning Joe." Prior to joining the *Post* in 2007, Capehart was the deputy editor of the *New York Daily News's* editorial page from 2002 to 2005. He worked as a policy adviser to Michael Bloomberg in his successful campaign for mayor of New York City. Capehart was a national affairs columnist for Bloomberg News from 2000-2001, and he was a member of the *New York Daily News* editorial board from 1993 -2000.

**Maria Cardona** is a seasoned Democratic strategist, public affairs and communications professional with more than 20 years of experience in the political, government, public relations, campaign, community and coalition building arenas. She currently is a Principal at the Dewey Square Group, where she heads the firm's Public Affairs practice, combining public policy, communications, coalition building, constituency outreach, government relations, traditional and new media. She is also a frequent political commentator and issues analyst on CNN, MSNBC, Fox, Univision, Telemundo, and CNN en Español, appearing as a public policy expert and providing political analysis on all manner of national issues.

**Andrew Rasiej** is the founder of Personal Democracy Media and co-founder of TechPresident. As a technology and social media campaign strategist, Rasiej has counseled political leaders and senior government officials including President Bill Clinton, Secretary Hillary Clinton, Senator Tom Daschle and Congressional Minority Leader Dick Gephardt. During the 2004

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presidential election, then-presidential candidate Howard Dean named Rasiej chairman of the technology advisory committee for the Dean for America Campaign. In 2010, Rasiej was named chairman of the New York Tech Meetup.

**Daniel Sieberg** is currently a spokesperson with the Google Politics and Elections team. An Emmy-nominated and award-winning TV correspondent, host and author, Sieberg's work has appeared in countless publications and on a variety of networks including CBS News, CNN, ABC News, MSNBC, BBC News. From 2006-2010, Sieberg was the science and technology correspondent for CBS News. Prior to joining CBS, Sieberg was the technology correspondent for CNN.

**Alex Torpey** is a social media entrepreneur who, at 24, is one of the youngest mayors in the country. Torpey utilized social media tools in his campaign and continues to use them in the governance of South Orange, New Jersey.

**Todd Van Etten** is Washington, D.C. office director of Crowdverb, a social mobilization company for corporations and campaigns. Prior to joining Crowdverb, Van Etten was the new media director for the Republican National Committee, where he oversaw the largest technological upgrades in party history, including a complete rebranding of the flagship GOP.com.

### **About the Kal & Lucille Rudman Foundation**

The mission of the Kal & Lucille Rudman Foundation is to support the vital needs of students and educators across the Greater Philadelphia region through innovative academic initiatives focused on media's role in society.

### **About the National Constitution Center**

The National Constitution Center is the first and only nonprofit, nonpartisan institution devoted to the most powerful vision of freedom ever expressed: the U.S. Constitution. Located on Independence Mall in Historic Philadelphia, the birthplace of American freedom, the Center illuminates constitutional ideals and inspires active citizenship through a state-of-the-art

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museum experience, including hundreds of interactive exhibits, films and rare artifacts; must-see feature exhibitions; the internationally acclaimed, 360-degree theatrical production *Freedom Rising*; and the iconic *Signers' Hall*, where visitors can sign the Constitution alongside 42 life-size, bronze statues of the Founding Fathers. As America's forum for constitutional dialogue, the Center engages diverse, distinguished leaders of government, public policy, journalism and scholarship in timely public discussions and debates. The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, the national hub for constitutional education, which offers cutting-edge civic learning resources both onsite and online. Freedom is calling. Answer it at the National Constitution Center. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

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