

# NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **FREEDOM IS CALLING: ANSWER IT AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER DURING AN EXTRAORDINARY CELEBRATION OF THE CONSTITUTION'S 225<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

***Affirm your commitment to freedom by signing a commemorative Constitution!***

Philadelphia, PA (January 18, 2012) – On September 17, 1787, our Founding Fathers signed a revolutionary document that, even today, continues to change the world and inspire passionate conversation. Throughout 2012, the National Constitution Center will serve as the headquarters of a historic milestone: the **225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. Constitution**. The Center will engage Americans nationwide during this pivotal election year with an exciting lineup of onsite and online programs that celebrate the freedom and pride that our founding document inspires. The commemoration will culminate in September with a star-studded Liberty Medal ceremony and an array of Constitution Day festivities that honor the Constitution's legacy of freedom.

"The 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a big year for the Constitution and we have big plans to celebrate it," said National Constitution Center President and CEO David Eisner. "We want people from across the nation to be part of this exciting milestone."

The Center's 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary highlights include:

### **Governors Proclaim 2012 a Year to Celebrate the Constitution**

To launch the yearlong festivities, **Governor Jack Markell of Delaware** – the first state to ratify the Constitution – joined the Center as the first governor to present an official, signed proclamation commemorating the Constitution's historic 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The National

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Governors Association – of which Governor Markell serves as vice chair – is working with the Center to deliver proclamations from governors of every state and U.S. territory that call upon Americans to remember the Founders' remarkable achievements and reflect on our rights and responsibilities as active citizens. To date, the Center has received proclamations from the governors of Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Virginia.

### **Pledge Your Commitment to Freedom – Become a Signer of the 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Constitution**

In celebration of this landmark year, the Center invites all Americans to reaffirm their commitment to freedom by becoming a signer of the Constitution. Participants from across the nation – and even around the globe – can do so online through a simple web application on [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org). Visitors to the Center will sign a special **commemorative 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary Constitution** that will be on display in *Signers' Hall* throughout the year. The signatures will appear alongside those of dignitaries, politicians and other VIPs who visit the Center in 2012.

### **Share Your Freedom Story**

This spring, the National Constitution Center will launch "**Freedom Story**," a video-based, online civic engagement campaign that invites people of all ages to share their American pride by submitting 90-second videos about those who have answered the call of freedom, and, through their actions, contributed to the story of "We the People." Submissions will air on the Center's website; viewers will select their favorite entries through an online voting process. The top three winners will be brought to the Center to play a starring role in the Constitution Day extravaganza in September.

### **Students across the Country Engage in Constitutional Issues with Constitution Hall Pass**

Millions of students around the country will celebrate civic holidays and learn about the creation of the Constitution and its contemporary relevance with the Center's free webcast series **Constitution Hall Pass**. Through engaging and interactive videos and live chats with

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educators and experts, Constitution Hall Pass helps students become active and engaged citizens. New to the series of webcasts this year, a special episode on the presidency will engage students in the election process and the power of the Executive Branch. Episodes are available at [constitutioncenter.org/hallpass](http://constitutioncenter.org/hallpass) and are broadcast on Channel One News, the leading television news network for teens.

### **Engage in Election 2012**

#### Evening Programs:

The Center will celebrate our freedom to vote by becoming a hub of election activity during the 2012 presidential race. Throughout the year, the Center's timely and engaging evening program series will feature prominent political leaders, journalists and experts who will examine the issues at the heart of the 2012 election, including tax reform, health care, gay marriage, foreign policy, immigration and the economy.

#### Yahoo! News Partnership:

In addition, the Center is partnering with Yahoo! News to put citizens at the forefront of election coverage. The Center will provide issue-focused commentary and features from its *Constitution Daily* blog to be carried on Yahoo!'s online and social media platforms. When Yahoo! reports on election issues, they will uniquely program their coverage to reach specific audiences – millennials, parents, seniors, and other key demographics – in order to create discussions about the issues that matter most to each group.

#### ElectNext in Voting Booths:

Election fervor builds in the spring with a timely and cutting-edge update to the voting booths inside the Center's main exhibition, *The Story of We the People*. In partnership with fast-growing Internet startup ElectNext, the Center will revolutionize how visitors approach the voting process – and who they are voting for. Like eHarmony for voters, the interactive technology inside the voting booths will feature a series of issues-based questions that will match visitors to the presidential candidate who best fits their political values. Above the voting booths, large screens will display live, on-site poll results, showcasing the issues deemed most important to visitors. National data projected on the screens also will allow Center guests to see where they stand in comparison with citizens across the country.

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### Address America:

Another highlight in the Center's 2012 Election programming, *Address America: Your Six Word Stump Speech*, is an interactive onsite and online exhibit that invites citizens to share their election priorities and vision for the future of our nation in the form of a six-word political platform. Visitors to the museum between April and November will have the opportunity to view and share submissions from their mobile devices, as well as on projected displays and new touch screens located in the Center's main exhibition. Submissions also will be aggregated from Facebook and Twitter. Additionally, the Center will develop curriculum that enables teachers to incorporate *Address America* in the classroom. This unique and accessible project is intended to help audiences express their civic voices, learn about key political issues and presidential candidates, become more familiar with differences of opinion and be inspired to take action. Following the election on November 6, 2012, the Center will continue to engage audiences in civic and governance issues by inviting six-word submissions of ideas that participants would hope to hear expressed on inauguration day 2013.

### Election Lounge:

As the 2012 election heats up and the candidates go head-to-head, the Center will stage its own campaign headquarters on the Grand Hall Overlook. The election will come to life for visitors of all ages who stop by the Center's Election Lounge to watch presidential campaign ads, cast a vote in our gumball poll, explore the ins and outs of running for president, register to vote, track primary results, create campaign buttons and more!

### Headed to the White House Exhibition:

From August 24 through November 30, visitors can experience *Headed to the White House*, a multimedia exhibition developed by the Center to capture the excitement, pageantry and importance of America's election process through hands-on activities and role-playing opportunities that take guests from the campaign trail to Election Day, all in one visit. The exhibition made its debut at the Center in 2008 and has been traveling around the country ever since. It is being updated to include the issues and candidates in the 2012 race before it returns to the Center.

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### **The Grand Finale: Constitution Day and Liberty Medal 2012**

The 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Constitution will culminate in a grand finale in September, when the Center welcomes audiences nationwide to participate in festive programs and star-studded special events in connection with a world-class, weeklong **Constitution Day** celebration and the 2012 **Liberty Medal** ceremony.

The capstone of this historic year, the Liberty Medal ceremony pays homage to men and women of courage and conviction who have answered the call of freedom. Set against the backdrop of Independence Mall – the birthplace of American freedom – this spectacular public event will draw an all-star cast of distinguished guests and will turn the national spotlight on the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Constitution. Television cameras will document the historic day, which also will be featured in a TV special. Previous Liberty Medal recipients include Nelson Mandela, Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Bono, and most recently former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates.

### **And Don't Forget Bruce!**

Excitement continues to grow as the Center prepares to celebrate freedom of expression with the must-see exhibition ***From Asbury Park to the Promised Land: The Life and Music of Bruce Springsteen***. This highly anticipated exhibition – on view from February 17 through September 3, 2012 – will be integral in attracting new audiences to the Center to celebrate the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Constitution.

For more information about the Center's celebration of the Constitution's 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary, visit [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

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 museum experience, including hundreds of interactive exhibits, films and rare artifacts; must-see feature exhibitions; the internationally acclaimed, 360-degree theatrical production *Freedom*

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*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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