

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

TD Bank underwrites FREE admission to the Center on Presidents Day, Monday, February 17

Philadelphia, PA (January 31, 2020) – February 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the 15th Amendment, which said the right to vote could not be denied based on race. The National Constitution Center will honor that milestone all month long with special educational programs and performances in conjunction with the new *Civil War and Reconstruction* exhibit, including “The Road to Freedom” show, the “Four Harriets” program, and theatrical performances of *Frances Ellen Watkins Harper: The Great Problem to Be Solved* and *FOURTEEN*. Visitors can also take a self-guided tour of the museum’s *The Story of We the People* exhibit to discover key milestones in African American history, and then test their knowledge at the Center’s giant game board activity.

TD Bank, America’s Most Convenient Bank®, sponsors African American History Month at the National Constitution Center and underwrites free admission to the Center on Presidents Day, Monday, February 17. Featured programs on Presidents Day include a Meet the Presidents Kids Town Hall, a Presidential Costume Contest, and more. This year marks the seventh consecutive year of TD Bank’s sponsorship.

On Friday, February 14, the National Constitution Center will host the inaugural event of [Philadelphia’s Frances Project](#). In association with the [Commonwealth Monument Project](#), the Frances Project is a Philadelphia-based celebration designed to spotlight the life and work of Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, a key African American writer, abolitionist, and suffragist, during the 2020 election year—the same year as the commemorations the 150th anniversary of the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment.

In fall 2019, the National Constitution Center and the African American Museum in Philadelphia announced a partnership to offer visitors a joint ticket that includes admission to both institutions for a discounted price, as well as an exclusive group package. Located just a block from each other in Philadelphia’s most historic square mile, the two institutions aim to educate the public about the whole of the American experience and the individuals who comprise ‘We the People.’ Both institutions are devoted to telling the richness of American history through interactive exhibits, priceless artifacts, and compelling storytelling.

[African American History Month Programs](#)

PLEASE NOTE: On Sunday, February 16, the museum’s hours will be extended, 9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., in celebration of Presidents Day Weekend.

Special Events

[150th Anniversary of the 15th Amendment](#)

Monday, February 3, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

On February 3, 1870, the 15th Amendment was ratified, stating that the right to vote could not be denied based on race. The National Constitution Center will honor the 150th anniversary of the 15th

Amendment through various programs on Monday, February 3. These programs will include gallery tours of the new *Civil War and Reconstruction: The Battle for Freedom and Equality* exhibit, a demonstration of an in-gallery interactive that allows visitors to explore the development of the 15th Amendment, and lobby shows throughout the day.

[Before the Fifteenth: Presented in Partnership with The Frances Project](#)

Friday, February 14, 1 – 3 p.m.

As part of Philadelphia's Frances Project, spotlighting the life and work of Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, this event takes an in-depth look at the fight for freedom and equality that began in the 1850s and continued to the passage of the 15th Amendment. The program includes a curator's tour of the National Constitution Center's newest exhibit, *Civil War and Reconstruction: The Battle for Freedom and Equality*. Following the tour, guests will experience *FOURTEEN*, a moving theatrical performance that sheds light on the Reconstruction era and the ratification of the 14th Amendment. A discussion with the National Constitution Center team will follow the performance. There is no cost to attend, but advanced registration is required.

[Presidents Day Weekend and FREE Family Day](#)

Saturday, February 15, through Monday, February 17

In addition to African American History Month programming, in February the National Constitution Center also celebrates Presidents Day Weekend with a variety of special presidential-themed programs and activities. Visitors will learn about the role of the president and what it takes to be commander in chief while participating in entertaining, educational programs, including presidential trivia where visitors can test their knowledge of America's 45 presidents, craft stations, story corners, and more. **On Presidents Day, Monday, February 17, the Center will host additional special programs and admission to the Center will be free courtesy of TD Bank.**

[Your Vote, Your History: Presented in Partnership with Students at Museums in Philadelphia](#)

Friday, February 28, 1 – 4 p.m.

February 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the 15th Amendment, which said the right to vote could not be denied based on race. To honor this milestone, the National Constitution Center and STAMP (Students at Museums in Philadelphia) are co-hosting an event for teens by teens to explore the history of voting. All Philadelphia high school teenagers are invited to take a tour of the National Constitution Center, talk to a constitutional scholar about the history of voting, and enjoy a social hour with snacks, karaoke, and a chance to try out a real voting booth.

Daily Programs

Program times will vary daily. Please check the visitor guide upon arrival for that day's show times.

FOURTEEN: A Theatrical Performance

Weekdays, February 4 through March 27

Main Exhibit

Visitors can experience *FOURTEEN*, a moving theatrical performance that sheds light on the Reconstruction era and the ratification of the 14th Amendment. Through dramatic interpretation of original texts, such as Frederick Douglass's open letter "To My Old Master," the 35-minute performance brings to life the leaders, influential figures, and everyday Americans who were central to the era. *This production has been supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.* Group reservations recommended.

The Road to Freedom: The Story of Slavery in America Program

Grand Hall Lobby

This interactive program explores the story of slavery in the United States through a constitutional lens, taking visitors on a journey from the time of the Constitutional Convention to the start of the Civil War. It will spotlight historic figures—like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Ona Judge, Angelina Grimke, Harriet Tubman, William Still, and Abraham Lincoln—and key events—such as the Missouri Compromise, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the *Dred Scott* case, and the secession of the South.

“Four Harriets” Program

Main Exhibit

Visitors can explore the lives of four American women—Harriet Robinson Scott, Harriet Tubman, Harriet Jacobs, and Harriet Beecher Stowe—who confronted slavery through literature, lawsuits, and direct action in their efforts to free themselves and others from bondage.

Decoding the Document: Reconstruction Amendment Gallery Walk

Civil War and Reconstruction Exhibit

Visitors can join the Center’s education staff to take a closer look at a rare copy of the Emancipation Proclamation, as well as the Center’s three new interactives on the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, and learn more about their history, the history of the Civil War, and the background of these critical amendments.

African American History Self-Guided Tour

Main Exhibit and Civil War and Reconstruction Exhibit

Visitors can pick up a flier at the Information Desk to take a self-guided museum tour highlighting important moments in African American history. Featuring:

- A rare printing of the Emancipation Proclamation, signed by Abraham Lincoln.
- A ballot box marked for “colored” for African American voters.
- Original copies of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments.
- A pen and inkwell used by Frederick Douglass.
- A copy of President Obama’s 2008 “A More Perfect Union” Speech.
- One-of-a-kind artifacts that give a glimpse into the daily lives of free African Americans in the 1700s who once called the museum’s block home.
- The American National Tree, featuring individuals who have made an impact on the Constitution throughout history, including Hiram Rhodes Revels, Paul Robeson, Fannie Lou Hamer, John Lewis, and more.

Giant Game Board Activity

Main Lobby

As part of the Center’s interactive daily programming in February, visitors can test their knowledge of African American history.

Online Resources

Interactive Constitution

After the Civil War, a series of transformational amendments, collectively known as the Reconstruction Amendments, were ratified. The National Constitution Center’s [Interactive Constitution](#) explores these

provisions (the [13th](#), [14th](#), and [15th](#) Amendments to the Constitution) with in-depth essays written by top scholars from across the political spectrum.

Classroom Exchanges

This February 14, students in classrooms around the country will commemorate the birthday of writer and abolitionist Frederick Douglass by participating in the [Classroom Exchanges](#), a new online program from the National Constitution Center that gives students the opportunity to connect with other students in real-time, face-to-face videoconference conversations on topics that matter to them. These 30-minute live exchanges will focus on freedom of speech, and are moderated by constitutional experts including judges and master teachers trained in civil dialogue techniques.

Educational Videos

The National Constitution Center's award-winning [Constitution Hall Pass](#) video lesson series explores the post-Civil War era and two of the pivotal Reconstruction Amendments. View full-length episodes on the [13th](#) and [14th](#) Amendments, as well as short videos featuring top 14th Amendment scholars [Eric Foner](#) and [Tomiko Brown-Nagin](#) and National Constitution Center President and CEO [Jeffrey Rosen](#).

Now through March 31, visitors can enjoy discounted admission with the National Constitution Center's Winter Warm Up sale. Admission prices will be discounted to \$10 for adults (usually \$14.50) and \$7.50 for youth ages 6-18 (usually \$11). This promotion is valid online only; tickets must be purchased in advance.

Admission during African American History Month includes access to the National Constitution Center's new permanent exhibit, *Civil War and Reconstruction: The Battle for Freedom and Equality*; the interactive main exhibit, *The Story of We the People*; the signature multimedia, theatrical performance of *Freedom Rising* presented in the Sidney Kimmel Theater; and the iconic *Signers' Hall*, featuring 42 life-size, bronze statues of the Founding Fathers.

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About the National Constitution Center

The [National Constitution Center](#) in Philadelphia brings together people of all ages and perspectives, across America and around the world, 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 nonpartisan 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 **Headquarters for Civic Education**, the Center delivers the best educational programs and online resources that inspire citizens and engage all Americans in learning about the U.S. Constitution. For more information, call 215-409-6700 or visit constitutioncenter.org.

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customers through its extensive network of approximately 1,250 convenient locations throughout the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Metro D.C., the Carolinas and Florida.

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