

# NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## THROUGH SERVICE, STORIES AND SONG NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER HONORS THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Philadelphia, PA (December 20, 2011) – In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s lifelong dedication to civility and service, the National Constitution Center will participate in the **17th Annual Greater Philadelphia Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service** on Monday, January 16, 2012. The Center’s day of remembrance will include service projects, musical and dramatic performances and special craft activities.

Visitors to the Center on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day also will have the final opportunity to experience *Fighting for Democracy: Who is the “We” in “We the People”?* on the last day of its three-month run. This groundbreaking exhibition, which pairs a must-see, multimedia exhibition from the Japanese American National Museum with an original theatrical production, traces the real-life experiences of a diverse group of seven Americans who bravely fought for equality, freedom and justice during the World War II era and helped paved the way for the Civil Rights movement and Dr. King’s work. Access to *Fighting for Democracy* and the Center’s Martin Luther King, Jr. Day events is FREE with museum admission.

In the spirit of Dr. King, visitors can participate in a quilting and sewing service project that benefits the Women Against Abuse shelter. This local nonprofit provides emergency shelter, transitional housing, legal services, behavioral healthcare, advocacy and education to victims of domestic violence. Participants will sew quilts, baby blankets and pillows for those in need while learning how quilting has brought communities together throughout history.

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## ADD ONE/MLK DAY 2012

At 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in the F.M. Kirby Auditorium, visitors can take part in a sing-along concert with "Two of a Kind," an award-winning, nationally touring, husband-wife duo who specialize in interactive musical programs for children. The performance will focus on themes related to Martin Luther King, Jr. through songs, sign-language, movement and stories, all with an emphasis on interaction and participation.

Beginning at 12:00 p.m. local actors and students from local colleges will read aloud Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous "I Have a Dream" speech. Throughout the day children also will have the opportunity to make special crafts, including "Hands Across the World" chains and "I Have a Dream" mobiles.

The day will conclude with a performance by International Opera Theater, in partnership with ValueDiversity.org, who will present an excerpt from their recently developed opera, *The Heart of a Hero*, at 3:00 p.m. in the Center's F.M. Kirby Auditorium. A dramatic combination of gospel, opera, movement, poetry and spirituals, *The Heart of a Hero* tells the little known stories of minority posthumous Congressional Medal of Honor recipients: First Lieutenant John R. Fox of the 92nd Infantry Division, Private First Class David M. Gonzales of the 32nd Infantry Division and Combat Medic James K. Okubo of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. The performance will feature historically documented text by Karen Saillant, artistic director of International Opera Theater. Music for *The Heart of a Hero* is written by three distinguished international composers: Carlo Pedini of Italy, Pierre Thillo of France and Von De Guzman of the Philippines. The International Opera Theater Multicultural Children's Choir will sing along side featured tenor Sergeant First Class Colin Eaton, a soloist with the United States Army Chorus.

Located on Independence Mall in Historic Philadelphia, the National Constitution Center is America's first and only nonprofit, nonpartisan institution devoted to the U.S. Constitution. As a cutting-edge museum, national town hall and educational facility, the Center illuminates constitutional ideals and inspires acts of citizenship through must-see multimedia exhibitions, live performances, timely public programs and dynamic educational resources. The museum dramatically tells the story of "We the People" through more than 100 interactive exhibits, films, photographs and rare artifacts; the stirring theatrical performance *Freedom Rising*; and the iconic attraction *Signers' Hall*,

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ADD TWO/MLK DAY 2012

featuring 42 life-sized bronze statues of the Founding Fathers. As America's town hall for constitutional dialogue, the Center regularly engages political leaders, scholars, pundits and journalists of diverse viewpoints. The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education and provides exceptional civic learning resources both onsite and online. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

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