



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media contacts for specific events are listed below

**Celebrating Constitution Day 2015:
Thousands of New Citizens Sworn in at Iconic Sites,
Students Coast-to-Coast Take ‘Preamble Challenge’**

PHILADELPHIA – Thousands of immigrants from across the globe will be sworn in as new American citizens, while students nationwide will take part in the “Preamble Challenge” to celebrate Constitution Day on Thursday, September 17, 2015.

The U.S. Courts are conducting 31 naturalization ceremonies at prominent sites across the country on Constitution Day and another 21 ceremonies in the weeks surrounding it, part of a growing annual effort by the federal judiciary to swear in citizens on that day.

Hundreds of teachers from Washington to Florida have signed up classes, schools and districts for the [Preamble Challenge](#), in which students and teachers are encouraged to come up with creative ways to celebrate the 52-word Preamble to the Constitution (“We the People...”) and undertake Constitution-related activities to mark the 228th anniversary of its signing.

These activities and others were organized by members of the [Civics Renewal Network](#) (CRN), a partnership among 26 groups devoted to elevating the quality of civics education and producing a generation of more knowledgeable voters, leaders and citizens. Members of CRN include the National Archives, the U.S. Courts, the National Constitution Center, the Library of Congress, and Annenberg Classroom.

“At a time when schools are being asked to do more with less, the Civics Renewal Network has come together to offer high-quality, no-cost, nonpartisan educational materials online,” said [Kathleen Hall Jamieson](#), director of the [Annenberg Public Policy Center](#) of the University of Pennsylvania, the home of [Annenberg Classroom](#). “When it comes to understanding how our government works and being an informed citizen, civic education matters.”

Naturalization ceremonies

Courts in all 12 regional circuits are conducting naturalization ceremonies, many of which will include students leading the Pledge of Allegiance or presenting welcome letters to the new citizens. “Students are a central part of these living civics lessons,” said U.S. District Court Judge Rodney W. Sippel, of the Eastern District of Missouri.

“I think around the world when people think of America... they think of one of the first democracies that really championed these individual freedoms. People have been inspired by America for centuries now,” said German violinist Augustin Hadelich, who performed “America the Beautiful” at last year’s New York ceremony, where he became an American citizen.

Last year for Constitution Day, more than 8,500 people were sworn in as new Americans.

This year’s Sept. 17 naturalization ceremonies include:

- The National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., 10 a.m., in the Rotunda for the Charters of Freedom: the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Open to press but not the public. Expected are 31 people to be naturalized by U.S. District Court Judge Christopher R. Cooper. The speaker is Archivist of the United States David S. Ferriero. Press contacts: Miriam Kleiman and Laura Diachenko, 202-357-5300, miriam.kleiman@nara.gov , laura.diachenko@nara.gov.
- The National Constitution Center, Philadelphia, 10:30 a.m., in F.M. Kirby Auditorium, presided over by U.S. District Court Judge John R. Padova, with 50 immigrants. Press contact: Merissa Blum, 215-409-6645, mblum@constitutioncenter.org.
- A sunrise ceremony overlooking Lake Natoma in Folsom State Recreation Area, near Sacramento, Calif.; the Battleship USS Missouri, Honolulu, Hawaii; the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site, Topeka, Kan.; Thomas Jefferson’s Poplar Forest home, Forest, Va.; and the Institute of Texan Cultures, San Antonio, Texas. For more on these and other U.S. Court ceremonies, press contact: Charles W. Hall, 202-502-2600, charles_w_hall@ao.uscourts.gov .

Preamble Challenge

The Preamble Challenge will kick off at 8:30 a.m. at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia. Constitution Center president and CEO Jeffrey Rosen will lead more than 100 students from Constitution High School and Roman Catholic High School in Philadelphia in the Preamble on the front lawn. View a live stream at constitutioncenter.org/livestreams.

Other groups of students will be taking part in the Challenge all day. Find out more about it and sign up here: <http://challenge.civicsrenewalnetwork.org/>. Follow the day’s events and tweet and Instagram your own: #ConstitutionDay2015.

Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, on Sept. 17, commemorate the signing of the Constitution in 1787. Since the passage of the Byrd Amendment in 2004, educational institutions that receive federal funds are required to hold an educational program on the U.S. Constitution on Sept. 17.

The Civics Renewal Network is an alliance of 26 organizations dedicated to raising the visibility of civics education and providing free, high-quality educational resources. The partners include the [American Bar Association](#), [Annenberg Public Policy Center](#), the [Library of Congress](#), the [National Archives and Records Administration](#), the [National Constitution Center](#), the NEH's [EDSITEment](#) Project, [iCivics](#), [ConSource: The Constitutional Sources Project](#), and the [U.S. Courts](#). Information: <http://civicsrenewalnetwork.org/partners>. On Twitter: [@CivicsRenewal](#).