

## NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

525 Arch Street | Independence Mall  
Philadelphia | PA 19106 | T 215 409 6600 | F 215 409 6650  
www.constitutioncenter.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Ashley Berke  
Senior Public Relations Manager  
215.409.6693  
[aberke@constitutioncenter.org](mailto:aberke@constitutioncenter.org)

### THE FOUNDING PERIODS IN FRANCE AND AMERICA DISCUSSED AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

*In conjunction with NAPOLEÓN exhibition*

Philadelphia, PA (June 26, 2009) – The National Constitution Center’s 2009-2010 Visiting Scholar, **A.E. Dick Howard**, White Burkett Miller Professor of Law and Public Affairs at the University of Virginia School of Law, will join the Center on Monday, July 20 at 6:30 p.m. for a discussion about the founding periods in France and America. Professor Howard’s presentation will focus on how the U.S. constitutional experience influenced the debates on the first French Constitution and the divergence in French and American constitutionalism after those early years. Admission to “Founding Principles: The French Connection” is FREE, but reservations are required and can be made at 215.409.6700.

Only four years after the ratification of the U.S. Constitution, the National Assembly created the first written constitution in France in 1791. While debating key constitutional issues, the National Assembly repeatedly invoked the American Constitution, as well as various state constitutions, including Pennsylvania’s Constitution of 1776 and the Massachusetts Constitution of 1780. As consecutive Ministers to France in the 1770s and 1780s, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin played key roles in bringing U.S. constitutional ideas to the country. With few competing models, the U.S. Constitution immediately emerged as an important influence on constitutional politics in France and elsewhere.

Recognized as an expert in the fields of comparative constitutionalism, the Supreme Court, and constitutional law, Professor Howard has argued several cases before the Supreme Court of the United States. In addition, he often serves as a consultant to

## ADD ONE/FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

constitutional draftsmen in America and abroad, and has worked on writing constitutions in such places as Brazil, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Albania, Malawi, and South Africa. Professor Howard served as executive director of the commission that wrote Virginia's current constitution and has been counsel to the General Assembly of Virginia, as well as consultant to state and federal bodies, including the United States Senate Judiciary Committee. He was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University and is the author of several monographs, including *Democracy's Dawn* and *Constitution-making in Eastern Europe*.

Through September 7, 2009, the National Constitution Center is hosting *NAPOLÉON*, an exhibition offering visitors a rare opportunity to explore the private life of the Emperor of France and to see beyond the legend to gain an understanding of this complex political leader whose actions reshaped the landscape of Europe and America.

Created from the extraordinary collection of First Empire authority and author, Pierre-Jean Chalençon, the exhibition showcases rare, personal belongings of Napoléon I, as well as some of the most famous depictions of him by important artists of the time. The Constitution Center is the sixth stop on the *NAPOLÉON* exhibition's first North American Tour. The exhibition marks the first time a number of items from the Chalençon Collection have ever been on display to the general public. *NAPOLÉON* is a 6,000 square foot international traveling exhibition distributed by Exhibits Development Group in cooperation with Cultural Arts Entertainment Group.

Admission to *NAPOLÉON* is \$17.50 for adults, \$16.50 for seniors ages 65 and up, and \$13.50 for children ages 4-12. Active military personnel and children ages 3 and under are free. Group rates are also available. Admission to the Center's main exhibition, *The Story of We the People*, including the award-winning theater production "Freedom Rising", is included. iPod audio tours cost an additional \$4. For ticket information, call 215.409.6700 or visit [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

-MORE-

## ADD TWO/FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

Shire Pharmaceuticals is the local presenting sponsor of the Center's showing of *NAPOLÉON* and CBS 3 is the official media partner. CBS 3 (KYW-TV) and The CW Philly 57 (WPSG-TV) are part of CBS Television Stations, a division of CBS Corporation.

The National Constitution Center, located at 525 Arch St. on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the ideas and values it represents. The Center serves as a museum, an education center, and a forum for debate on constitutional issues. The museum dramatically tells the story of the Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education. Also, as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional discourse, the Center presents – without endorsement – programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

###