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**WHOOPI GOLDBERG, RICHIE HAVENS, AND NIKKI CHOOI
TO PARTICIPATE IN 2009 LIBERTY MEDAL CEREMONY
AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER**

Philadelphia, PA – Actress **Whoopi Goldberg**, as well as musicians **Richie Havens** and **Nikki Chooi**, will participate in the 2009 Liberty Medal ceremony at the National Constitution Center on Thursday, October 8, 2009 at 6:30 p.m., honoring filmmaker and humanitarian Steven Spielberg. Goldberg will provide remarks about the acclaimed director, with whom she worked on “The Color Purple.” Violinist Nikki Chooi, a student at the Curtis Institute of Music, will perform the Theme from “Schindler’s List,” and Richie Havens will close the ceremony with a performance of his hit song, “Freedom.”

In 2002, **Whoopi Goldberg** became one of an elite group of artists who has won a Grammy (“Whoopi Goldberg,” 1985), an Academy Award (“Ghost,” 1991), a Golden Globe (“The Color Purple,” 1985 and “Ghost,” 1991), an Emmy (as host of AMC’s “Beyond Tara: The Extraordinary Life of Hattie McDaniel,” 2002) and a Tony (Producer of “Thoroughly Modern Millie,” 2002). She is equally well-known for her humanitarian efforts on behalf of children, the homeless, human rights, education, substance abuse, and the battle against AIDS, as well as many other causes and charities. Among her charitable activities, Goldberg is a Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations.

Goldberg made her motion picture debut in Steven Spielberg’s film version of Alice Walker’s “The Color Purple,” for which she earned an Academy Award nomination and a Golden Globe. Her performance in “Ghost” earned her an Academy Award and a Golden Globe for Best Supporting Actress. She has also appeared in such films as “Jumpin’ Jack Flash,” “Clara’s Heart,” “The Long Walk Home,” “Soapdish,” “The Player,” “Sarafina!,” “Sister Act,” “Made in America,” “Corrina, Corrina,” “Boys on the

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ADD ONE/LIBERTY MEDAL PERFORMERS

Side,” “Eddie,” “The Associate” and “Ghosts of Mississippi,” “How Stella Got Her Groove Back,” “Girl, Interrupted,” “Kingdom Come” and “Rat Race.” She has also voiced characters in animated features such as “The Lion King,” “Racing Stripes,” “Doogal,” and “Everyone’s Hero.”

On television, Goldberg appeared for five seasons on “Star Trek: The Next Generation.” She also co-starred with Jean Stapleton in “Bagdad Café,” and hosted her own syndicated late-night talk show. She appeared in the Emmy-nominated HBO drama, “In the Gloaming,” directed by Christopher Reeve, as well as “The Wonderful World of Disney’s Rogers & Hammerstein’s Cinderella” and “A Knight in Camelot,” and appeared in the mini-series “Alice in Wonderland” and “The Magical Legend of the Leprechauns.” She starred in the NBC sitcom, “Whoopi,” which she executive produced. In addition, she appeared in the television movies, “It’s a Very Merry Muppet Christmas Movie” and Showtime’s “Good Fences,” which she co-produced with co-star Danny Glover. She produced and appeared on Nick Jr’s “Whoopi’s Littleburg,” and currently appears as moderator on ABC’s long-running talk show “The View.”

Goldberg has also been honored with multiple NAACP Image Awards, numerous People’s Choice Awards (including a special tribute in 1998), and five Nickelodeon Kids’ Choice Awards as “Favorite Movie Actress,” as well as various awards and honors for her many humanitarian efforts.

Folk singer and guitarist **Richie Havens**’ fiery, soulful singing style has remained powerful and popular since he first emerged from the Greenwich Village folk scene in the early 1960s. His work has inspired audiences from the Woodstock Music & Arts Fair in 1969, to the Clinton Presidential Inauguration in 1993, to the 30th Woodstock Anniversary celebration, “A Day in the Garden,” in 1999. For over three decades, and with more than twenty-five albums released, Havens uses music to convey messages of brotherhood and personal freedom.

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ADD TWO/LIBERTY MEDAL PERFORMERS

Born in Brooklyn, Richard P. Havens was the eldest of nine children. At an early age, he began organizing his neighborhood friends into street corner doo-wop groups, and was performing with The McCrea Gospel Singers at 16. At the age of 20, Havens left Brooklyn to seek out the artistic stimulation of Greenwich Village. His reputation as a solo performer soon spread beyond the Village folk circles. After joining forces with legendary manager Albert Grossman, he landed his first record deal with the Verve label, which released "Mixed Bag" in 1967.

Havens soon earned widespread notice for his live performances. By the 1970s, he was in great demand in colleges across the country, and on the international folk and pop festival circuit. He played the 1966 Newport Folk Festival, the 1967 Monterey Jazz Festival, the 1968 Miami Pop Festival, the 1969 Woodstock Festival, the 1969 Isle of Wight Festival, and the first Glastonbury Festival in 1970.

Havens' Woodstock appearance proved to be a major turning point in his career. As the festival's first performer, he held the crowd spellbound for nearly three hours. Having run out of tunes, he improvised a song based on the old spiritual "Motherless Child," which later became "Freedom," a song now considered to be the anthem of a generation.

In 2003, The National Music Council awarded Havens the American Eagle Award for his place in America's musical heritage, and for providing "a rare and inspiring voice of eloquence, integrity, and social responsibility." Havens will perform at World Cafe Live in Philadelphia on Friday, October 9, 2009.

Violinist **Nikki Chooi** entered the Curtis Institute of Music in 2007 and studies with renowned violinists Ida Kavafian and Joseph Silverstein. Students at Curtis receive merit-based full-tuition scholarships; Mr. Chooi holds the Joe and Marie Field Annual Fellowship.

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ADD THREE/LIBERTY MEDAL PERFORMERS

Raised in Victoria, British Columbia, Chooi has performed as a soloist with the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Edmonton, Montreal, Victoria, and Winnipeg symphony orchestras. In 2007-08, he performed on the Debut Atlantic recital tour series and National Arts Centre Debut series.

Chooi is a recipient of the 2008 Sylva Gelber Music Foundation Award. He was awarded the special prize at the XIII Tchaikovsky International Violin Competition in Moscow, and he was a semi-finalist at the 2006 Quadrennial Montreal International Competition. Other major accomplishments include first prize in the Montreal Symphony Standard Life Strings Competition, first place in the Shean Strings Competition, and the Grand Award at the Canadian National Music Festival.

Chooi will be accompanied on piano by Curtis Institute staff accompanist, **Jungeun Kim**. Kim earned her Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the Juilliard School. She has won numerous awards, including the Young Musicians Foundation Competition and VOCE Competition in Los Angeles. In addition, she has been featured in the Philadelphia Orchestra's Chamber Music series, and has collaborated with such distinguished artists as Sarah Chang, Ida Kavafian, Peter Wiley, Ruggiero Ricci, Aaron Rosand, Kurt Masur, Riccardo Chailly and Wolfgang Sawalish. In 2005, she founded the New York Summer Music Festival, where she serves as the executive director. Kim joined the faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music as a staff pianist of its world-renowned Student Recital Series in 1999, administrative coordinator of concerts and recitals in 2004, and director of instrumental accompaniment and outside performances in 2009.

The National Constitution Center's 2009 Liberty Medal will be awarded to filmmaker and humanitarian Steven Spielberg for his artistic and personal commitment to the preservation of human rights. Through his award-winning films, Spielberg presents stories of the struggle and triumph of humanity over tyranny, to inform and inspire millions to better understand the abiding call of liberty. Spielberg also dedicates himself to gathering and archiving testimonies of survivors and other witnesses of genocide through the Shoah Visual History Foundation, ensuring future generations will never forget the tragedy of liberty lost.

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ADD FOUR/LIBERTY MEDAL PERFORMERS

The public ceremony will take place on Thursday, October 8, 2009, at 6:30 p.m. at the National Constitution Center in Historic Philadelphia. The event will be webcast live at www.6abc.com, and will be broadcast on WPVI-TV on Sunday, October 18, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.

The Liberty Medal was established in 1988 by We the People 200 to commemorate the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, annually honoring men and women of courage and conviction who strive to secure the blessings of liberty to people around the globe.

Ira Lubert, of Independence Capital Partners, has renewed his support for the Liberty Medal ceremony and will sponsor the Liberty Medal Award in 2009. Citizens Bank is the presenting sponsor for the Presidents Reception prior to the Liberty Medal ceremony. The Liberty Medal is also supported by the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

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. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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