



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE CONSTITUTIONAL WALKING TOUR ANNOUNCES STUDENT WINNERS IN ITS  
FIRST ANNUAL AMERICAN FREEDOM ESSAY CONTEST**

***Students from Philadelphia and Montgomery Counties in Pennsylvania and Burlington County in  
New Jersey Named Winners***

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** – November 27, 2007 – The Constitutional Walking Tour of Philadelphia today announced the student winners of its 2007 American Freedom Essay Contest.

The winner in the Elementary School Category (Grades 1-5) was Leah Huebner from the William H. Loesche School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia county) for her essay “This is what FREEDOM means to me” (Teacher: Merle Fine).

The winner in the Middle School Category (Grades 6-8) was Santina Pescatore from Waldron Mercy Academy in Merion Station, Pennsylvania (Montgomery county) for her essay “Freedom Must Carry On” (Teacher: Eileen Flanagan).

The winner in the High School Category (Grades 9-12) was Alexander Sliwecki from Cinnaminson High School in Cinnaminson, New Jersey (Burlington county) for his essay about Freedom of Speech (Teacher: Megan Schweitzer).

The American Freedom Essay Contest received many wonderful essays from students attending public and private schools, as well as those being home schooled, all along the East Coast of the United States. In total, there were approximately 2,000 essays received from more than 100 schools which participated in this Constitution Day contest. Schools from the following states participated including Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. The winning essays will be posted online at [www.theconstitutional.com/essay](http://www.theconstitutional.com/essay).

“We were thrilled with the response to our inaugural American Freedom Essay Contest,” stated Jonathan Bari, Chairman of The Constitutional Walking Tour. “We salute all of the students and educators who participated in the contest on a job well done with the high caliber of essays that we received.”

Essay topics represented a broad spectrum of ideas and different points of view on various subjects including freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, freedom of the press, the right to petition the government, the right to bear arms, the right to pursue one’s happiness, etc.

## **American Freedom Essay Contest**

September 17<sup>th</sup> is designated as Constitution Day because on that date in 1787, the delegates of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia signed the United States Constitution at Independence Hall. Each year, The Constitutional Walking Tour celebrates Constitution Day throughout the month of September, and teachers are encouraged to utilize The Constitutional's many free educational resources available at: [www.TheConstitutional.com/1787](http://www.TheConstitutional.com/1787) .

This year, in honor of Constitution Day, The Constitutional Walking Tour and The Philadelphia Inquirer asked students to give their views about American freedom. The American Freedom Essay Contest challenged educators to get their students to write a 100-300 word essay on the importance of freedom in their lives. Entries were judged in Elementary School, Middle School and High School categories with the winner in each category earning a free field trip of Historic Philadelphia with The Constitutional Walking Tour for his/her class.<sup>1</sup> For more details on The Constitutional's field trips, visit [www.TheConstitutional.com/schools](http://www.TheConstitutional.com/schools).

The contest is planned to be an annual event. To sign up to receive an email when the details of the 2008 contest is announced, visit [www.TheConstitutional.com/schools](http://www.TheConstitutional.com/schools) and sign up for The Constitutional Walking Tour's Educator mailing list.

## **Background on Constitution Day**

In late 2004, Senator Robert Byrd, one of the United States Senate's leading Constitutional scholars, introduced legislation that President George W. Bush signed into law on December 8, 2004 requiring that all schools, colleges and Federal agencies receiving Federal funds offer annual educational programming involving the Constitution of the United States on or around Constitution Day, September 17<sup>th</sup>.

## **The Constitutional's Educator Resources**

The Constitutional Walking Tour offers a variety of resources to help Educational Institutions and Federal Agencies fulfill the annual requirement for Constitution Day programming, including The Constitutional Guided Walking Tour.

The Constitutional Guided Walking Tour tells the dramatic story of the brave men and women who were responsible for creating America. Step back in time to see where The United States Constitution was created. See more than 20 of the most historic sites and attractions in 75 minutes on a 1.25-mile outdoor journey, including many sites and topics related to the U.S. Constitution such as Independence Hall and the National Constitution Center. Group tours and field trips are available year-round with advance reservations. Group rates and student discounts are available for groups of 25 or more. For more

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<sup>1</sup> No purchase necessary. For complete contest rules, please see [www.TheConstitutional.com/essayrules](http://www.TheConstitutional.com/essayrules)

information, visit [www.TheConstitutional.com/schools](http://www.TheConstitutional.com/schools), or call our group sales department at 215.525.1776.

For details on all of The Constitutional's educational resources, please visit [www.TheConstitutional.com/1787](http://www.TheConstitutional.com/1787).

### **About The Constitutional Walking Tour of Philadelphia**

The Constitutional Walking Tour of Philadelphia takes visitors on a walking journey through America's Birthplace "Where Every Day is Independence Day!"™ Located in Historic Philadelphia, The Constitutional visits more than 20 of the most historical sites on a 75 minute, 1.25 mile outdoor adventure in the Independence National Historical Park area, which is home to the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall. The Constitutional guides visitors on a walk through history where The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States were created. Since 2004, The Constitutional has been consistently ranked as one of Philadelphia's "Top 25 Tourist Attractions" by the Philadelphia Business Journal. In addition, The Constitutional is one of the leading providers of School Field Trips of Historic Philadelphia. Visitors can experience The Constitutional: 1) on their own as a free, self-guided walking tour, 2) with a lively tour guide for a fee, or 3) with the Philly MP3 Audio Tour. For more information on The Constitutional's various tours, please visit [www.TheConstitutional.com](http://www.TheConstitutional.com). The Constitutional is also the producer of the Spirits of '76 Ghost Tour of Philadelphia which is "one part history, two parts haunt." The Spirits of '76 Ghost Tour features more than 20 of "Philly's Frights & Sights"™ on a 75 minute, 1.25 mile outdoor walking tour through Historic Philadelphia that features haunted facts and folklore. For more information, please see [www.Spiritsof76.com](http://www.Spiritsof76.com).

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**EDITOR'S NOTES** - For Education media, please visit The Constitutional's various online resources:

- **High-resolution Photographs** of Historic Philadelphia are available for media usage at: [www.TheConstitutional.com/images](http://www.TheConstitutional.com/images).
- **Story Ideas** on The Constitutional Walking Tour, Historic Philadelphia and Heritage Tourism are available for media usage at: [www.TheConstitutional.com/StoryIdeas](http://www.TheConstitutional.com/StoryIdeas).
- **By the Numbers** statistics on The Constitutional Walking Tour and Historic Philadelphia are available for media usage at: [www.TheConstitutional.com/numbers](http://www.TheConstitutional.com/numbers).

#### **The Constitutional Walking Tour**

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