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NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER'S NEW EXHIBIT ON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT AND 19TH AMENDMENT TO OPEN ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMENDMENT

The 19th Amendment: How Women Won the Vote, will open to the public on August 26, 2020, with special programming, the premiere of composer Patrice Michaels' new work RESOLVED, and an online Town Hall discussion with historians and scholars

Philadelphia, PA (August 21, 2020) – On August 26, the National Constitution Center will open [The 19th Amendment: How Women Won the Vote](#), tracing the triumphs and struggles that led to the ratification of the 19th Amendment. The exhibit will feature some of the many women who transformed constitutional history—including Sojourner Truth, Alice Paul, and Ida B. Wells—and will allow visitors to better understand the long fight for women's suffrage.

"During this milestone year while America celebrates the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote, we are thrilled to provide Americans the opportunity to learn about this landmark amendment and the path to its ratification both through this extraordinary new exhibit and online," said Jeffrey Rosen, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center. "It's an honor for the National Constitution Center to tell these stories of women's suffrage among our founding documents galleries and Civil War and Reconstruction gallery, so Americans can better understand how these amendments more fully embrace the promises of equal citizenship espoused by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution."

The 19th Amendment: How Women Won the Vote is a key component of the National Constitution Center's [Women and the Constitution initiative](#), celebrating the centennial anniversary of the 19th Amendment in 2020 and beyond. As part of the initiative and in conjunction with the new exhibit, the Center will host a variety of online programming on August 26. Online programming will include:

- The premiere performance of *RESOLVED*, a new 18-minute song cycle about the 19th Amendment and the American women's suffrage movement by **Patrice Michaels**, performed by internationally-renowned mezzo-soprano **J'Nai Bridges** and pianist **Laura Ward**, followed by an *America's Town Hall* program about iconic women who fought for the 19th Amendment and the Equal Rights Amendment in partnership with [Vision2020's Women 100](#)
- Meet the Suffragists Kids Town Hall program featuring some of the women featured in the Center's new exhibit, including abolitionist and suffragist Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, portrayed by historic interpreter **Cynthia Eaton**, and suffragist Dora Lewis, portrayed by historic interpreter **Carol Spacht**
- Tours of the new *The 19th Amendment: How Women Won the Vote* exhibit

Additional details about the events on August 26 are available [here](#), and registration for the premiere of *RESOLVED* and the panel discussion is available [here](#).

Beginning in the 1840s, *The 19th Amendment: How Women Won the Vote* will trace the roots of the women's rights movement in early reform work and the ultimate decision to pursue voting rights. It will highlight the constitutional arguments and historical context of the fight for suffrage over 70 years, as well as the tactics suffragists used to persuade state legislatures and the national government to recognize voting rights for women.

The exhibit will feature various immersive elements, including the National Constitution Center's [Drafting Table interactive](#), available online through the *Interactive Constitution*, where visitors can explore drafts of the 19th Amendment—and discover the events and documents that influenced its text. They can listen in to audio zones to hear quotes from the time period that capture the arguments for and against suffrage for women. Visitors will also be able to view an animated timeline and map that showcases changes as states started to grant women the vote—decades before the passage of the 19th Amendment. Later in the exhibit, visitors will enter a recreated prison cell to hear an actress's recording and view a silhouetted reenactment that captures the experience of a suffragist who was jailed for picketing the White House. These interactives will be available online through the [Women and the Constitution page](#).

Out of nearly 100 artifacts in the 3,000-square-foot exhibit, highlights include a rare printing of the *Declaration of Sentiments* from the first women's convention at Seneca Falls, a speech given by African American suffragist Mary Ann Shadd Cary before the House Judiciary Committee, a ballot box used to collect women's votes in the late 1800s, a letter written by Philadelphia suffragist Dora Lewis from prison, Pennsylvania's ratification copy of the 19th Amendment, as well as visually compelling "Votes for Women" ephemera.

The new exhibit builds on the National Constitution Center's *Civil War and Reconstruction: The Battle for Freedom and Equality* exhibit, exploring the continuing quest to extend the equal liberty promised by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution to African Americans and women.

To assist in the development of *The 19th Amendment*, the National Constitution Center assembled a diverse panel of America's leading scholars to serve as an advisory board. Scholars include **Betty Collier-Thomas**, professor of history at Temple University; **Laura Free**, associate professor of history at Hobart and William Smith Colleges; **Gail Heriot**, professor of law at the University of San Diego; **Reva Siegel**, Nicholas deB. Katzenbach Professor of Law at Yale Law School; and **Lisa Tetrault**, associate professor of history at Carnegie Mellon University. Additional exhibit details are available at constitutioncenter.org/upcoming-exhibits.

Support for the exhibit and the [Women and the Constitution initiative](#) comes from the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, Mauree Jane and Mark W. Perry, John P. & Anne Welsh McNulty Foundation, The Snider Foundation, The McLean Contributionship, Glenmede, SteegeThomson Communications, and Sarah and David Andrews.

Patrice Michaels' *RESOLVED*—a co-commission in affiliation with the National Constitution Center, Lyric Fest of Philadelphia, and Musicians Club of Women in Chicago and produced by NBCUniversal—highlights letters, proclamations, transcribed conversations and meetings to offer a glimpse into the minds and hearts of those who fought for and against women's suffrage. Michaels' most recent project, [Notorious RBG in Song](#), was first presented at a National Constitution Center event for a Washington, D.C., student audience in February 2019.

Admission to the National Constitution Center is free for all visitors through September 5, 2020, made possible in part thanks to support from PECO.

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About the National Constitution Center

The [National Constitution Center](https://www.constitutioncenter.org) in Philadelphia brings together people of all ages and perspectives, across America and around the world, to learn about, debate, and celebrate the greatest vision of human freedom in history, the U.S. Constitution. A private, nonprofit organization, the Center serves as America's leading platform for constitutional education and debate, fulfilling its congressional charter "to disseminate information about the U.S. Constitution on a nonpartisan basis." As the **Museum of We the People**, the Center brings the Constitution to life for visitors of all ages through interactive programs and exhibits. As **America's Town Hall**, the Center brings the leading conservative and liberal thought leaders together to debate the Constitution on all media platforms. As a **Headquarters for Civic Education**, the Center delivers the best educational programs and online resources that inspire citizens and engage all Americans in learning about the U.S. Constitution. For more information, call 215-409-6700 or visit [constitutioncenter.org](https://www.constitutioncenter.org).