

# NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY DECIDE: CAN GOVERNMENT PROHIBIT CITIZENS FROM OWNING HANDGUNS?

### *The Exchange at the National Constitution Center Features Respectful Deliberation on Hot Button Issues*

Philadelphia, PA (May 5, 2010) – As the Supreme Court prepares to make a historic ruling on the controversial Chicago gun-rights case, *McDonald v. Chicago*, students from schools across the country will discuss whether or not state and local governments should be able to prohibit handgun ownership during ***The Exchange*** at the National Constitution Center. The program will take place on Thursday, May 27, 2010, from 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. EST. **SuChin Pak**, of “G Word” on the Planet Green Network, will host.

*The Exchange* engages high school students in deliberation about current constitutional issues in a national videoconference format that promotes mutual respect. During this installment of *The Exchange*, students will examine various perspectives on gun control and will discuss the issue in relation to constitutional values. Students will also be asked to discuss the *District of Columbia v. Heller* decision and the pending Supreme Court decision in *McDonald v. Chicago*, to determine if the Second Amendment is applicable to the states. Scholarly advisor **Joyce Lee Malcolm**, Professor of Law at George Mason University School of Law, will help students understand how the Constitution shapes the debate.

Students will take part in the deliberation both at the Center and via videoconference.

Participating schools include:

- Abington High School\* Abington, PA
- Cassadaga Valley Central School\* Sinclairville, NY
- Elizabeth High School-Upper Academy\* Elizabeth, NJ

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- Rainier High School\* Rainier, WA
- R.A. Millikan High School\* Long Beach, CA
- Science Leadership Academy Philadelphia, PA
- Springfield High School\* Springfield, PA

\* Denotes school participating via Internet2

Any school in the country can view a live broadcast of the event at [www.constitutioncenter.org/exchange](http://www.constitutioncenter.org/exchange), where curricular material to support classroom discussion of the topic is also available.

Prior to *The Exchange*, participating schools will receive a curriculum poster developed by the education staff at the Center to encourage student examination and evaluation of gun control from a variety of perspectives. The front side of the poster is designed to initiate the conversation with a Town Hall Wall, a format pioneered at the Center and used in its main exhibition, which presents the fundamentals of an issue and various options for its resolution. The opposite side of the poster, created for teachers, displays the curriculum, including lesson plans and student handouts.

**SuChin Pak** is the host of “G Word,” a daily news series about innovation in the environmental space, on the Planet Green Network. Prior to joining the Planet Green Network, Pak served as an MTV News correspondent. While part of the MTV news team, she co-hosted MTV’s pre-Grammy show and covered the MTV Video Music Awards, the MTV Movie Awards, and the Sundance Film Festival. Pak was also an integral part of MTV’s 2004 *Choose or Lose* Campaign, which sought to encourage young people to vote. In addition, she covered the September 11<sup>th</sup> tragedy, contributing segments about young volunteers and Muslim-American women. In 2005, Pak traveled to Thailand to cover the aftermath of the tsunami. Following Hurricane Katrina, she visited Baton Rouge to report on college students at Louisiana State University who aided rescue and recovery efforts. Born in Korea, Pak and her family moved to the Bay Area when she was five years old. She graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, with a degree in political science.

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**Joyce Lee Malcolm**, Professor of Law at George Mason University School of Law, is a historian and constitutional scholar. She is the author of seven books, including *To Keep and Bear Arms: The Origins of an Anglo-American Right* and *Guns and Violence: The English Experience*. Her work on the Second Amendment and the right to be armed has been widely cited in court opinions and legal literature, including the US Supreme Court's landmark 2008 opinion, *District of Columbia v. Heller*. Malcolm's latest book, *Peter's War: A New England Slave Boy and the American Revolution*, has been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

*The Exchange* is made possible with generous support from the Annenberg Foundation and Scholastic Inc. Previous *Exchange* programs have focused on topics such as religious expression in schools, immigration, and the balance of school safety and student constitutional rights. During the most recent *Exchange* program, students discussed the issue of mandatory national service. For more information, please contact Jason Allen at 215.409.6644 or [jallen@constitutioncenter.org](mailto:jallen@constitutioncenter.org).

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).

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