



# BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**BHS Contact: Jeanne Hodesh  
347-381-3712**

**[jhodesh@brooklynhistory.org](mailto:jhodesh@brooklynhistory.org)**

**National Grid Contact: Karen Young  
929-324-5050**

**[Karen.young@nationalgrid.com](mailto:Karen.young@nationalgrid.com)**

**St. Francis College Contact: Richard Relkin  
718-489-5214  
[rrelkin@sfc.edu](mailto:rrelkin@sfc.edu)**

## **BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY, NATIONAL GRID AND ST. FRANCIS COLLEGE CELEBRATE JACKIE ROBINSON'S IMPACT ON AND OFF THE FIELD**

*Borough institutions plan exhibitions and events leading up to the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the day Robinson broke the color barrier in professional baseball.*

March 13, 2017 Brooklyn, NY—Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS), National Grid and St. Francis College have banded together to commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jackie Robinson's debut on the field for the Brooklyn Dodgers on April 15, 1947. With this historic moment, Robinson broke the color barrier in professional baseball, signifying, once and for all, the end to segregation in the Major Leagues.

Each of the three partnering organizations acknowledges the anniversary in their own respective ways. On April 5, BHS opens a year-long exhibition titled *Until Everyone Has It Made: Jackie Robinson's Legacy*, which tells the story of Robinson the extraordinary athlete, and Robinson the dedicated fighter for equal rights. Among the many objects on view is the treasured Dodger's 1955 World Series Championship banner. At noon that day, sports historian Joseph Dorinson will deliver a public lecture on Robinson's contribution to American history at St. Francis College. And from April 3 until April 14, National Grid hosts a pop-up exhibition that tells the story of Jackie Robinson's life.

The collaborative celebration is also an educational event for students from grade school through college. St. Francis College freshmen enrolled in a class about protest took multiple trips to BHS's Othmer Library to conduct research on the event that changed baseball. After examining artifacts and other resources they created a brochure that will be available at the two exhibitions and lecture, teaching visitors about this moment in history and how it relates to the art of protest. In addition, during the 2017-2018 school year, BHS educators will offer on-site school groups a special exhibition-based program that uses Robinson's life as a springboard to discuss segregation, social justice, and protest.

“In honoring the legacy of Jackie Robinson, we are thrilled to partner with some of Brooklyn’s finest institutions. By engaging students of all ages in this celebration, we are able to impart the importance of Robinson’s role in shaping American history to a new generation,” said Deborah Schwartz, President of Brooklyn Historical Society.

“Jackie Robinson’s commitment to Brooklyn – and his perseverance and courage – paved a way into the history of baseball and the civil rights movement,” said Ken Daly, President of National Grid New York. “National Grid is pleased to celebrate our shared history – as our legacy company headquarters was next to the former Dodgers headquarters, where history was made when Jackie signed his groundbreaking contract. I am so proud to work for a company that has its own long history of supporting the Brooklyn community and building a team of employees who are diverse and inclusive in every way. On a personal note, Jackie Robinson was a hero to my Dad who has special memories of being a Dodgers fan as a child and I am now privileged to share Jackie’s lessons with my own four children.”

“By integrating America’s national pastime in 1947, Jackie Robinson paved the way for the decades of major civil rights victories that followed,” said St. Francis College History Professor Sara Rzeszutek Haviland, whose students have been researching Robinson all year and designed the brochure which accompanies the exhibitions. “As a college that embraces diversity and inclusion, St. Francis is excited to participate in this community partnership to honor Robinson’s life and legacy. We are also thrilled that this event has given our students the opportunity to conduct hands-on archival research and participate in such a significant celebration.”

The events offered by the partners are:

**Exhibition: *Until Everyone Has It Made: Jackie Robinson’s Legacy***

**April 5, 2017 – June, 2018**

**Brooklyn Historical Society, 128 Pierrepont St.**

On April 15, 1947 Jackie Robinson broke the professional baseball color line when the Brooklyn Dodgers started him at first base. This exhibition celebrates that seminal moment in American history by featuring an array of archival materials, photography, programs, and memorabilia, all of which tells a story that continues to resonate today.

**Brown Bag Lunch and Lecture: *Jackie Robinson’s Legacy***

**April 5, 12 – 1:30 pm**

**St. Francis College, 182 Remsen St.**

Brown bag lunch and lecture on the life of Jackie Robinson by Joseph Dorinson, Professor of History, LIU-Brooklyn; moderated by Sara Rzeszutek Haviland, Assistant Professor of History, St. Francis College

**Jackie Robinson Pop-up Exhibition**

**April 3 – April 14, 2017**

**National Grid, One MetroTech Center, 2nd floor**

Pop-up exhibition open to the public Monday – Friday, 8:15 am – 5pm

**About National Grid**

National Grid (LSE: NG; NYSE: NGG) is an electricity and natural gas delivery company that connects nearly 7 million customers to vital energy sources through its networks in New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. It is the largest distributor of natural gas in the Northeast. National Grid also operates the systems that deliver gas and electricity across Great Britain.

Through its U.S. Connect21 strategy, National Grid is transforming its electricity and natural gas networks to support the 21st century digital economy with smarter, cleaner, and more resilient energy solutions. Connect21 is vital to our communities' long-term economic and environmental health and aligns with regulatory initiatives in New York (REV: Reforming the Energy Vision) and Massachusetts (Grid Modernization.)

**About St. Francis College**

St. Francis College, founded in 1859 by the Franciscan Brothers of Brooklyn, is located in Brooklyn Heights, N.Y. Since its founding, the College has pursued its Franciscan mission to provide an affordable, high-quality education to students from New York City's five boroughs and beyond.

**About Brooklyn Historical Society**

Founded in 1863, Brooklyn Historical Society is a nationally recognized urban history center dedicated to preserving and encouraging the study of Brooklyn's extraordinary 400-year history. Located in Brooklyn Heights and housed in a magnificent landmark building designed by George Post and opened in 1881, today's BHS is a cultural hub for civic dialogue, thoughtful engagement and community outreach.

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