



REKINDLING THE SPIRIT OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Inspiring the Next Generation to Uphold America's First Principles



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



The Steamboat Institute

Inspiring Americans to Greatness since 2008



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OUR MISSION

The Steamboat Institute promotes America's first principles and inspires active involvement in the defense of liberty. We stand for the following five founding principles:

- ★ Limited government
- ★ Limited taxation and fiscal responsibility
 - ★ Free market capitalism
- ★ Individual rights and responsibilities
- ★ Strong national defense



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SI's Emerging Leaders Council and scholarship recipients with Fox News Chief Political Anchor Bret Baier at the 2025 Freedom Conference in Beaver Creek, CO

Here at The Steamboat Institute, we are Defenders of Freedom and Advocates of Liberty. We believe that America is a great nation because of our people, not because of our government.

The Steamboat Institute promotes America's first principles and inspires active involvement in the defense of liberty. Though we were founded in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, in 2008, The Steamboat Institute is not a place ... it's an idea — an idea that provides educational tools, information and inspiration to those who hold our founding principles dear.

Limited government, limited taxation and free market capitalism, individual rights and responsibilities, and strong national defense — these are the principles that have made America the greatest nation on Earth!

We take seriously the concept that freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction, and we intend to make sure that America grows stronger during our watch.

We create programs and initiatives to ensure America's freedom for future generations. Our Annual Freedom Conference brings Americans together to discuss the top issues facing the nation. Our Campus Liberty Tour and Emerging Leaders Council allow us to reach the next generation with common sense ideas and the tools to be advocates of liberty in their communities. Our Journalism Fellows are fighting the mainstream narratives in the media to reach millions of Americans with a message of hope for the future of our country.

Our events are tremendously popular because they provide unique opportunities for people to have direct and personal contact with nationally recognized leaders in conservative thought and policy. This is an essential component in our fight for freedom.

When we started The Steamboat Institute in 2008, it was out of genuine concern for the future of our country. The Steamboat Institute has succeeded beyond anything we could have imagined. We have found that there is a tremendous desire by many Americans to make a difference in our communities, our states, and our nation.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN



In Fall 2025, a student at Washington & Lee University, who had attended one of our Campus Liberty Tour debates, sent me an email asking for advice. She lamented that she no longer knew how to talk honestly with some of her closest friends. When they learned she held certain views, the conversations simply stopped. Group chats went silent. Invitations dried up. Disagreement had become grounds for social exile. In the wake of political violence that rattled the country last year – including the assassination of Charlie Kirk – the student felt an urgency to do something constructive though she had no idea where to begin.

How do you bring people together to talk about hard issues without it totally blowing up?

That question encapsulates the civic crisis of our time.

As our nation approaches its 250th anniversary, the greatest threat to American self-government and liberty is the collapse of civil disagreement. Our republic cannot survive if its citizens no longer know how to disagree without trying to silence one another. America's founders understood this intuitively. The Constitution was born of conflict that was structured, reasoned, and very much public. Yet, today, in practice and especially with younger generations, this Constitutional wisdom is challenged.

The good news? Steamboat Institute's programs – including our popular **Campus Liberty Tour** debates – turn ideological confrontation into intellectual curiosity. Students, faculty, and all who attended our **11 debates in 2025** were made to feel welcome and comfortable engaging with differing opinions. Barriers to civil conversation were removed, allowing true intellectual engagement to flourish. It's no wonder that more universities and campus groups – *from Ivy League schools to community colleges* – are reaching out to SI for help with bringing civil debate and discourse initiatives to their campuses!

Beyond the college campus, SI is building a powerful network of principled young leaders through our **Emerging Leaders Council**, now **45 members strong!** Reaching beyond conservative constituencies, our ELC members are becoming influential public speakers and writers, with pieces published in *USA Today*, TEDx Talks, and more.

Nationally, our **14 SI Fellows for Public Policy & American Exceptionalism** are shaping public opinion with principled writing and commentating for major media outlets, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Washington Examiner*, Fox News, Fox Business, CNN, and more, reaching **247 million viewers and listeners** in 2025!

In August, hundreds of people traveled from across America to join us for our **17th Annual Freedom Conference** in the inspiring Rocky Mountain setting of Beaver Creek, Colorado. Guests were treated to one of our most powerful speaker line-ups yet, including Fox News Chief Political Anchor Bret Baier, U.S. Secretary of Energy Chris Wright, Emmy Award-winning sportscaster Michele Tafoya, America's Tenor Steve Amerson, an all-star foreign policy/national security panel moderated by former Bloomberg TV Prime Time Anchor John Dawson, and our popular College Sports Panel!

At the core of all our programs is a commitment to inspiring people to defend liberty through civil debate and thoughtful discourse.

I visited with the Washington & Lee student on a Zoom call and advised her to start small. Trying to change the campus culture overnight would be a herculean task. I suggested bringing a few people together with the simple goal of learning how to “disagree better.” She followed my advice. Later that fall, the group hosted a watch party for our Campus Liberty Tour debate on socialism versus capitalism and continued meeting afterward not to reach consensus, but to simply keep talking.

As we prepare to celebrate America's 250th anniversary in 2026, Steamboat Institute is positioned to be the standard bearer for the movement to restore the art of civil disagreement. The future of America depends on it. We invite you to join us!

Jennifer Schubert-Akin

*Co-founder, Chairman and CEO
The Steamboat Institute*

2025: YEAR AT A GLANCE



The Steamboat Institute

CAMPUS LIBERTY

— T O U R —

11 DEBATES

Hosted on College Campuses Across America

1,491

In-person Attendance

10,404

Livestream Viewers

111,000

Online Views of Full Debate Videos

3 MILLION

Online Views of Short Video Clips

17th ANNUAL

**FREEDOM
CONFERENCE
& FESTIVAL***

340

Registrants

34

Scholarships Awarded

2 MILLION

Online Views



ELC
EMERGING LEADERS COUNCIL

45

Members

Including:

7

New members

Representing

15 STATES

and Washington, D.C.

STEAMBOAT INSTITUTE
FELLOWSHIP
FOR PUBLIC POLICY
AND AMERICAN
EXCEPTIONALISM

Fellows completed

456 MEDIA HITS

Including:

256

On Major Networks

Media appearances reached approximately

247 MILLION

Viewers and Listeners

2025 Fellowship Recipient

CARINE HAJJAR

Member of Editorial Board of the *Boston Globe*

CAMPUS LIBERTY TOUR



At Arizona State University, Stephanie Kelton and Steve Moore debated whether the federal government should make reducing the national debt a fiscal priority.



Reporters for "The Cadet" at Virginia Military Institute interview debaters Jonathan Turley and Daniel Farbman.



At CU Boulder, Jennifer Sey argues against allowing transgender athletes in women's sports.

Liberty requires citizens who are trained in the art of disagreement. Through its Campus Liberty Tour, Steamboat Institute does just that. SI's debates bring nationally recognized leaders, scholars, policy practitioners, and public intellectuals to universities for discourse that models evidence-based reasoning, deep expertise, and civil disagreement. Our focus is on teaching students – and all who attend – **how** to think, not **what** to think.

Since 2018, SI has produced more than 60 university debates nationwide, partnering with institutions across the ideological and geographical spectrum. Each event features two high-profile speakers who represent sharply contrasting perspectives on pressing national issues (e.g., capitalism vs. socialism, immigration policy, climate/energy policy, DEI mandates, and more). Moderated by professional facilitators (typically SI's Fellows), the debates offer an environment where opposing arguments are examined with intellectual rigor, mutual respect, and audience participation.

These events regularly attract hundreds of students, staff, faculty, and community members. Pre- and post-debate audience polling shows meaningful shifts in openness to new perspectives and critical evaluation. **For many students, a Campus Liberty Tour debate is their first exposure to ideas that promote liberty, capitalism, and strong national defense.**

Despite 2024-2025 being one of the most volatile periods on college campuses since the 1960s, not a single Campus Liberty Tour debate was shouted down or cancelled!

“Oftentimes, even when we do have debates, they're kind of sanitized and they pick uncontroversial topics or ones that they think will be less provocative. The fact that they didn't shy away from such an important one, especially for a college campus...is really inspiring.”

– Student attendee at Arizona State University debate on the national debt

2025 SPRING TOUR

FEBRUARY 11 PRINCETON UNIVERSITY, PRINCETON, NJ

RESOLUTION: Be it resolved, the U.S.-Israel alliance is a strategic asset for American foreign policy.

IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: 150

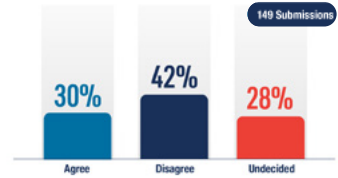
TOTAL LIVESTREAM AND ONLINE VIEWS: 89,919 (Livestream + Full Recorded Debate Views)

MODERATED BY: Tom Rogan – Foreign Policy/National Security Writer, *Washington Examiner*; Tony Blankley Senior Fellow, Steamboat Institute

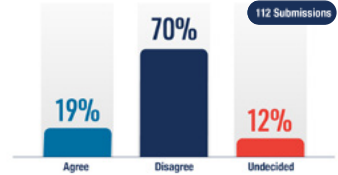
FEATURING:

- » Josh Hammer (affirmative) – Senior editor-at-large of *Newsweek*; Host of *The Josh Hammer Show*; Author of *Israel and Civilization: The Fate of the Jewish Nation and the Destiny of the West*
- » Dave Smith (negative) – Stand-Up Comedian; Host of "Part of the Problem" Podcast; Libertarian Political Commentator

Pre-debate Poll



Post-debate Poll



APRIL 9 UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, BOULDER, CO

RESOLUTION: Be it resolved, transgender athletes should be allowed to compete in women's sports.

IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: 68

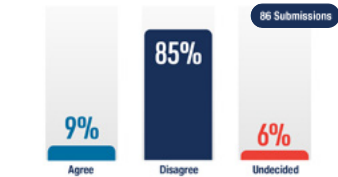
TOTAL LIVESTREAM AND ONLINE VIEWS: 3,759 (Livestream + Full Recorded Debate Views)

MODERATED BY: Kaylee McGhee White - Editor-In-Chief for Independent Women Features; Tony Blankley Fellow, Steamboat Institute

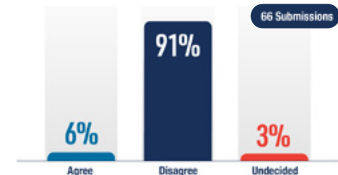
FEATURING:

- » Kevin Bolling (affirmative) - Executive Director of the Secular Student Alliance
- » Jennifer Sey (negative) - Founder and CEO of XX-XY Athletics; 1986 National Women's Gymnastics Champion; Former Brand President at Levi's

Pre-debate Poll



Post-debate Poll



APRIL 16 ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, TEMPE, AZ

RESOLUTION: Be it resolved, the U.S. federal government should make reducing the national debt a fiscal priority.

IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: 146

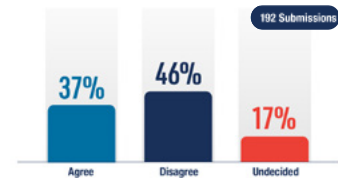
TOTAL LIVESTREAM AND ONLINE VIEWS: 13,295 (Livestream + Full Recorded Debate Views)

MODERATED BY: Carrie Sheffield – Senior Policy Analyst, Independent Women's Voice; Tony Blankley Senior Fellow, Steamboat Institute

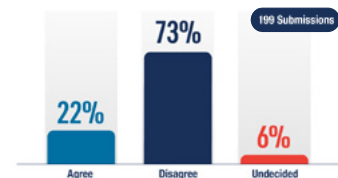
FEATURING:

- » Steve Moore (affirmative) – Senior Visiting Fellow in Economics, The Heritage Foundation
- » Stephanie Kelton (negative) – Best-selling Author of *The Deficit Myth*; Professor of Economics and Public Policy, Stony Brook University

Pre-debate Poll



Post-debate Poll



APRIL 23
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE, TN

RESOLUTION: Be it resolved, persons born in the U.S. to temporarily or illegally present parents are U.S. citizens by birthright under the Fourteenth Amendment.

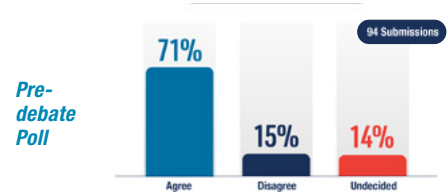
IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: 115

TOTAL LIVESTREAM AND ONLINE VIEWS: 990 (Livestream + Full Recorded Debate Views)

MODERATED BY: Phillip Wegmann – White House Correspondent for RealClearPolitics; Tony Blankley Senior Fellow, Steamboat Institute

FEATURING:

- » Vikram Amar (affirmative) – Distinguished Professor of Law, University of California, Davis School of Law
- » Charles J. Cooper (negative) – Founding Member and Chairman of Cooper & Kirk, PLLC



APRIL 29
COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY, GRAND JUNCTION, CO

RESOLUTION: Be it resolved, more federal agencies, such as the Bureau of Land Management, should be relocated outside Washington D.C.

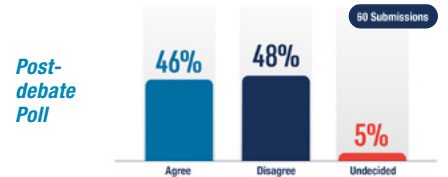
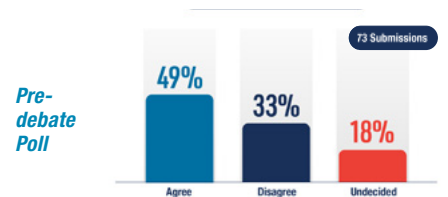
IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: 75

TOTAL LIVESTREAM AND ONLINE VIEWS: (Livestream + Full Recorded Debate Views): 1,024

MODERATED BY: Amber Duke – Washington Editor at *The Spectator*; Co-host of *Rising at The Hill* TV; Tony Blankley Senior Fellow, Steamboat Institute

FEATURING:

- » William Perry Pendley (affirmative) – Acting Director of the Bureau of Land Management (2019-2021)
- » Mary Jo Rugwell (negative) – President, Public Lands Foundation; Former State Director, Bureau of Land Management, WY



CAMPUS LIBERTY TOUR WATCH PARTIES

The Steamboat Institute continues to offer watch party packages upon request! Our livestream audience soared this year. Why not watch with friends? With a simple setup of your smart TV, our YouTube livestream can make your home party central. We also partner with student organizations, alumni groups, and think tanks to offer watch parties. Our watch party viewers get Steamboat Institute “swag” as well as access to QR codes to participate in the debate polls and submit questions directly to our moderators.

2025 FALL TOUR

SEPTEMBER 30

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE, LEXINGTON, VA

RESOLUTION: Be it resolved, the U.S. is experiencing a constitutional crisis.

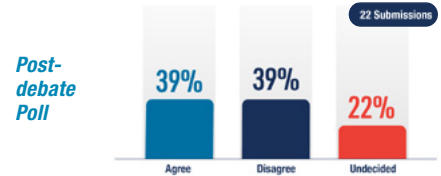
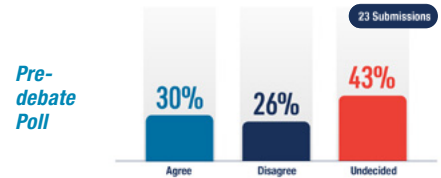
IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: 205

TOTAL LIVESTREAM AND ONLINE VIEWS: 3,118 (Livestream + Full Recorded Debate Views)

MODERATED BY: Kaylee McGhee White – Fox News Contributor; Tony Blankley Senior Fellow, Steamboat Institute

FEATURING:

- » Daniel Farbman (affirmative) – Associate Professor and McHale Faculty Research Scholar, Boston College Law School
- » Jonathan Turley (negative) – J.B. and Maurice C. Shapiro Professor of Public Interest Law, George Washington University Law School



OCTOBER 8

CORNELL UNIVERSITY, ITHACA, NY

RESOLUTION: Be it resolved, American global dominance is the best defense against tyranny and evil.

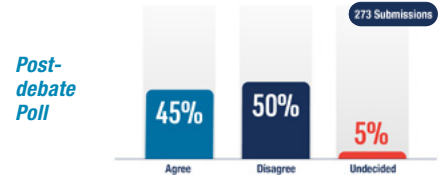
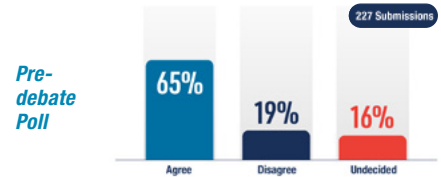
IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: 130

TOTAL LIVESTREAM AND ONLINE VIEWS: 759 (Livestream + Full Recorded Debate Views)

MODERATED BY: Sarah Bedford – Investigations Editor for the *Washington Examiner*; Tony Blankley Senior Fellow, Steamboat Institute

FEATURING:

- » Mary Kissel (affirmative) – Executive VP and Senior Policy Advisor, Stephens Inc.; Senior Advisor to Sec. of State Michael R. Pompeo (2018-21)
- » Justin Logan (negative) – Director of Defense and Foreign Policy Studies at the Cato Institute



OCTOBER 15

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, AUSTIN, TX

RESOLUTION: Be it resolved, the use of tariffs is beneficial to the American economy.

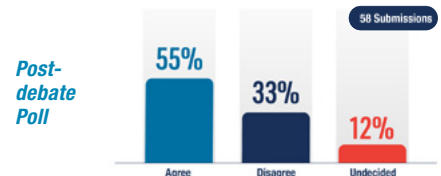
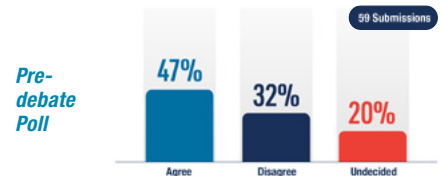
IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: 150

TOTAL LIVESTREAM AND ONLINE VIEWS: 499 (Livestream + Full Recorded Debate Views)

MODERATED BY: Philip Wegmann – White House Correspondent for RealClearPolitics; Tony Blankley Senior Fellow, Steamboat Institute

FEATURING:

- » Manisha Singh (affirmative) – Founder and Principal of Sunstone Strategy Group; Former Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs in the U.S. State Department
- » Daniel J. Mitchell (negative) – Co-Founder of the Center for Freedom and Prosperity; Former Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute



OCTOBER 28
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK, MD

RESOLUTION: Be it resolved, the government should ban all DEI programs.

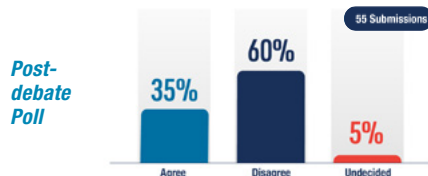
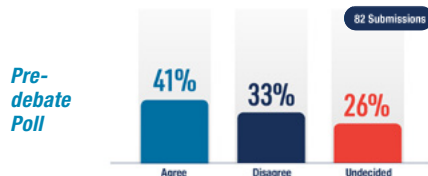
IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: 185

TOTAL LIVESTREAM AND ONLINE VIEWS: 668 (Livestream + Full Recorded Debate Views)

MODERATED BY: Carine Hajjar – Opinion Journalist and Editorial Board Member of the *Washington Post*; Steamboat Institute Fellow for Public Policy and American Exceptionalism

FEATURING:

- » Jason Riley (affirmative) – Columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*; Senior Fellow, Manhattan Institute
- » Ralph Richard Banks (negative) – Jackson Eli Reynolds Professor of Law, Stanford Law School



NOVEMBER 4
GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY, PHOENIX, AZ

RESOLUTION: Be it resolved, in the near term, artificial intelligence will do more harm than good.

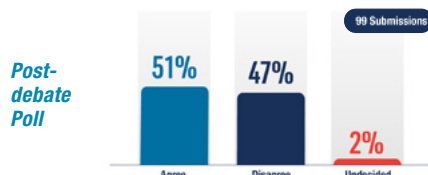
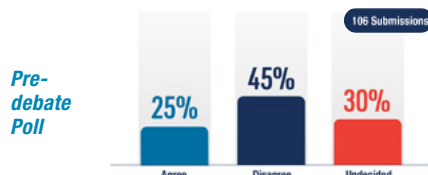
IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: 67

TOTAL LIVESTREAM AND ONLINE VIEWS: 874 (Livestream + Full Recorded Debate Views)

MODERATED BY: Hadley Heath Manning – Director of Steamboat Institute’s Fellowship for Public Policy and American Exceptionalism; Tony Blankley Senior Fellow, Steamboat Institute

FEATURING:

- » Bret Weinstein (affirmative) – Evolutionary Biologist, Author, and Host of The DarkHorse Podcast
- » Michael Strain (negative) – Director of Economic Policy Studies and the Arthur F. Burns Scholar in Political Economy at the American Enterprise Institute



NOVEMBER 13
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO

RESOLUTION: Be it resolved, capitalism is better than socialism for human flourishing.

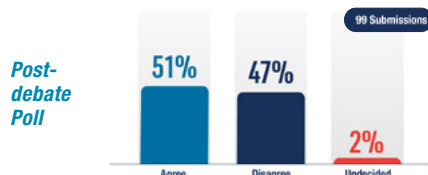
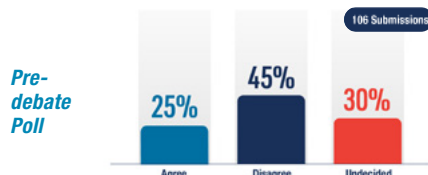
IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: 200

TOTAL LIVESTREAM AND ONLINE VIEWS: 2,395 (Livestream + Full Recorded Debate Views)

MODERATED BY: Hadley Heath Manning – Director of Steamboat Institute’s Fellowship for Public Policy and American Exceptionalism; Tony Blankley Senior Fellow, Steamboat Institute

FEATURING:

- » Yaron Brook (affirmative) – Chairman of the Board of the Ayn Rand Institute; Host of The Yaron Brook Show; Author of *In Pursuit of Wealth: The Moral Case for Finance*
- » Bhaskar Sunkara (negative) – Founding Editor of Jacobin; President of the Nation magazine; Author of *The Socialist Manifesto: The Case for Radical Politics in an Era of Extreme Inequality*



3 MILLION +

Total Online Views for Campus
Liberty Tour Debates in 2025

**CLT DEBATE LOCATIONS
2018 - 2025**



“This debate from Steamboat Institute was absolutely fantastic... [the debaters] both brought civility to a conversation that, especially right now, is one of the most heated topics of our time.”

– Max Whalen, President of the Cornell College Republicans

CAMPUS LIBERTY TOUR ADVISORY BOARD

- » Rajshree Agarwal – Director, Ed Snider Center for Enterprise and Markets, Robert H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland
- » Vikram Amar – Professor of Law, University of California, Davis
- » Brian Domitrovic – Senior Associate, Laffer Center for Supply-Side Economics
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- » Robert Kaufman – Professor, Public Policy, Pepperdine University
- » Hadley Heath Manning – Director of Steamboat Institute's Fellowship for Public Policy and American Exceptionalism; Tony Blankley Senior Fellow, Steamboat Institute; Senior Fellow, Independent Women;
- » Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill – Director of the Campus Free Expression Project at The Council of Independent Colleges
- » Judi Newman – Board of Trustees, University of Miami
- » Jason Riley – Member of *The Wall Street Journal* Editorial Board; Senior Fellow, Manhattan Institute
- » Ilya Shapiro – Senior Fellow and Director of Constitutional Studies, The Manhattan Institute
- » Tina Snider – Executive Director, Tina Snider Foundation; Advisory Board, Benson Center for the Study of Western Civilization, University of Colorado Boulder
- » Matthew Spalding – Kirby Professor, Constitutional Government; Dean, Van Andel Graduate School of Government, Hillsdale College, Washington D.C.; Board of Directors, Steamboat Institute
- » Ted Trimpa – Principal and CEO, Trimpa Group
- » Brandon Van Dyck – Associate Director of the Princeton Initiative in Catholic Thought at Aquinas Institute, Princeton University
- » Derek Wagner – Vice President, Intergovernmental and Community Affairs, Colorado Mesa University
- » Randy Wayne – Associate Professor, School of Integrative Plant Science, Cornell University

17TH ANNUAL FREEDOM CONFERENCE



SI Fellow Carrie Sheffield interviews keynote speaker Bret Baier.



17th ANNUAL FREEDOM CONFERENCE & FESTIVAL*

AUGUST 22-23, 2025

PARK HYATT • BEAVER CREEK, COLORADO

Since 2009, Steamboat Institute's Freedom Conference has drawn hundreds of freedom-loving people from across America to our retreat-like setting in Colorado's spectacular Rocky Mountains each August. Attendees, including 35 young leaders (ages 20-29) who attend on scholarships, are immersed in ideas that promote liberty and inspire Americans to greatness! Our guests meet and hear from our nation's top experts in national security, the economy, energy policy, media and journalism, artificial intelligence, sports, entertainment, and more. Intellectually robust and uniquely inspiring, the Freedom Conference is renowned for inspiring everyday Americans to have a deeper appreciation for the principles, policies, values and vision upon which America was founded and our precious freedom depends.

Total Attendance: 340

Conference guests enjoy the Beaver Creek Ski Area with America's Tenor Steve Amerson and Guy Benson



Panel on "The Future of College Sports in the Age of NIL and Player Compensation" featuring economist Daniel J. Mitchell, investor Mark A. Stevens, CU Athletic Director Rick George, and CU Head Men's Basketball Coach Tad Boyle

FEATURED SPEAKERS AT THE 17TH ANNUAL FREEDOM CONFERENCE INCLUDED:

- » Bret Baier – Fox News Chief Political Anchor and host of "Special Report with Bret Baier"
- » U.S. Secretary of Energy Chris Wright
- » Michele Tafoya – Emmy Award-winning sports reporter
- » Guy Benson – Host of "Guy Benson Show" and Fox News Contributor
- » Mary Kissel – Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute; Senior Advisor to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (2018-21); long and distinguished career at *The Wall Street Journal*
- » Steve Amerson – America's Tenor
- » Mark A. Stevens – Founder and Managing Partner, S-Cubed Capital; Executive Board Member, Golden State Warriors; Member of Executive Committee of U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Foundation
- » Rick George – Athletic Director, University of Colorado at Boulder
- » Andy Kessler – Columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*
- » Stephen Kotkin – Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution; author of multiple books on Stalin and history of Soviet Union
- » John Dawson – Founder of Acara Strategy; former Bloomberg TV Prime Time Anchor
- » Michael Doran – Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute; Expert on Middle East affairs
- » Matthew Spalding – Dean of Van Andel Graduate School of Government, Hillsdale College; author of *The Making of the American Mind: The Story of Our Declaration of Independence*



Freedom Conference speakers and guests enjoy the annual Coyote Gold Margarita Party, a fixture of Freedom Conference weekend since 2009!



Michele Tafoya speaking during the keynote luncheon

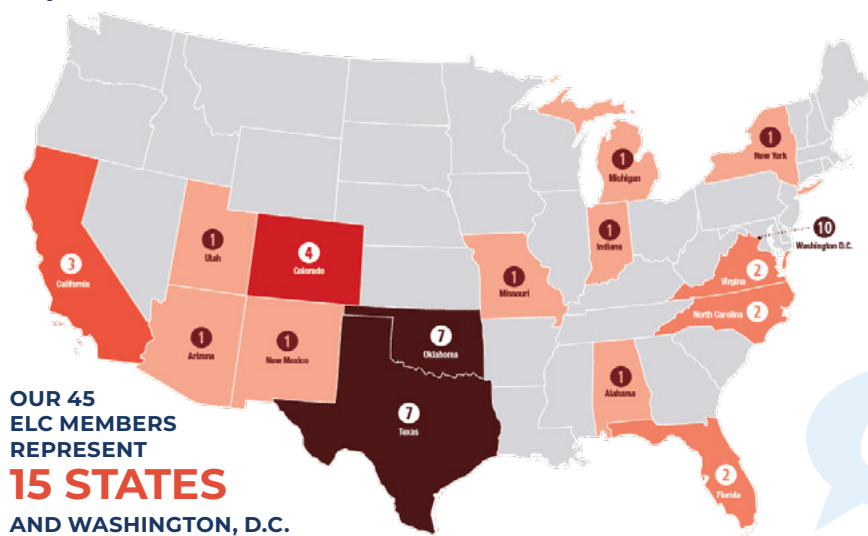
EMERGING LEADERS COUNCIL



ELC Members with SI CEO Jennifer Schubert-Akin and 2025 Freedom Conference speaker Michele Tafoya

The **Emerging Leaders Council** is a select network of 45 young leaders (ages 20-29) from across the U.S., offering multi-year leadership training, first principles training, media skills, and training in civil debate and discourse. ELC members enjoy an Annual Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C., where speakers have included The Honorable Neil M. Gorsuch, best-selling author and historian Amity Shlaes, economist Steve Moore, Newt Gingrich, and others.

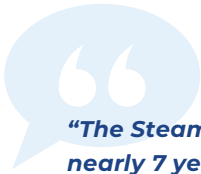
ELC members come from across America and work in a variety of businesses and professions, including aerospace engineering, filmmaking, corporate partnerships liaison for an NFL team, accounting and finance, and even a professional singer! Current ELC members have recently been hired to work in Washington, D.C. in the U.S. Departments of Energy and Agriculture, while others are elected state representatives. ELC members are becoming leaders on campuses, in civic life, and in local, state and federal government roles.



**OUR 45
ELC MEMBERS
REPRESENT
15 STATES
AND WASHINGTON, D.C.**

“I am deeply grateful for the ELC. While so many fellowships seem to end abruptly, the ELC’s multi-year model fosters a lasting community—a network of people who not only care deeply about one another but are also committed to walking together as we build the future of the USA.”

– Isabella Maciejewski, Director of Development, St. John Henry Newman Institute



“The Steamboat Institute invested in me nearly 7 years ago, and has been nothing but supportive as I’ve progressed in my policy career. I couldn’t recommend Steamboat more to those looking to gain key skills and a genuine network of other inspiring young professionals.”

– Solomon Chen, Policy Advisor, U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Workforce

The 4th Annual Leadership Summit was held in May 2025 at The Fund for American Studies in Washington, D.C. ELC members met and learned from renowned international singer Mary Millben, White House special advisor May Mailman, national defense expert James Carafano, Roger Ream of The Fund for American Studies, energy policy expert Will Franklin, and SI’s Fellows who provided media training and advice on being a persuasive communicator. Members also participated in the Outspoken Roundtables debate, honing their skills in public speaking and persuasion. A special treat included a tour of the White House.

Throughout the year, ELC members enjoy:

- » **Peer Mentorship** to offer encouragement, experience, wisdom and practical advice
- » **Monthly Zoom meetings** where they learn from experts such as Tim Carney, senior political columnist for the *Washington Examiner*, and Sabin Howard, renowned sculptor who created the World War One Memorial on the National Mall
- » **Networking opportunities** with SI’s vast network of speakers, Fellows, Board members, and others
- » **Scholarships** to attend the annual Freedom Conference in Beaver Creek, Colorado



STEAMBOAT INSTITUTE

FELLOWSHIP FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM



Carine speaks after receiving the fellowship award at the 2025 Freedom Conference

2025 FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT

Carine Hajjar

*Opinion Journalist and
Editorial Board Member
of the Washington Post*

The Steamboat Institute was proud to present its 14th Fellowship for Public Policy and American Exceptionalism to Carine Hajjar, opinion journalist and editorial board member at *The Washington Post*, where she covers U.S. politics, higher education, immigration, and national security with a focus on free expression and democratic institutions.

Carine was awarded the Joseph Rago Memorial Fellowship for Excellence in Journalism by The Fund for American Studies in 2022, during which she served as a fellow on *The Wall Street Journal's* Editorial Board.

Carine previously worked as a columnist and editorial board member at *The Boston Globe*. Her work has also appeared in *National Review*, and she has provided commentary on Fox News, Fox Business, and NewsNation. Carine graduated from Harvard College in 2021 with a degree in government and economics. She is based in Washington, D.C.

**PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS OF THE STEAMBOAT INSTITUTE FELLOWSHIP FOR
PUBLIC POLICY AND AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM**



Tom Rogan
Commentary editor and
foreign policy reporter at the
Washington Examiner
AwarDED 2014



Jillian Kay Melchior
London-based member of *The Wall
Street Journal* Editorial Board.
AwarDED 2015



Hadley Heath Manning
Director of Steamboat Institute's
fellowship program; Senior fellow at
Independent Women
AwarDED 2016



Kelsey Harkness Bolar
Founder of IW Features,
Independent Women
AwarDED 2017



Philip Wegmann
White House Correspondent,
Real Clear Politics
AwarDED 2018



Amber Duke
Editor-in-Chief, the *Daily Caller*;
Co-host of "Rising" on The Hill TV;
AwarDED 2019



Saagar Enjeti
Co-host, *Breaking Points*
on YouTube
AwarDED 2019



Patrice Onwuka
Director of the Center for
Economic Opportunity,
Independent Women; Co-host,
WMAL AM in Washington, D.C.
AwarDED 2020



Carrie Sheffield
Senior policy analyst at
Independent Women;
columnist and broadcaster in
Washington, D.C.
AwarDED 2021



Sarah Bedford
Political and
investigative reporter,
Washington Examiner
AwarDED 2022



Kaylee McGhee White
Fox News Contributor;
Director of IW Features at
Independent Women
AwarDED 2023



George E. Bogden
Senior Counsel for Trade,
Continental Strategy
AwarDED 2023



Brad Polumbo
Independent journalist; Host,
"Brad v. Everyone"
on YouTube
AwarDED 2024

The Steamboat Institute Fellows are dedicated, truth-seeking journalists and commentators who constantly strive to bring to light the realities often overlooked by the mainstream media.

2025 FELLOWS MEDIA SUMMARY:

456
MEDIA APPEARANCES

Reaching
247 MILLION
VIEWERS/LISTENERS

with an
ADVERTISING VALUE
EQUIVALENCY OF
\$4.2 MILLION

MORE THAN
256
of these hits were on major networks
(Fox News, Fox Business, CNN, MSNBC and others)



ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP



The Steamboat Institute Fellowship for Public Policy and American Exceptionalism was established to honor the memory of our dear friend, Tony Blankley, and to build on his legacy. Tony Blankley was a master journalist and communicator and acted as the Moderator for our first three Freedom Conferences (2009, 2010 and 2011). Tony was Executive Vice President at Edelman, a Washington, D.C.-based public relations firm, and served as editorial page editor at *The Washington Times*. His insights and good humor were indispensable.

The Steamboat Institute is proud to nurture and support the careers of outstanding young journalists and emerging conservative thought leaders who share our commitment to fact-based reporting, civil discourse, and an appreciation of America's founding principles.

SELECTION COMMITTEE:

- » Hadley Heath Manning – Director of Steamboat Institute's Fellowship for Public Policy and American Exceptionalism and Tony Blankley Fellow
- » Thomas P. McDevitt – Chairman, Board of Directors – *The Washington Times*
- » John B. Roberts II – Author, former Reagan White House and Reagan-Bush '80 and '84 campaign senior staff, and international political consultant
- » Tom Rogan – Commentary Editor and Foreign Policy Reporter, *Washington Examiner*; Tony Blankley Senior Fellow
- » Matthew Spalding – Vice President of Washington Operations and Dean of the Van Andel Graduate School of Government, Hillsdale College, Washington, D.C.
- » Ryan Wolfe – Director of the Center for Excellence in Journalism at The Fund for American Studies

MEMBERS EMERITUS:

- » Lynda Davis, Ph.D. – Widow of Tony Blankley
- » Steve Hofman – Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Labor
- » Lauren Maddox – Senior Policy Advisor, Holland & Knight LLP; former Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Education
- » Ed Meese – 75th Attorney General of the United States
- » John O' Sullivan – British commentator and former speechwriter for Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher; Senior Fellow with *National Review*

“The Steamboat Institute's Tony Blankley Fellowship has been a defining part of my media career. Through Steamboat, I've had the opportunity to have my own team of media bookers placing me on major news programs, have been connected with high-level sources and interview subjects, and moderated campus debates on key issues. It's been a blessing to be a part of a network of other highly successful and ambitious young conservatives in media, whether it's just to provide a 'gut check' or to help connect each other to stories and sources. We have truly become a family over the years, and I couldn't imagine reaching this stage in my career without the help of Steamboat and the Blankley Fellowship.”

– Amber Duke, Tony Blankley Fellow 2019, Editor-in-Chief at the *Daily Caller*

MEDIA AND REACH

2025 MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS:

Fox News/Fox Business: 226 appearances by SI's Tony Blankley Fellows

26 radio interviews, including Fox News, SiriusXM, iHeartRadio, and others

NewsNation: 16 appearances by SI's Tony Blankley Fellows

CNN and **MSNBC:** multiple appearances by SI's Tony Blankley Fellows

2025 Freedom Conference was featured in the **Vail Daily**

Campus Liberty Tour debates were featured in **The Washington Examiner**, **Lexington News-Gazette**, **Cornell Chronicle**, **Colorado Springs Gazette**, **Cornell Review**, **Colorado Politics**, and more

NOTABLE HIGHLIGHTS:

Jan. 20: *Hannity* (Fox News)
FELLOW: Kaylee McGhee White
TOPIC: Inauguration Coverage

Mar. 9: *Fox Report* (Fox News)
FELLOW: Sarah Bedford
TOPIC: DOGE Cuts

July. 16: *CNN NewsNight with Abby Phillip* (CNN)
FELLOW: Brad Polumbo
TOPIC: News of the day

July. 28: *The Evening Edit* (Fox Business)
FELLOW: Amber Duke
TOPIC: Zohran Mamdani

Oct. 7: *Varey & Co* (Fox Business)
FELLOW: Carine Hajjar
TOPIC: ICE raids

Oct. 28: *America's Newsroom* (Fox News)
FELLOW: Carine Hajjar
TOPIC: Governor Races

Nov. 12: *Faulkner Focus* (Fox News)
FELLOW: Kaylee McGhee White
TOPIC: Nancy Pelosi Retirement

Nov. 27: *On Balance with LeLand Vittert* (NewsNation)
FELLOW: Brad Polumbo
TOPIC: DC National Guard Shooting



OP-EDS WERE PUBLISHED IN NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS INCLUDING:

USA Today: "We're creating AI that could surveil US citizens. And the government is in on it."

The Wall Street Journal: "The Lessons of Ukraine's Drone Warfare"

Boston Globe: "Don't do the Crime if you Can't do the Time, Protesters"

Washington Post: "Low Birthrates Aren't About Cost"

Washington Examiner: "What Protests in the Street Have in Common with Deep-Pocketed Radical Movements"

U.S. News and World Report: "I was on Medicaid. It could collapse if we don't control spiraling costs."



The Boston Globe

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON
Examiner

The News-Gazette.

Cornell Review

CORNELL CHRONICLE

VailDaily



SOCIAL MEDIA

FAST FACTS

- » Our content received more than **9 million views** in 2025.
- » YouTube subscribers increased **from 24,000 in January 2025 to nearly 50,000** by December.
- » **63% of viewers were new viewers** – our content attracts new audiences every day.
- » Viewers of SI's videos (Campus Liberty Tour debates, Freedom Conference speakers, Fellows' media appearances, and more) watched **more than 800,000 hours** of our content.
- » **Facebook followers** increased from **28,300 in January to over 48,000** in December.

TOP-PERFORMING CONTENT IN 2025

- » **Princeton debate on U.S.-Israel alliance (Josh Hammer vs. Dave Smith)**: 6,203 livestream viewers (with a lively chat throughout). Following the debate, another **47,000+** watched the full 80-minute debate on SI's YouTube channel.
- » **CU Boulder debate on men competing in women's sports**: short video clips of Jennifer Sey's passionate defense of women's sports received **40,000+** views.
- » **Michele Tafoya at 17th Annual Freedom Conference, on standing up for diversity of ideas on college campuses**: Short video clips received nearly **1 million** views.
- » To view the **most popular short videos of all programs** (Campus Liberty Tour, Freedom Conference, and Fellows' media appearances), visit our YouTube channel.



Princeton debate on U.S.-Israel alliance has received **200,000+ views** including short clips.



Jennifer Sey clips at CU Boulder debate on transgender athletes in women's sports have received **40,000+ views**

 **INSTAGRAM**

Followers: **3,970**
 Reach: **655,200**
 New accounts reached: **600,000** ↑ 150%

 **FACEBOOK**

Followers: **48,304** ↑ 70%
 Views: **3.9 million**
 Engagement: **150,000**

 **YOUTUBE**

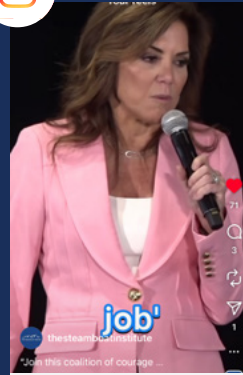
Subscribers: **49,657** ↑ 107%
 Watch time (hours): **490,000 hrs** ↑ 180%

 **X**

Followers: **8,285** ↑ 11%
 Impressions: **73,500** (average per month)
 Engagement rate: **5%** (average per month)



HIGHEST-PERFORMING POSTS:



Michele Tafoya nearly **1 Million views**

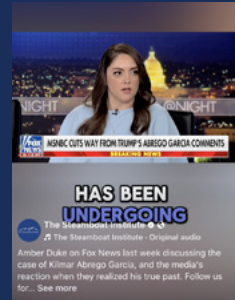


Amber Duke on Fox **215,000 views**



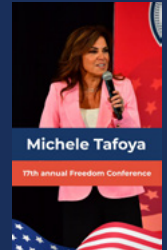
HIGHLIGHTS:

Amber Duke on Fox News
600,000 views



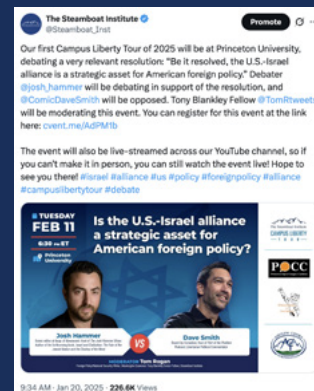
HIGHEST-VIEWED VIDEO:

“Is the U.S.-Israel alliance a strategic asset for American foreign policy?”



HIGHEST-VIEWED SHORT:

“Only certain voices are allowed on this campus?”



HIGHEST PERFORMING POST:

Our First Campus Liberty Tour debate of 2025!

COURAGE IN EDUCATION AWARD



Dr. Kanelos receives the Courage in Education Award from SI Co-Founder, Chairman, and CEO Jennifer Schubert-Akin.

The Courage in Education award is granted each year to an institution or member of academia who demonstrates a commitment to open inquiry, free speech, and intellectual diversity – traditional ideals of higher education that have been usurped in recent years in favor of identity politics and free speech restrictions.

2025 COURAGE IN EDUCATION AWARD RECIPIENT **Pano Kanelos, Ph.D.**

Founder of the University of Austin

Pano Kanelos, Ph.D., joined the University of Austin as its Founding President in 2021 and helped the young institution through its first academic years until assuming the role of Chancellor in the summer of 2025.

Dr. Kanelos and UATX are committed to renewing the mission of the university and to serving as a model for other institutions of higher education by safeguarding academic freedom and promoting open inquiry and civil discourse. UATX intends for its graduates to make important and enduring contributions to the advancement of liberty and the betterment of society.

PAST RECIPIENTS

- » 2024: Jay Bhattacharya, MD, Professor of Health Policy at Stanford University, Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research
- » 2023: Randy Wayne, Associate Professor in the School of Integrative Plant Science at Cornell University
- » 2022: Ilya Shapiro, Senior Fellow and Director of Constitutional Studies, The Manhattan Institute
- » 2021: Jameson Broggi, Second Lieutenant, United States Marine Corps; Advocate for South Carolina REACH Act; Member of Steamboat Institute's Emerging Leaders Council
- » 2020: Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, Michigan
- » 2019: Samuel J. Abrams, Professor, Sarah Lawrence College
- » 2018: Wallace D. Loh, President of the University of Maryland
- » 2017: Brandon Van Dyck, Assistant Professor of Government & Law, Lafayette College
- » 2016: Bruce D. Benson, President of the University of Colorado

LEGACY CIRCLE



THE LEGACY CIRCLE

To make permanent our Mission and Founding Principles, Steamboat Institute launched the Legacy Circle in 2020. Legacy Circle members pledge to include Steamboat Institute in their estate and deferred giving plans.

STEAMBOAT INSTITUTE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES ITS LEGACY CIRCLE MEMBERS:

Rick Akin and Jennifer Schubert-Akin	John and Ruth Denton	Ron and Chenza Lazof
Kristine and William Bensler	Roger and Sandy Dorf	Douglass Loring
Roger and Patricia Burton	William H. and Susan Friesell	Cole and Margo McCombs
Ellen Campbell	Aurelia Giacometto	Virginia and Richard Srednicki
Bruce Carlock	Cathy Grawe	Joanna and Otis Wragg
Cheri Carsten	Gary and JoAnne Hofmeister	
Lynda Davis	Irene Johnson	

For more information about the Legacy Circle, contact Jennifer Schubert-Akin at jsa@steamboatinstitute.org

ENDOWMENT FOR THE FUTURE OF LIBERTY

To ensure the continuation of our work in educating and inspiring future generations to defend liberty, Steamboat Institute established “The Steamboat Institute Endowment for the Future of Liberty.”

On July 31, 2025, SI kicked off a campaign to grow its Endowment for the Future of Liberty from \$330,000 to \$1 million, with a deadline of August 23, 2025. Led by a dollar-for-dollar matching gift provided by SI Board Member Mark Stevens and his wife, Mary, SI successfully met the challenge, raising \$1 million to increase the total endowment fund to \$1.3 million. The next goal is to increase the endowment to \$3 million. This is an important step in securing SI’s long-term future.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT STEAMBOAT INSTITUTE’S ENDOWMENT FOR THE FUTURE OF LIBERTY:

- » Make an unrestricted gift either in one lump sum or with a pledge for gifts to occur over a designated period of time.
- » Make a gift to support a specific program.

RECOGNITION FOR DONORS TO STEAMBOAT INSTITUTE’S ENDOWMENT FOR THE FUTURE OF LIBERTY INCLUDES:

- » Invitations to special private events with high-profile leaders in conservative, free market thought and policy
- » Special recognition at Annual Freedom Conference

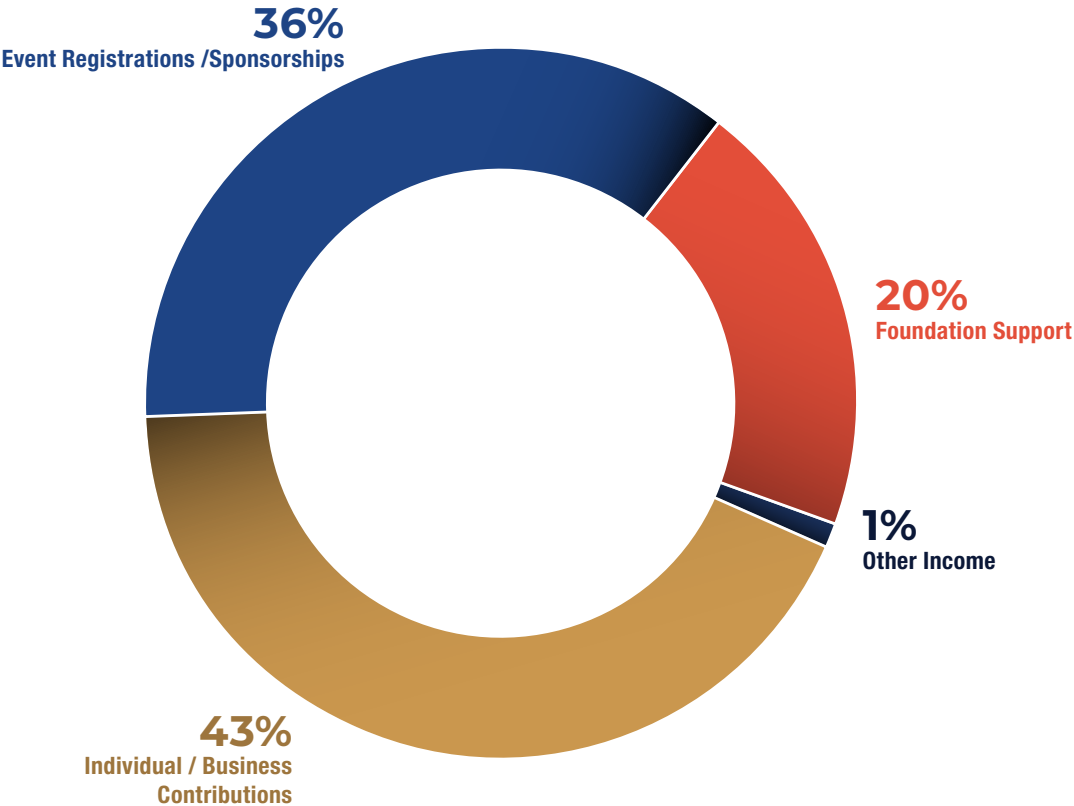
To send a check or donate online, include “Endowment for the Future of Liberty” in the memo or designation line. For more information on Steamboat Institute’s Endowment for the Future of Liberty, please contact Emma Eisenman, Director of Development: emma@steamboatinstitute.org

REVENUE AND EXPENSES

	2025	2024
REVENUE CATEGORIES		
Foundation Grants	\$606,750	\$890,318
Individual/Business Contributions	\$306,735	\$321,147
Endowment Gifts	\$969,541	\$210,200
Legacy Gifts	-	-
Freedom Conference Registrations/Sponsorships	\$736,220	\$642,635
Winter Policy Summit	-	\$17,485
Campus Liberty Tour	\$327,900	\$245,700
ELC Leadership Summit	\$4,125	\$2,625
Other Income	\$26,792	\$7,875
Total Revenue	\$2,978,063	\$2,337,985
EXPENSE CATEGORIES		
Payroll Expenses	\$500,812	\$454,898
Freedom Conference	\$553,053	\$502,124
Campus Liberty Tour	\$606,938	\$571,360
Tony Blankley Fellowship	\$160,528	\$162,058
Winter Policy Summit	\$3,060	\$167,386
Emerging Leaders Council	\$72,806	\$77,284
Fundraising expenses	\$79,175	\$70,638
General operating expenses	\$82,283	\$91,237
Total Expenses	\$2,058,655	\$2,096,985
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$919,408	\$241,000

FUNDING SOURCES

The Steamboat Institute gratefully acknowledges the support of individuals, organizations, and foundations in carrying out our mission:



2025 FOUNDATION SUPPORT

Adolph Coors Foundation
The Anschutz Foundation
The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation
Chiavacci Family Foundation
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**In Loving Memory:
Grace-Marie Turner**
Galen Institute
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Facilitator of "Defenders of Capitalism" program for
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**In Loving Memory:
William J. "Bill" Thomson, II**

OUR TEAM

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Jackson Grasz

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Moorpark, CA

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Director of Development
Littleton, CO

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THE STEAMBOAT INSTITUTE PROMOTES AMERICA'S FIRST PRINCIPLES AND INSPIRES ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEFENSE OF LIBERTY:

- » Limited taxation and fiscal responsibility
- » Free market capitalism
- » Limited government
- » Strong national defense
- » Individual rights and responsibilities



As a non-profit organization, Steamboat Institute's programs are funded entirely from donations from generous individuals and grants from foundations. We do not accept any government funding. **Your support allows us to reach millions of people across America with the message of individual liberty and American Exceptionalism!**

The Steamboat Institute is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-partisan organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.



Steamboat Institute

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Federal E.I.N. 26-2096621



PRAISE FOR STEAMBOAT INSTITUTE

“Steamboat Institute bet on me toward the beginning of my career, right when I was thinking of leaving journalism. It is my sincere hope, and an ongoing personal project all these years later, that I live up to that confidence and their incredible kindness.”

– Philip Wegmann, White House Reporter for *The Wall Street Journal*; recipient of 2018 SI Fellowship for Public Policy and American Exceptionalism

“Steamboat Institute’s Campus Liberty Tour debate was absolutely fantastic! Both debaters brought civility to a conversation that is one of the most heated topics of our time.”

– Max Whalen, President of Cornell College Republicans, attendee at Campus Liberty Tour debate on America’s role in the world

“The Emerging Leaders Council is a space where ideas are tested, leadership is refined, and lasting relationships are built. Being part of a community that values both the founding principles of our nation and a constant commitment to lifelong learning is incredibly meaningful to me.”

– Jayke Flaggart, Founder & Managing Partner, Red River Collective; Member of Steamboat Institute’s Emerging Leaders Council

“Steamboat Institute is an indispensable partner for building scalable, high-quality civil discourse programming.”

– Rajshree Agarwal, Director of the Ed Snider Center for Enterprise & Markets at the University of Maryland

“Congratulations on your 17th Annual Freedom Conference! From the quality of the speakers and the passionate debates to integrity of the content and professionalism of your team, you raised the bar. Your formula would attract many an audience not only in the U.S. but across the U.K., Europe, Australia and beyond. It was an honour to moderate the two panels.”

– John Dawson, Founder and Managing Partner, Acara Strategy; former Bloomberg TV Prime Time Anchor; speaker at 2025 Freedom Conference