

AFF

AMERICA'S FUTURE FOUNDATION

2019
ANNUAL
REPORT

INSIDE

SOCIALISM: *DREAM VS. REALITY*
WRITING FELLOWS SHINE A LIGHT ON GOVERNMENT
CHAPTER IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS
ANNUAL BUCKLEY AWARD WINNERS
REBUILDING CIVIL SOCIETY



I'd like to begin by saying thank you.

Every day across the nation, America's Future Foundation (AFF) is empowering young people searching for an alternative to the progressive message of bigger government, redistribution of wealth, and identity politics. Thanks to your support, we are building the next generation of leaders—by giving them the skills, the network, and the foundational principles they need to lead America into a free and prosperous future.

Your support accomplishes this in a few key ways: First, at its heart, AFF is a community-centered organization. We know young people need the social support and backing of a tribe of freedom lovers, and we work to build that at the local level through chapters on the ground in key cities. AFF chapters preserve robust debate and freedom of expression and encourage their members to be ambassadors for freedom throughout their communities.

Second, AFF empowers young advocates for freedom to raise their voices and gives them the platform to do just that. Through AFF's Writing Fellows Program hundreds of young people have been given the tools to write about free-market principles and the network to share those views in national media. Thanks to you, more than 4,000 articles were published by AFF alumni in 2019, ensuring that the free-market voice is represented in a space where it is rarely heard.

In this 2019 Annual Report, you will get a picture of everything your investment makes possible in communities across the nation. You'll read why young people rejected the socialist philosophy of their peers and opted to fight for freedom. You'll learn about our work on the ground to foster great discussions, and you'll meet young leaders who are boldly advancing the virtues of liberty and personal responsibility.

Rising generations of millennials and Gen Z are often cited as preferring socialism to capitalism, and demanding that the government do more to solve their problems. At AFF, we say to them, "Not on our watch." We know the formula for unleashing prosperity: a free and open market with a robust civil society, and we pledge to work every day to ensure that that remains America's legacy in the near future and beyond.

Thank you for your investment in America's future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cindy Cerquitella". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Cindy Cerquitella
Executive Director



Socialism: Dream vs. Reality

Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez...what do they have in common? Enthusiastic millennial and Gen Z supporters. Despite real examples of democractic socialism failing in nearby countries, the newest generations flock to big government to solve their problems.

But those who have lived under totalitarian regimes know better and want to ensure that their peers know too. This is why they joined AFF—to be a part of a community that educates with the truth and empowers them to fight back and solve problems. **Here are the stories of four AFF members who lived under tyrannical governments and resolved to fight for freedom in the United States.**



MY LIFE IN CHINA

Rhachel's Story

AFF – Jacksonville

In 2009, I moved to Beijing, China, to teach English. After graduating in 2008 I thought this would be a great opportunity to be able to support myself, travel, and get some job experience.

Up until this point, I never thought much about politics. I knew communism was bad and didn't support it, but nothing prepared me for what I found in the People's Republic.

There were places where the pollution was so bad that children were born with birth defects. Mind you, this was a year after the 2008 Olympics, after they cleaned up Beijing significantly for the international event. Most days I couldn't see the sky because it was covered by various hues of brown and yellow.

The censorship was terrible. I could not use the internet because everything is blocked by the Chinese government. My organization eventually got me a VPN to bypass Chinese government firewalls, but even then I had to be extremely careful about what I did online. That extended to offline too. Every cab has a hidden

microphone. Cameras watched me everywhere I went. My apartment and cell phone were bugged. When I attended church, I had to show my passport to prove that I was allowed. Conveniences like heat were entirely controlled by the government. They turned the heat off in March even though the cold lasted until May.

Every day I asked myself, "Why? Why are people living like this?" This led to my studying economics and rethinking partisan politics. I became alarmed about the direction my own country was taking. I was so concerned that I decided to head back to the US with the hope that I could fight for freedom here.

Since my return, I never forgot what I learned in China. It is so easy to think that totalitarian realities cannot happen in the United States, but we are already on that path. This is the reason I've spent the last several years fighting back against these destructive forces and why I'm extremely proud to be with America's Future Foundation. AFF is empowering my generation to take our country back.

MY LIFE IN VENEZUELA

Jorge's Story

AFF – Phoenix

I came to America because it is the place where I found more opportunities to develop myself, opportunities that sadly I never saw in Venezuela thanks to the socialist system enforced there since 1999.

As a foreigner who has only been in America for a little more than a year, I have already seen more than double the opportunities that my homeland Venezuela gave me in my whole life. The free-market system is beautiful and should be defended until the end.

Because socialism, no matter how democratic it could be, will always lead to bankruptcy, stagnation of the economy, and ultimately the loss of individual liberty.

I got involved with AFF in Phoenix because it's always beneficial for the liberty movement to work as a team. Liberty lovers across the US (and even across the world) should work in a coordinated way to provide a much more effective defense of individual liberty. I believe AFF has a lot of potential in that regard.





MY LIFE IN RUSSIA

Oleg's Story

AFF – Nashville

I came to the United States out of a desire to live free. The USSR was a slave-holding state, and I had no love for their variant of the “peculiar institution” (socialism).

Between no freedom to travel, the compulsive conscription to abusive military service, officially encouraged antisemitism, I had enough of them. My family learned English in advance of moving to the US, which we perceived as the most free country in the world. Our view proved correct, though the sheer number of government impositions on Americans was an unpleasant surprise.

If I had remained in Russia, I would be insane or, more likely, dead by now. I've followed the lives of some of my friends from back there, most of them did very poorly. Nothing of what I do here would have been possible in that country. The increasingly open enthusiasm in the US for reenacting the USSR is a concern.

America's Future Foundation is critical to stopping the rise of socialism in the United States. The fight for the future of American culture is won in individual minds, most importantly in the minds of the active, the passionate, and the competent segment of the population. AFF does a good job of outreach, especially to the people who aren't already committed to a position.

MY LIFE IN VIETNAM

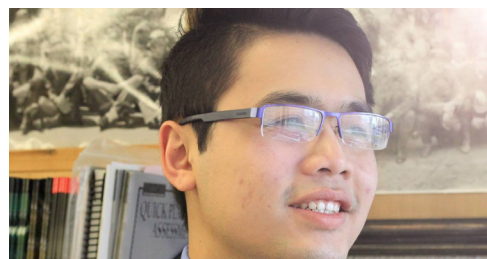
Thahn's Story

AFF – Columbus

About 10 years ago when my father got sponsored by my grandmother to come to the United States, he asked my mom to let me come here with him.

In my mind at the time, I thought that I would never leave Vietnam for another country. Not until living in the United States for a few years did I understand why so many people wanted to be in America.

The vast opportunities that are open to Americans and those who live here is so large that I cannot describe it all in a few sentences. People may complain that they don't get the same opportunity as somebody else, but America offers a wealth of knowledge that many people around the world do not have access to.



And the United States does not prohibit people from starting a business or engaging in the political process based on their political identification, like in Vietnam.

I think the change in social and economic beliefs among young people in the US should alarm us, and we need to look into why they are moving in this direction.

America's Future Foundation is one of the few organizations that shares my values and is targeted to serve young people my age. AFF provides extensive knowledge to young people who can mindfully impact their communities. It gives me access to policy experts and those who impact our government. It is exactly what we need to make us a better country.

AFF WRITING FELLOWS: SHINING A LIGHT ON GOVERNMENT AT ALL LEVELS

While the changing media landscape has brought new opportunities for aspiring writers, it's also led to the collapse of many local newspapers. This gap in local news coverage means far too many people across the country are left without reliable sources of information about what's happening in their own backyards. Even worse, the decline in local news coverage has led to far more polarization in voting habits, according to a study published in the *Journal of Communication* in late 2018.

Fortunately, many alumni of AFF's Writing Fellows Program have taken it upon themselves to help fill the gap in covering many of the issues that will have the most direct impact on people's lives.

As the new western editor for *The Center Square*, **Derek Draplin** (AFF Class of Spring 2016) works to organize thorough coverage of a large and too-often overlooked region of the country. Derek's own writing focuses heavily on Colorado and Arizona, covering a range of topics including environmental policy, economic regulations, infrastructure, and more. In a part of the country in which a significant portion of the land is under government control, vigilant watchdogs like Derek are critical to exposing government overreach by telling the stories of those affected.

"There are endless government regulations," Derek said. "If regulations are meant to alter human behavior in some way, then that means there are also endless stories about how these regulations affect individuals, families, businesses, etc. The same could be said for deregulation. How does deregulation affect individuals, families, and businesses?"

The collapse of local journalism has only further alienated communities already struggling. As a co-founder of *Expatalachians*, **Anthony Hennen** (AFF Class of Spring 2019) aims to shine a light on the neglected people of Appalachia and highlight the cultural and economic issues facing the region. While the idea of starting a new publication may seem a daunting challenge for some, Anthony has found it to ultimately be a fulfilling labor of love.

"Writing on a consistent schedule and improving every week will attract a following, but expect it to take years, not months," Anthony said. "It'll build your skills and expertise though, so keep that in mind when it's 4 a.m. and you're wondering whether you should give up because it's costing too much time and money. It's worth the pain."

While covering state-level government is incredibly important, so too is finding the local angle on national issues. Freelance writer **Kelvey Vander Hart** (AFF Class of Spring 2019) writes often on how events at the local level touch issues of national importance, with a particular focus on abortion and environmental issues.



"In the age of the Green New Deal, I think it is easy to forget that we can improve our environment and pursue conservation without crushing our economy."

Particularly in a time when socialists insist that theirs is the only approach to solving our environmental problems, Kelvey provides an important free-market voice in favor of the alternative.

"In the age of the Green New Deal, I think it is easy to forget that we can improve our environment and pursue conservation without crushing our economy," Kelvey said.

While national coverage is important, the role of local reporters in preserving small government can't be overstated. Government corruption, overreach, and creeping socialism can happen at any level of government, starting at the smallest municipal government." We need more shoe-leather reporting and fewer hot takes," Anthony said. "Especially for younger journalists, they need to get familiar with digging through a city government's emails or figuring out what's going on with the latest statewide boondoggle."



Josh Evans is the manager of the Writing Fellows Program at America's Future Foundation.



WRITING FELLOWS ALUMNI IMPACT THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION

AFF's Writing Fellows Program is about more than teaching persuasive writing skills. Through a combination of guest speakers, workshops and mentoring, the program equips fellows to be effective advocates who can shape the national conversation in favor of free markets. Thanks to your help, during the program's short five-year history, so many talented alumni have already risen to prominent positions in media, policy and government, and are making a tangible impact on the world around them.

During his time as a commentary writer at the *Washington Examiner*, **Philip Wegmann** (AFF Class of Spring 2016) uncovered an egregious misuse of taxpayer funds to pay for lavish meals, hotels and other expenses, leading to the firing of a chief of staff and a congressional ethics investigation into a sitting member of the House.

Since leaving the *Examiner*, Phil has continued to play a role in shaping the national conversation as White House and 2020 election reporter at *RealClearPolitics*, where he's written an in-depth profile of the controversial FCC Chairman and a thorough obituary of the White House daily press briefing, as well as providing valuable in-depth coverage of the Democratic presidential primary.

While reporters like Phil work to expose corruption, many other alumni work within the policy world to promote liberty at all levels of government. As the editorial manager at the R Street Institute, **Christina Pesavento** (AFF Class of Summer 2017) applies a critical eye to nearly everything the free-market think tank puts out to the public and often writes on economic regulations, occupational licensing, and other facets of central planning that make life more difficult for the average American.



**4,127
publications**

Christina has also shown a passion for helping others to become more effective writers, both in her work with the staff of the R Street Institute and as an occasional guest speaker for the Writing Fellows Program.

"It would be great if more young conservatives and libertarians just wrote, period," Christina said. "For too long, I think, we've allowed the left to frame the conversation instead of grabbing the reins and framing it ourselves. Since we're

writing in a time of social media mobs and bias response teams, it takes much more courage to speak up than it once did. But I also think that given this reality, our voices are needed now more than ever to push back against threats to limited government and personal liberty."



**108 new
writing
fellows**

Many AFF alumni advocate for limited government from within government positions themselves. As the policy director at the US Department of Education, **Mckenzie Snow** (AFF Class of Summer 2015) has made major headways in support of school choice. She led the way for the department's Education Freedom Scholarships which established a scholarship system funded by private donors that allows parents to make the right educational choices for their children. Through her advocacy, she's earned herself a spot on the 2020 Forbes 30 Under 30 list for law and policy, and more importantly, she's helped to empower families and give parents, not the state, important rights to decide what kind of education is best for their children.

The Writing Fellows Program has also seen its fair share of editors emerge from the ever-growing alumni class. A range of publications now have AFF alumni in editor roles, including *Reason's* assistant editor **Billy Binion** (AFF Class of Spring 2018), *The National Interest's* deputy managing editor **John Dale Grover** (AFF Class of Spring 2019), and *The Center Square's* western regional editor Derek Draplin. These alumni have not only found strong readership from their own work, but have risen to positions that allow them to shape the direction of their respective publications.

Also among AFF's editor alumni is **Jason Russell** (AFF Class of Fall 2014), contributors editor at the *Washington Examiner*. The *Examiner* has

"It's tough for me to imagine working outside of journalism. If it hadn't been for AFF, it wouldn't have happened."

been an important launchpad to the careers of prominent young pro-liberty writers, and as the contributors editor, Jason has played a pivotal role in providing that platform.

Jason's role in encouraging rising new voices isn't limited to his editor role; for two years, he served as the program manager for the Writing Fellows Program. As someone whose career was launched by the program, he worked tirelessly to give others the same opportunities he gained from experience.

"I wouldn't have my job at the *Washington Examiner* if it weren't for AFF," Jason said. "I was in the inaugural class of Writing Fellows, and Phil Klein, then the *Examiner's* commentary editor, was one of the guest speakers. I didn't realize it, but he'd edited an op-ed by me a few weeks prior. I asked him how to simplify complex topics like healthcare and taxes for a general audience. A few weeks later, he invited me to apply for an open position at the *Examiner* as a commentary writer. I didn't think I was qualified for such a cool job, but I applied, got hired, and I've been blessed to work at the *Examiner* for five years now.

"Now it's tough for me to imagine working outside of journalism. If it hadn't been for AFF, it wouldn't have happened."



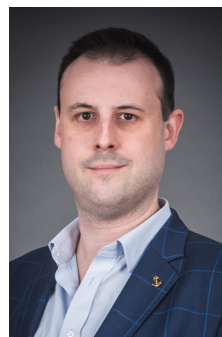
CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT: AFF-RHODE ISLAND

In 2016, Bernie Sanders won the Rhode Island Democratic primary in a major upset victory. As a sign of things to come, an enormous wave of young voters turned out nationally, demanding to change our country into something that looks more like the Ocean State. The very socialism being experimented with in Rhode Island is now spreading like wildfire across a generation of voters. America's Future Foundation's Rhode Island chapter is the only community of young professionals dedicated to advancing freedom in the Ocean State and fighting back against the failed fever dreams of a cohort of fledgling socialist utopians.

AFF-Rhode Island arms a new generation of liberty-minded leaders with the big ideas of freedom, giving them a credible alternative to the status quo. Thanks to your support in 2019, AFF expanded the networks and impact of chapter members by introducing them to policy experts, grassroots organizers, legislators, and business leaders. Each month, the chapter prepared its members to challenge socialist proponents in their day-to-day lives by sharpening their public debate skills in open discussion, education, and encouraging civil discourse. In fact, AFF-RI has been so effective that the socialists in the state, feeling threatened, have tried to create their own socialist version of AFF. A local Antifa group even sent spies into events, not only to collect information, but to try to create negative publicity for AFF-RI.

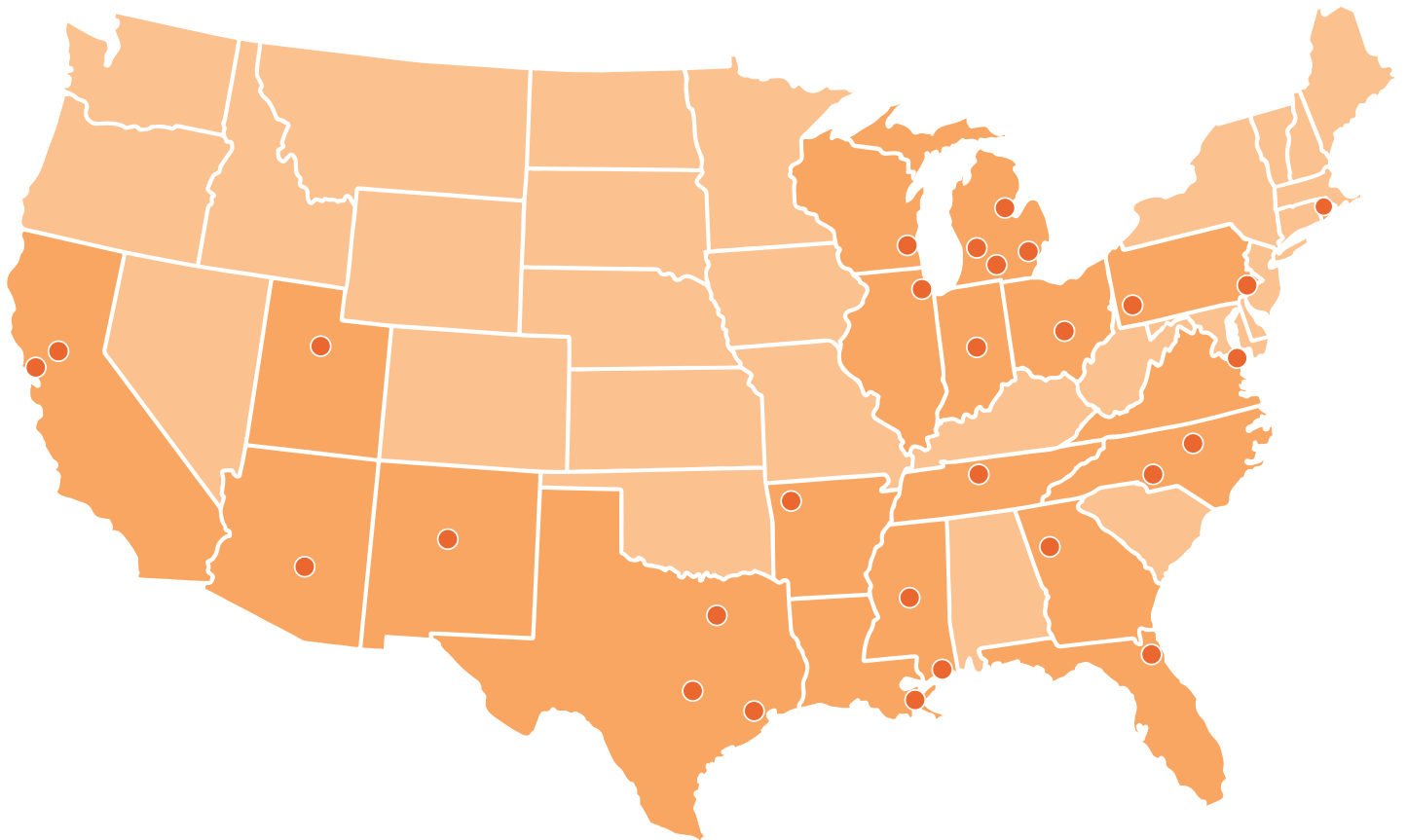
AFF-Rhode Island prides itself on building a community of like-minded freedom champions (found nowhere else in the state) that supports and empowers its members. For example, one AFF-RI member found himself working under a socialist director at a major national nonprofit. The director persecuted him for his conservative and religious beliefs, creating an extremely hostile work environment. AFF-RI and AFF-HQ sprung into action to help him to secure several interviews at conservative organizations. Through these efforts, he found a fundraising job with a state-based, right-leaning business association in Rhode Island. Without the AFF community, this would not have happened.

The community and education, connections and support you provide through AFF are unparalleled. It is critical to continue bolstering the success of chapters like Rhode Island if we are to free a generation of young people from the iron grip of extreme progressivism.



Larry Gillheeney is the AFF-Rhode Island chapter leader and advocacy manager for the Rhode Island Center for Freedom & Prosperity.

AMERICA'S FUTURE FOUNDATION CHAPTERS



AFF by the Numbers



6,169 attendees



186 events



29 city chapters

2019 AFF-CHAPTER LEADERS

Savannah Despin

Albuquerque, NM

Nathan Wilson

Atlanta, GA

Tori Moreland

Austin, TX

Katy Gambella

Charlotte, NC

Eric Kohn

Chicago, IL

Esther Bardo

Columbus, OH

Meg Tuszynski

Dallas, TX

Heather Pfitzenmaier

Detroit, MI

Joshua Waters

Fayetteville, AR

Tyler Groenendal

Grand Rapids, MI

Howie Morgan

Gulf Coast, MS

Heather Redmon

Houston, TX

Chloe Anagnos

Indianapolis, IN

Nic Lott

Jackson, MS

Rhachel Toombs

Jacksonville, FL

Annie Patnaude

Lansing, MI

Tanya Hayes

Midland, MI

Julie Grace

Milwaukee, WI

Taylor Dawson

Nashville, TN

Aly Rau

New Orleans, LA

Brian Nichols

Philadelphia, PA

Austin Jack

Phoenix, AZ

David Vesely

Pittsburgh, PA

Andrew Richards

Provo, UT

Hannah Niles

Raleigh, NC

Larry Gillheeney

Providence, RI

Mike Sertic

Sacramento, CA

Evan Harris

San Francisco, CA

Grace Morgan

Washington, DC



"I've been able to connect volunteers to liberty programs this way with less pressure than a formal meeting introduction. It's easy to introduce 'on the fence' friends of mine to ideas of liberty."

– Anja Baker Jackson, MS





"America's Future Foundation was one of the first institutions to not only provide me with the professional development opportunities necessary to bolster my career, but to also give me confidence and support of their community to have faith in my own abilities and persevere through the challenges along the way."

– Sloan Shearman Arlington, VA



CHAPTER

HIGHLIGHTS

AFF often provides the only safe space for liberty-loving millennials and GenZers (ages 22-40) to find networking, professional development, community, and education at the local level.

In 2019, AFF fostered these communities of young leaders in 29 cities across the country. By empowering and educating young leaders to understand the principles of liberty and to take action locally, we are giving people the opportunity to embrace freedom from a perspective they can understand, combating socialist ideas where they are the most dangerous, and changing hearts and minds in our cities.



Engaging With Political Leaders

In **Columbus, OH**, and **Jackson, MS**, the chapters provide meaningful educational opportunities to legislative aides and assistants working in the state capitals. By tackling local issues, as well as foundational principles like freedom of speech, they provide important context and lessons these aids can take back to the State House. Special guests in 2019 included Rep. Jena Powell (pictured left), youngest elected state representative in Ohio, and Mississippi State Auditor Shad White.

Local Think Tank Partners

- Badger Institute, Milwaukee, WI
- Beacon Center of Tennessee, Nashville, TN
- Buckeye Institute, Columbus, OH
- Americans for Prosperity, Albuquerque, NM
- Mackinac Center for Public Policy, Midland, MI
- Illinois Policy Institute, Chicago, IL
- Pelican Institute, New Orleans, LA
- Pacific Research Institute, San Francisco, SF
- Rhode Island Center for Freedom and Prosperity, Providence, RI
- Goldwater Institute, Phoenix, AZ
- O'Neil Center for Global Markets and Freedom at SMU, Dallas, TX
- Acton Institute, Grand Rapids, MI
- Texas Public Policy Foundation, Austin, TX
- Mississippi Center for Public Policy, Jackson, MS



Defending Freedom in Big Cities

AFF chapters in notoriously progressive cities prove the absolute need for providing a free-market voice. **AFF-Detroit** fostered vital conversations about preserving property rights in collaboration with the Pacific Legal Foundation, ending corporate welfare with John Mozena, and explored strategies for revitalizing their city by taking an innovation bus tour. In **San Francisco**, AFF partnered with the Pacific Research Institute to tackle California's new law against freelance workers.

Bringing Freedom to Life

A benefit of AFF's community-driven approach is that chapters can embrace their cities' local culture. In **Austin, TX**, the chapter offered unique ways to share the message of freedom in their socialist-leaning city through a "Friendsgiving" dinner discussion, salon-style events with tech leaders like Arlo Gilbert, and a visit to Community First! Village, a private solution to Austin's homelessness challenges. In **Rhode Island**, this included intimate dinners at popular restaurants and an annual outing to a polo match.



Connecting a New Generation of Leaders

AFF-Chicago pulls in nationally recognized thinkers to provide intimate discussions on the principles of liberty. In 2019, they featured events with *National Review*'s Jonah Goldberg and Kevin Williamson, Robby Soave from the Reason Foundation, and Richard Lorenc (pictured left) of the Foundation for Economic Education. In **Milwaukee**, their "How I Built my Business" series introduced members to John Stollenwerk of J.J. Edmonds Shoes.



Partnering with National Influencers

With AFF headquartered in **Washington, DC**, we are thrilled to host hundreds of young leaders working to advance freedom. Policy discussions provided ample opportunity to work with great partners, including a sold-out event at Facebook's DC headquarters and an event on micromobility in partnership with the Mercatus Center and Lime Scooters.

Tackling the Big Issues:

- School choice
- Second Amendment rights
- Socialism vs. free markets
- Antisemitism
- The role of civil society
- The "gender wage gap"
- Criminal justice reform
- Local activism
- Communicating with non-liberty-lovers
- Economic development
- Environmentalism
- Taxes
- Government corruption
- Prohibition
- Occupational licensing
- Intellectual property rights
- Corporate welfare

Changing Minds

AFF-Raleigh grew by leaps and bounds this year and made a specific effort to reach non-traditional audiences. Their Innovation in Education Summit attracted young teachers, and their six-week entrepreneurship course attracted small business leaders across industries.



ROMINA BOCCIA PROMOTES FREEDOM THROUGH AFF CHAPTERS



Romina Boccia is a leading fiscal and economic expert at The Heritage Foundation. Often introduced as “an economist who speaks English” for making complex topics easily understood, Romina is a sought-after speaker and panel moderator who frequently travels the United States and abroad to speak at conferences, conventions, and on college campuses.

Where are you from and what brought you to the United States?

I am originally from Germany, despite my name being very Italian. I've always loved traveling and exploring and decided to take a gap year to work as an au pair for a family in the U.S. Once here, I discovered that the incredible promise of the American Dream isn't just something you see in movies. It's real and attainable. If you work hard, think creatively, and collaborate with others, you can truly realize your dreams in this country.

Democratic socialism has become fashionable lately among young Americans. What does this mean for the future of the US?

It's natural for young people to rebel against the status quo. We need to give them something worth fighting for. I believe the case for liberty and economic freedom is much more powerful than the empty promises of socialist democrats.

We haven't done enough to help people understand the tremendous power that democratic market economies have to generate prosperity by enabling people to create, trade, and prosper.

Also, young people are confused about what socialism really means. Polls show that only a small minority understand socialism to mean government ownership or control over the economy. Most people have some vague notion of socialism meaning caring about equality and caring for others.

How can we persuade people that Big Government isn't the answer?

We need to return power to the people in their states and localities. Our politics have become more divisive while our need for finding common ground to address national challenges like the growing fiscal crisis has become greater.

Resorting to government to solve most problems that we should address in civil society creates more problems than it solves. We have asked government to do too much, thinking we can devolve our responsibilities to each other to this other entity with seemingly endless pockets.

We must win over their hearts by telling the stories of those affected by government overreach as well as highlighting success stories that inspire and lift us up, demonstrating that markets and civil society work better.

Why did you decide to partner with America's Future Foundation?

America's Future Foundation is helping to bring people together across the country in casual community settings to expose more people to the ideas of liberty and in the process help build a ground movement to advance liberty. I enjoy speaking to AFF groups across the country on issues from our national debt, to the virtues of market economies, to how men and women get paid. I am also enjoying reading and writing for the AFF blog, which has fresh and inspiring content on how we can grow personally and professionally and participate most effectively in building and strengthening communities. AFF helps to grow future leaders for liberty by creating opportunities for young professionals to get engaged and shine.



BUCKLEY AWARD WINNERS STAND AGAINST THE SOCIALIST NARRATIVE

The general consensus among millennials may be that socialism is preferable to capitalism, but with outstanding free-market advocates like the 2019 Buckley Award winners, that won't be the case for long.

The awards are named after William F. Buckley, Jr. who, before the age of 30, became the leader of the early movement championing conservative fusionism—a philosophy that brought together various strands of conservatism and libertarianism to work together to conserve America's founding principles.

The 2019 Buckley Awards were presented at AFF's Annual Gala in Washington, DC, to honor five creative, dedicated, and talented individuals and to inspire more than 230 young professionals in attendance to follow in their footsteps:

Austin Berg, for his contribution to the advancement of liberty in one of the country's

"There is nothing more American than using the freedoms you have to fight for the freedoms that you, or those that you care about, lack."

— Brooke Fallon, 2019 AFF Buckley Award Winner

most restrictive states, Illinois, by using creative and personal storytelling. Through his "solutions journalism" initiative at the Illinois Policy Institute, he shares stories of Illinoisans suffering under poor public policy choices and successfully connects free-market solutions to those problems.



Brooke Fallon, for her efforts to reduce burdensome occupational licensing requirements and improve the livelihoods of Americans across the country. Through her work at the Institute for Justice, she has taught activists, entrepreneurs, and property owners how to make their voices heard against the threat of government overreach.

Aaron Rice, for his impact on the debate over administrative forfeiture in the state of Mississippi. Through numerous op-eds and media interviews, Aaron's work at the Mississippi Justice Institute has directly influenced public conversations on this issue of personal liberty and, ultimately, successfully swayed lawmakers and public policy in Mississippi.

"Our liberty allows us to be our true selves and to shape our own destinies. It is our greatest treasure as Americans."

Matt Warner, for his success in advancing free-market ideas internationally. Through his work at the Atlas Network, he created the "Doing Development Differently" initiative, which reexamines foreign aid and the developing world, as well as expanded the impact of their training programs, strengthening the worldwide freedom movement.

Richard Lorenc, for his role in the education of the next generation of free-market leaders through his work at the Foundation for Economic Education (FEE). Under Richard's direction, FEE's Youth Education & Audience Research ("YEAR") project develops and promotes new content and distribution techniques for free-market ideas.

Through their work—advancing the ideas of a free society in creative and innovative ways, leading a significant grassroots initiative to protect individual liberty, and impacting news coverage of a high profile issue—this year's winners push back against the socialist narrative and showcase how limited government and a free society better the lives and happiness of all Americans.



Kristine Goffos is the director of marketing for America's Future Foundation. A native Iowan, Kristine is a graduate of Iowa State University and is an avid Cyclones fan. In addition to helping communicate the ideas of a free society, she enjoys a good cup of coffee (or two, or three) and pretty much any IPA.



CREATING A CULTURE OF FREEDOM THROUGH ART AND EXPRESSION

Despite the bad rap they sometimes get, AFF has witnessed a Millennial Generation that is innovative, effective, and ambitious. They side hustle their way to their dream careers. They launch their own businesses. They take advantage of opportunities to beautify and improve their communities. They share their insights through podcasts and blogs in order to help their peers navigate similar experiences.

So many things young Americans enjoy daily—podcasts, music, books, brews, and food—wouldn't exist if it weren't for this creative ingenuity. And none of it would be possible if not for the ability to create and live freely.

Celebrating this creative liberty is important to moving the needle towards a culture of freedom in our society, particularly among millennials. Because having the freedom to follow your passion and express yourself is important across the spectrum. But many millennials do not connect the dots between creative expression and liberty.

That's why America's Future Foundation showcased the artistic and cultural side of freedom at the first-annual "Laissez Fair" on October 19 at the beautiful Lee-Fendall House in Old Town Alexandria.

This festival-style event featured an afternoon of live performances and talks, headlined by a live podcast recording of Kibbe on Liberty with special guest Rep. Justin Amash. Other sets included live music by Stephen Kent, stand up comedy by Molly Fratz and Laura Delhomme, and an instructor-led yoga session. And the Laissez Fair marketplace featured the work of artists and entrepreneurs from across the AFF community.

Over 120 attendees joined in the celebration of freedom and expression and left inspired to create and innovate America into a freer, more beautiful place.



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REBUILDING CIVIL SOCIETY

The media and elite classes were shocked in 2006 when Arthur Brooks' classic book *Who Really Cares* showed everyone that it was conservatives, not liberals, who were more likely to support charitable causes and to do so more significantly.

The new shocking revelation on generosity comes not by ideology but by age. We continue to see more and more studies proving that, when it comes to charitable giving, the Millennial Generation is steadily growing into the role of generous charitable givers—far more than young people are given credit for.

Our engagement goes beyond giving dollars. We want involvement. We want a connection with the causes we serve. We're more likely to engage locally, in our community, rather than with big, national causes, or even with our alma maters.

Put another way, our engagement in the nonprofit community and civil society isn't a checkbox for us. We view giving and volunteering as part-and-parcel to our broader lives and identities, not as a distinct silo of ourselves. These trends only become more pronounced with the generation coming up behind millennials, Generation Z (people born since 1997).

How should a group like AFF bridge the gap between the ideas we care about and community engagement? I would argue it has a big role and one that can only grow.

I recently spent time updating a list of grantees we give to at DonorsTrust. I faced a conundrum: where do I put AFF? Was it a public policy organization, broadly defined, or a civic group?

I came down on the side of calling AFF a civic group. Yes, AFF views the world through a particular liberty-minded lens. However, AFF isn't about getting a certain policy passed or promoting a certain issue platform—though that is often a byproduct of AFF's work. AFF is about helping younger generations engage as humans, not as policy wonks. It gives a platform for young professionals to build the

habits of civic engagement, philanthropy, and social connection, building engaged and informed citizens in the process.

In doing so, AFF plays a key role by instilling the formative values that Howard Husock discusses in his recent book *Who Killed Civil Society?* The book explores the way government programs have crowded out organizations working to build the formative social norms that truly hold society together, replacing them with a top-down reformatory approach that, while attempting to help, only weakens people.

Last year, thanks to your investment in AFF, I had the privilege of interviewing Howard at AFF events in Dallas, Atlanta, and Washington, DC. At each, I met young people working by day as attorneys and investment bankers and real estate agents, but who use their other waking hours building organizations to help children in their area, or to reimagine ways to help people develop job skills, or receive justice in the courts.

“Sometimes I fear there is a tendency in conservative and libertarian circles to treat philanthropy as a thing we do when we’re older.”

Sometimes I fear there is a tendency in conservative and libertarian circles to treat philanthropy as a thing we do when we’re older. We let our travel priorities, growing professional responsibilities, and expanding families take priority over building community ties and finding ways to volunteer and serve others.

Doing so is a trap, though. By not engaging in the activities of civil society, we cede space for the government to step in. That’s why it is so refreshing to see young people stepping up to join AFF and to lead efforts in their cities.

Yes, we need policy organizations to explain where government is getting in the way. However, we also need to model what non-governmental solutions look like. It’s a major message of DonorsTrust’s



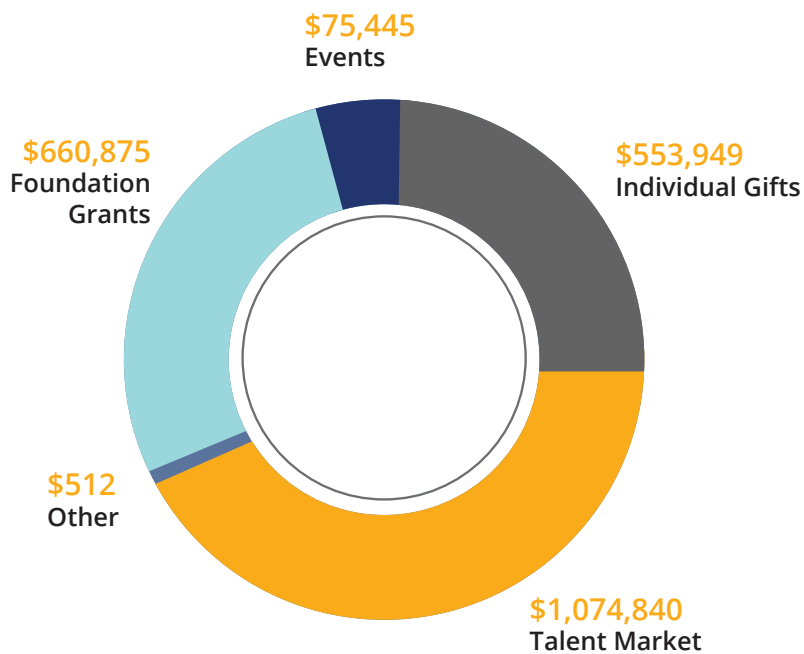
Novus Society, a program for engaging donors under 40: philanthropy isn’t about how much you give, it’s about having a strategy for giving it. It’s why AFF and Novus Society continually team up to encourage charitable giving and volunteerism among young adults. If we make civil-society solutions the norm, then top-down strategies will fail.

AFF’s last big gathering of the year in DC was a new event called the Laissez Fair. There, dozens of young people from around DC gathered on a crisp fall afternoon to listen to music, chat, eat, hear comedians, play a few games, and generally live life together. Everyone there would happily denounce socialism, but that doesn’t mean they don’t want to be social. There will always be those who call out for governmental solutions to bring people together, but AFF stands as a reminder that we must build genuine connections through a strong civil society. That’s a better way to change the world.



Peter Lipsett serves on America's Future Foundation's board of directors and is vice president of DonorsTrust, the community foundation of the liberty movement. He also leads the effort to grow DonorsTrust's Novus Society, a network of donors under 40 committed to growing their philanthropic network and know-how.

2019 AFF FINANCIALS



Revenue

Talent Market - \$1,074,840

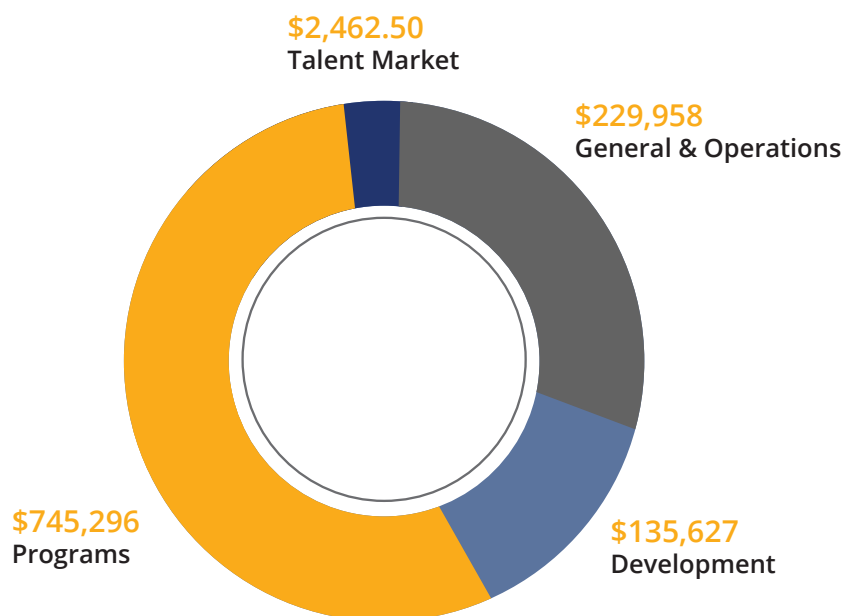
Foundation Grants - \$660,875

Individual Gifts - \$553,949

Events - \$75,445

Other - \$512

Total Revenue - \$2,365,621



Expenses

Programs - \$745,296

General & Operations - \$229,958

Development - \$135,627

Talent Market - \$2,462.50

Total Expenses - \$1,113,343.50

2019 AFF STAFF AND BOARD

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Angel Fimbres Barceló

Special Events & Programs Manager

Cindy Cerquitella

Executive Director

Christopher Devine

Operations Coordinator

Josh Evans

Writing Fellows Program Manager

Kristine Goffos

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*Chief Operating Officer, Break Bread, Break Borders
Dallas, TX*

I was thoroughly impressed by the genuine connections I made with other like-minded individuals. These connections have the potential to affect my future career goals. I look forward to attending another AFF event!

– Morgan Miller, Decatur, GA

AFF encourages me to think and occasionally introduces new ideas or challenges existing ones.

– Peter Gott, Denver, CO

I first got involved in AFF after college when I was working in Raleigh, NC, I organized with them for half a year before returning to my home town Jackson, MS where I organize with the chapter. Wherever I move next, AFF will be part of my life.

– Nate Baker Jackson, MS

I am grateful to AFF for providing an outlet and a venue for liberty-minded people to come together and discuss our vision of how prosperous this country can become - for everyone - if we can just get government out of the way.

– William Hunt, Warren, RI



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