



**December 2011**

**From the President's Desk**

**Dear Friends:**

On September 17, 2011, Constitution Day, the Alexander Hamilton Institute for the Study of Western Civilization (AHI) celebrated its fourth birthday. We write this letter to advise you of initiatives and activities to further our mission to promote excellence in scholarship through the study of freedom, democracy, and capitalism. Our programs reflect intellectual diversity, provide for the innovative teaching of civic and economic knowledge, and promote a genuine free marketplace of ideas. We believe that a liberal-arts graduate, properly trained, should possess not only an enhanced capacity to distinguish between career and the good life, but the ability to manage the conflicts of adulthood with honesty, dignity, and a sense of personal responsibility.

**Student Engagement and Participation is Strong**

The AHI now operates five student organizations with more than 100 student members. Our newest addition, the Entrepreneurship Club, held its inaugural meeting on November 4, 2011, and featured as keynote speaker Harlan Calkins, our newest Board member and CEO of Rochester Midland Corporation. The AHI continues to create programs that provide for the innovative teaching of civic and economic knowledge. Highlights include:

- The Dawson Society is currently engaged in reading C.S. Lewis's *Screwtape Letters* under the supervision of Professor Douglas Ambrose.
- The Edmund Burke Association has organized a group independent study under the supervision of Robert Paquette to read cover-to-cover the political trilogy composed by Bertrand de Jouvenel, one of the charter members of the Mont Pelerin Society and one of the great anti-totalitarian thinkers of the twentieth century. Jouvenel's trilogy, which ranges from antiquity to modernity, can serve almost as a primer in Western political history.
- The AHI Undergraduate Fellows have recently sponsored programs on the Hamilton College campus that raised important questions about radical environmental policies.
- Students in the Publius Society have sponsored monthly activities that have covered issues ranging from banking and fiscal policy to the Occupy Wall Street Movement.

In March 2012, the AHI will continue its partnership with the James Madison Institute, by sending two of its Undergraduate Fellows to present papers at a prestigious undergraduate conference to be held at Georgetown University.

This summer, The Stuttering Foundation, the world's oldest and largest nonprofit organization that works toward the prevention and improved treatment of stuttering, awarded a summer internship to Susannah Parkin, an AHI Undergraduate Fellow and psychology major at Hamilton

College. "Susannah is an incredibly bright and talented young lady," commented Stuttering Foundation President Jane Fraser.

During the spring semester, Hamilton College awarded AHI Undergraduate Fellow Marta Johnson the Katharine Eckman '09 Internship. The internship, established in memory of Katharine C. Eckman (Hamilton Class '09), provides a generous summer stipend for a student interested in politics, government, and public policy. Ms. Johnson, an economics major at Hamilton College, recently concluded her internship, which she used primarily to help the AHI in planning future programming centered on the theme of "limited government."

Former undergraduate Lachlan Markay, now an investigative reporter at the Heritage Foundation's Center for Media and Public Policy is not only the first Heritage employee with that job title, he has assumed a lead role in investigating the "Fast and Furious" scandal. You can find a link to his recent speech to the Intercollegiate Studies Institute's Collegiate Network conference on our website.

The AHI's headquarters has been used increasingly as a site for the recruitment of AHI Undergraduate Fellows by for-profit and non-profit businesses. In 2010-2011, AHI Undergraduate Fellows were admitted to a variety of law schools and graduate programs. The Charles Koch Foundation has awarded AHI and AHI-Rochester fellows with employment, and Koch representatives will be conducting interviews at the AHI again this year. Recent visits by representatives from the Manhattan Institute and the Heritage Foundation are leading to undergraduate and graduate opportunities with those prestigious organizations.

Perhaps the most important news about the AHI is that organizations are awarding our Undergraduate Fellows for achievement, and businesses are hiring them.

### **Continued Success of the Annual Colloquium**

In April 2011 we held our Fourth Annual Colloquium at the Turning Stone Resort. Senior Fellow Theodore Eismeier organized the event centered on the theme of "Law, Technology, and American Constitutional Government: Curing the Mischief of Faction in the 21st Century." The event was extremely well attended.

In 2012 we will be holding our Fifth Annual Carl B. Menges Colloquium on April 12 at the Turning Stone Resort. More than a dozen scholars in the fields of history, philosophy, economics, and political science have accepted our invitation. Students from Skidmore College, Colgate University, Hampden-Sydney College, and Hamilton College will be in attendance.

### **Recent Grants and Gifts**

In 2011 we received a \$150,000 grant from the Thomas W. Smith Foundation, the largest in the AHI's brief history, to support three years of programming.

Also in 2011, we received a \$20,000 grant from the Apgar Foundation to support our newest affiliate in Rochester.

We continue to receive support from the Thomas Armstrong Foundation with annual awards that range from \$2,500 to \$5,000. The AHI has received a second grant from the Koch Foundation in the amount of \$9,000 to support programming in entrepreneurship at AHI Rochester.

In October, Liberty Fund, one of the most distinguished organizations of its kind, “established to encourage the study of the ideal of a society of free and responsible individuals,” gifted us with hundreds of volumes and DVDS that form the “Library of Liberty.” These materials will be located in our renovated office space, which was recently dedicated to James Piereson, a stalwart supporter of the AHI who is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute and President of the William E. Simon Foundation.

### **New Rochester Affiliate**

The AHI is also delighted to announce that we are growing by introducing our first new affiliate in Rochester. [Alexander Hamilton Institute for the Study of Western Civilization at Rochester](#) has been established to promote the study of a free society. Free in the sense that individuals have certain inalienable rights that cannot be taken away without contradicting the fundamental principles of life. “We draw our values from the ideas set forth by Adam Smith, Friedrich Hayek, Herbert Spencer, and other freedom loving individuals,” noted AHI Senior Fellow Michael Rizzo who heads the affiliate in Rochester.

AHI Rochester provides a forum for interested undergraduates to explore these questions through a variety of programming. Students participate in seminars where they read how the great thinkers of the past and present answer these questions. Professors and businessmen are invited to speak to help better understand the successes and failures in the world today. “By educating ourselves, we become better advocates for peace and freedom in our own lives and will become leaders in the never-ending debate of free markets versus planned economies,” said Rizzo.

### **The Ongoing Work of Our Fellows:**

Caleb Nelson, one of the most impressive young legal scholars in the United States, delivered in the Hamilton College Chapel the AHI’s Fourth Annual David Aldrich Nelson lecture in Constitutional Jurisprudence on “The Constitution and the Benthamite Interpretation of the Common Law.” Professor Nelson and his sister Claudia, a distinguished professor of English at Texas A&M, have joined the AHI team as academic advisor and Senior Fellow, respectively.

As part of our program to enhance public civic literacy, we sponsor a Mohawk Valley Monthly Book Club that reaches out to area high-school teachers. Resident Fellow Dr. Christopher Hill now offers continuing education classes, and his class “Law, Liberty, and Western History” is filled to capacity.

This past fall semester, Marc Elias, Firmwide Chair of Political Law at Perkins Coie in Washington D. C. served as a Visiting Fellow. During that time, he taught a class “Modern Campaigns and Elections” for the Department of Government at Hamilton College.

In 2010, Oxford University Press published *The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas*. This encyclopedic work was edited by AHI Charter Fellow Robert Paquette and AHI academic

advisor Mark Smith and includes contributions from AHI Charter Fellow Douglas Ambrose and AHI advisors Eugene D. Genovese, Stanley Engerman, Daniel Littlefield and Peter Coclanis.

In 2011 and 2012 the University of South Carolina Press will be publishing a five volume work, *History and Women, Culture and Faith: Selected Writings of Elizabeth Fox-Genovese*, which honors one of the charter members of the AHI's board of academic advisors and includes contributions by AHI Fellows Sheila O'Connor-Ambrose, Douglas Ambrose, and Robert Paquette and AHI advisors Robert George, Thomas Pangle, and Mark Smith.

Journalist Jay Nordlinger published a feature story on AHI advisor Eugene D. Genovese, described by a writer for the *Atlantic* as "this country's greatest living historian," in the November 7, 2011 issue of *National Review*.

In 2011, the AHI announced the creation of the Theodore J. Eismeier Fellowship in Political Science to honor an AHI fellow who will be retiring from Hamilton College in 2012 after more than thirty years of distinguished service. The AHI is in the process of raising money for this annual competitive fellowship to put it on a firm financial footing, and we encourage friends of Ted—better known as Tedheads—to contact us for information on how to help us with this initiative.

### **Website Re-Launch**

We are pleased to announce the re-launch of our website is almost ready. The new website will offer an improved user experience, a wealth of knowledge and a new ability to participate via social media. Along with a direct link to the Rochester website, the most visible updates the AHI website can be seen in the site's layout, with a new, cleaner, easier-to-navigate design template. Student initiatives, news and events as well as bookstore are now displayed prominently across the top bar. Visitors to the new AHI website can also find us on Facebook directly from the website.

### **Business Operations**

The AHI is moving forward carefully and deliberately to fund a growing list of programmatic initiatives and to extend its reach to other institutions. We believe that our independent model has a number of distinct advantages over kindred-spirit organizations that operate on-campus under restraint and relentlessly challenged by unsympathetic faculty and administrators.

The AHI's 990 is public and available upon request.

We made several improvements to the headquarters facility over the past year including the installation of a first class business office on the second floor and an improved the energy efficiency of the building by the installation of insulation, windows and internal doors. An energy audit report by L&S Energy Services provided free of charge by the New York State Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA), detailed several energy improvement opportunities that we have prioritized and will implement over time so that the facility can become the scholarly beehive envisioned by the Charter Fellows.

## **Help Us Support Our Mission**

“Human freedom – the need to secure it, the obligation to preserve it, the necessity to defend it, the resolution to die for it -- this is the great theme of our time,” so said a famous screenwriter in the 1960s. If anything, the circumstances of our own time have added to the potency of these words.

The AHI intends to lead in getting this message out by deeds more than words. If you'd like to help us spread the word about our programs, or just get regular updates and press releases on our activities, you can do so by:

- “Friending” us on [Facebook](#),
- filling out a [contact form](#) on our [website](#),
- or forwarding this letter to a friend.

Attempts to expand our message cannot succeed without your continued support. We hope you'll consider a financial contribution of \$250, \$150, \$50 or more to further our mission to promote excellence in scholarship through the study of freedom, democracy, and capitalism.

If you wish to make a donation to support the Alexander Hamilton Institute for the Study of Western Civilization, please send your tax deductible contribution to:

**The Alexander Hamilton Institute for the Study of Western Civilization  
The Alexander Hamilton Inn  
21 W. Park Row  
Clinton, NY 13323**

Sincerely,

Richard Erlanger, President  
Douglas Ambrose, Charter Fellow  
James Bradfield, Charter Fellow  
Robert Paquette, Charter Fellow

*P.S.: We hope that you'll consider supporting our mission to create programs that provide for the innovative teaching of civic and economic knowledge in order to promote a genuine free marketplace for ideas.*