



*The Alexander Hamilton Institute
for the Study of Western Civilization*

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From the President's Desk

December 14, 2015

Dear Friends:

A Message from the President:

The Alexander Hamilton Institute for the Study of Western Civilization (AHI) is nearing the end of another very successful year. Please know how grateful we are for your continued support. Recent unrest and outright thuggery at many of this country's most prestigious colleges and universities—Yale, Dartmouth, Princeton, Claremont McKenna, and Hamilton College, to name a few—can only serve to underscore why the AHI came into existence in the first place, some nine years ago. More important, investigative reporting has exposed the weakness of campus administrators in confronting what can only be described as a potentially deadly assault on the most basic principles of academic freedom and liberal arts education. In no way do we believe that the wave of campus restiveness has crested as we head into a presidential election year. Far from it.

In 2015, the AHI continued to extend the reach of its programmatic activities and initiatives, raising public awareness of its mission and making many new friends along the way. In that regard, Carl and Cordelia Menges deserve special mention for the memorable fund-raising event they organized for the AHI in New York City on October 7th. The festivities began at the Barbetta Restaurant in the Theater District, where Mr. Menges and AHI Charter Fellow Robert Paquette addressed attendants on the history and mission of the AHI, and ended at the nearby Richard Rodgers Theater for a performance of Lin-Manuel Miranda's inspiring hit musical *Hamilton*. More than 130 persons purchased tickets, and the AHI is deeply grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Menges and the members of the organizational committee for their superlative work in selling every ticket. We are also grateful to the scores of people who sent in donations even though they were unable to attend the event.

In 2015, the AHI also continued to receive recognition for its efforts at educational reform. The American Council of Trustees and Alumni named the AHI an "oasis of excellence." In the October 21 issue of *Forbes*, the economist Richard Vedder, director of the Center for College Affordability and Productivity (CCAP), praised the AHI in "fighting for a diversity of views" in higher education and described the AHI as "first-rate [in] bringing major scholars" to venues on and off campuses. George Leef, Director of Policy Research, the John William Pope Center for Higher Education, praised the AHI annual Carl B. Menges colloquium as "an excellent way of getting good, engaged college students thinking about crucial issues." One recent graduate of Hamilton

College who was nurtured by the AHI spoke to Leef's point. "It is hard to express my gratitude and admiration for the AHI," he said. In rising up the ladder of a financial investment firm, he added, "I barely knew what any of this stuff was before the AHI talk on private equity my junior year."

The AHI now engages hundreds of students on multiple campuses. This year, we sponsored or co-sponsored activities at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), Skidmore College, Dartmouth College, Utica College, University of Missouri, Baylor University's Department of Political Science, and Hamilton College. We also co-sponsored a timely event in the fall with Colgate University's Center for Freedom & Western Civilization on the Common Core curriculum. Here is a *sampling* of our work in 2015:

- During the spring semester, the AHI offered a new continuing education course entitled "The Media and Politics," taught by Resident Fellow David Frisk.
- During the spring semester, AHI Charter Fellow Douglas Ambrose directed a reading group for the Christopher Dawson Society on Catholic intellectual Josef Pieper.
- During the spring semester, David Frisk responded to student demand at Hamilton College by directing an introductory reading group on the influential German existentialist philosopher Martin Heidegger.
- On February 6, [The Center for Statesmanship, Law, and Liberty](#), which is in affiliation with the AHI, offered a course on Advanced Placement at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). Directed by AHI Senior Fellow Joseph Fornieri, the course provided area high school students who seek to enrich their understanding of the role of statesmanship in American history and government with a college learning experience in preparation for their Advanced Placement exams in History and Political Science.
- February 19-22, AHI Fellows participated at the Liberty Fund Colloquium, "Liberty and Patriotism in America and the World," in Savannah, Georgia. AHI Fellow Joseph Fornieri organized the colloquium, Senior Fellow Lee Cheek participated in the colloquium and Charter Fellow Robert Paquette served as moderator.
- March 31, the AHI sponsored at Hamilton College the showing of *Body and Soul: The State of the Jewish Nation*, a new documentary film by award-winning filmmaker Gloria Z. Greenfield.
- On April 8, the AHI co-sponsored an event with the Hamilton College Republican Club that brought Heather Mac Donald, Thomas W. Smith Fellow at the Manhattan Institute, New York City, to Hamilton College to speak on the subject "Are Cops Racist?"
- In April, the AHI held the Eighth Annual Carl B. Menges Colloquium devoted to the theme "Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and the Rule of Law: How to

Return America to Prosperity.” Dr. Michael C. Munger, Professor of Political Science, Duke University, and Director of the Duke Philosophy, Politics, and Economics Program, provided the keynote address on April 16 to a record crowd.

- June 18-19, the AHI co-sponsored with the Department of Political Science, Baylor University the [Seventh Annual Summer Conference](#). Daniel Mahoney, holder of the Augustine Chair for Distinguished Scholarship at Assumption College, directed the conference, which attracted a record number of attendants.
- On August 6-7, Charter Fellow Robert Paquette and Pamela Jensen, Professor Emerita of Political Science, Kenyon College, gathered at Liberty Fund headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana, to participate in a Socratic seminar to discuss Richard Epstein’s book [The Classical Liberal Constitution: The Uncertain Quest for Limited Government](#) (Harvard University Press, 2014).
- On August 19, the AHI gathered students and fellows for a Leadership Dinner that featured Roger Pilon, founder and director of Cato’s Center for Constitutional Studies.
- During the fall semester, Resident Fellow David Frisk taught at the AHI a course open to the public on “The Constitution in the 20th Century and Today: Key Decisions and Controversies.” A record number of citizens in the region signed up for the course.
- In partnership with the Kinder Forum, the AHI held the [Eighth Annual David Aldrich Nelson Lecture in Constitutional Jurisprudence](#) on Constitution Day at the University of Missouri campus. Professors of Law James E. Fleming and Linda C. McClain, both of Boston University, addressed the audience on the recent Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*.
- On October 15, Roger Scruton, one of the most influential philosophers of his generation, delivered a lecture on “The Law of the Land: Reflections on Law and Migration” at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York. The AHI co-sponsored the lecture with Skidmore’s Benjamin Franklin Forum.
- Also on October 15, Resident Fellow Dr. Mary Grabar participated in a public debate “The Common Core: Is It Good for Students and Teachers?” at the Palace Theater, Hamilton, New York. AHI Senior Fellow Robert Kraynak, Professor of Government at Colgate University and director of Colgate’s Center for Freedom and Western Civilization, organized the event.
- On October 24, the AHI held the fourth annual Red Cross blood drive in partnership with the Red Cross and the Hamilton College chapter of the Alpha Delta Phi Fraternity to show our continued support of the Clinton community.
- This year marks the 800th anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta. On November 7, the AHI co-sponsored with Dartmouth’s Daniel Webster Center a

conference that explored the significance of Magna Carta in political and legal history as well as the charter's importance in current debates about due process and religious liberty.

- On Veterans Day, 11 November, Colonel Glenn "Alex" Crowther delivered at Hamilton College the Third Annual General Josiah Bunting III Veterans Day Lecture on "Service."

What's ahead (a sampling):

- Our signature event, the annual Carl B. Menges Colloquium will be held April 14-16 at the Turning Stone Resort. This year's theme: "Toleration, the Constitution, and the Limits of an Open Society." Roger Pilon, Vice President for Legal Affairs for the Cato Institute and Publisher of *Cato Supreme Court Review*, will keynote the event.
- In a few weeks, the AHI will announce a major initiative to establish a kindred-spirit program at an elite liberal arts college in the northeast.
- On April 1-2, the AHI will co-sponsor with the Benjamin Franklin Forum at Skidmore College, the Annual Undergraduate Conference on the American Polity. Professor Diana Schaub, Loyola University Maryland, will keynote.
- In 2016, the AHI will announce completion of the Eugene D. Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese Reading Room. The Genoveses, among the most influential intellectuals of their generation, served as academic advisors to the AHI before their deaths in 2012 and 2007, respectively. Eugene Genovese bequeathed to the AHI his massive collection on southern history, which collection is in the process of being catalogued.
- In 2016, the AHI will sponsor two reading clusters, open to the public, at Hamilton College. One designed in particular for pre-law students will focus on great works in legal history. Dr. Beth L'Arrive of Colgate University will lead a second cluster that will focus on Plato's *Republic*.
- In 2016, the AHI will make a major announcement about a major initiative to advance communications, public relations, and technology.
- In 2016, the AHI brand will be seen on several major scholarly publications.

We continue to be impressed by AHI Undergraduate Fellows, past and present.

- Former AHI Undergraduate Fellows continue to achieve: Benjamin Swett of Darien, Connecticut, was hired by Irving Levin Associates, a leading publisher of business intelligence in the field of health care; Anderson Tuggle was accepted for admission into Yale Law School; Joseph Bock began his first term as Municipal Public Defender in his home town of Boonton, New Jersey; Dean Ball

was honored at a dinner ceremony on May 2. Dean serves as Policy Manager at the Manhattan Institute's Center for State and Local Leadership; Joe Simonson, was hired as the Editorial Page Assistant at the *New York Post*; Sarah Larson joined MBT Bank; Sarah Izzo serves as an analyst for the Advisory Board Company; Thomas Cheeseman is finishing his classwork as a scholarship student at Vanderbilt Law School; Tim Minella received a Ph. D in the history of science; Liz Farrington completed her coursework at Notre Dame Law School and is working as a lawyer in New Mexico; Will Eagan is finishing a Ph.D. in statistics at Purdue University; Will Robbins is an analyst at Morgan Stanley; and Steven Pet received a scholarship to attend the University of Virginia School of Law.

- Current AHI Undergraduate Fellows are also excelling: Phil Parkes was awarded a summer internship at the American Enterprise Institute; Amy Elinski worked as a summer intern in the area of national security; Alex Klosner was awarded a summer fellowship from the Charles Koch Institute; and Zoe Garman and Danielle Stemper from the Rochester Institute of Technology and Michael Adamo from Hamilton College received awards as a result of their participation in the AHI's annual Carl B. Menges Colloquium.
- Also, in October, the AHI Undergraduate publication [Enquiry](#) went online. The student-run publication began in 2013, but was upgraded to an online version this year.

How can you help? Some of you who will receive this letter have already made tax-deductible contributions to the AHI for this year. We thank you for your generosity. We ask those who have not yet contributed to help us to complete major initiatives to undertake an ever expanding list of programmatic activities

Please consider a financial contribution of \$100, \$200, \$300 or more to further our existing programs and future initiatives. We hope that you will consider supporting our mission of educational reform and our creation of innovative programming designed to promote intellectual diversity and a genuine free marketplace for ideas.

We accept donations directly via our [website](#), or if you wish to mail a donation to support the Alexander Hamilton Institute, please send your contribution to:

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One final note. Those unfamiliar with the AHI often ask, "What is its purpose?" Answer: Can any person looking clear-sightedly at the academy today honestly deny that we are needed?

Sincerely,

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