



In Memory
JOHN RIECKER
1930-2008

"John Riecker was a refined, gracious and unpretentious gentleman who generously shared his expertise and wisdom with the Mackinac Center and so many other institutions he believed were making a difference. When John joined our advisory board years ago, I knew we were gaining a sage counselor. But I later learned, as others who knew John can attest, that I was also gaining a friend."

President Joseph G. Lehman on the passing of John Riecker, member of the Center's Board of Directors and long-time advisor

High Demand for Center Economists During Fiscal Crisis

For months there has been a relentless media din over the banking and mortgage crisis, including overwrought claims about the failures of the marketplace, and an increasing clamor for more federal bailouts and further redistribution of taxpayer dollars. Yet, there have been few politicians or professional commentators who could explain how we got here or offer solutions that wouldn't exacerbate existing problems.

Enter the Mackinac Center's erudite and widely regarded economists. Armed with decades of experience, frank analysis and free-market principles, their insights were sought throughout the state and nationwide. Week after week, David Littmann, the Center's senior economist, and Michael D. LaFaive, director of the Center's Morey Fiscal Policy Center, were called upon to bring clarity to the public dialogue.

Few people combine the comprehensive

understanding of banking, mortgages, the automotive industry and Michigan economics like Littmann, the former chief economist for Comerica Bank. With master's degrees in economics from MIT and the University of Michigan, a nationally recognized record of spot-on economic forecasting and the ability to articulate economics in a compelling manner, Littmann's analysis was in high demand.

In a Sept. 24 Op-Ed in The Detroit News, Littmann enumerated the government ventures and rules that led to the fiscal crisis. "Yet," he wrote, "to cover their corrupting decisions and past complaisance, Washington's major mouthpieces ... now say that unless we trust them with a new round of our scarce resources, the U.S. economic system will collapse. This rhetoric is meant to panic us into accepting a new federal

see "Bailout" Page 4

Celebrating 20 Years of Resolve

When more than 600 friends come together to help you celebrate a milestone, you know it's going to be a memorable event.

That was the case on Nov. 11 when more than 625 supporters, guests and friends of liberty packed the Kellogg Center on the campus of Michigan State University to celebrate the Mackinac Center's 20th anniversary.

Elected officials, reporters, business leaders, educators and people from all walks of life came from every corner of Michigan



(and beyond) to celebrate two decades of free-market ideas and ideals. New friends were introduced to old acquaintances, and guests lined up for a book signing by keynote speaker John

Stossel of ABC News.

With typical self-deprecating humor, Supreme Court Justice Cliff Taylor served as emcee, as he had at the Center's fifth and tenth anniversary celebrations. Founding board members Joe Olson and Richard McLellan welcomed the assembled guests and recalled the Center's formative years.

President Emeritus Lawrence W. Reed made several introductions, noting that while the Center's success has always been because of ideas,

see "Gala," Page 6

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Ideas and Political Leadership



Joseph G. Lehman
President

Seven days after last month's election, more than 600 friends gathered to celebrate the Mackinac Center's 20th anniversary. The election itself produced little that proponents of limited government might celebrate, but its aftermath provided the perfect backdrop to underscore the current that drives public policy as well as election results: ideas.

Economist Friedrich Hayek is credited with a vivid, if exaggerated, analogy. He compared politicians to corks bobbing in the ocean, with ideas and their champions acting as the invisible currents that sweep them along. I shared Hayek's analogy to the amused delight of our anniversary gala crowd, along with one of my own that drew a notable response. (I ask the forbearance of those with whom I've already shared it.)

I said watching the Legislature pass laws is like watching a football game through a hole in the fence that only lets you see the few yards nearest the goal line. You see players score as they carry the ball across that line, but you're missing a lot of the game. Someone, somewhere, somehow sets up those big plays.

Often outside the view of political observers are the people who champion ideas and the means by which to accomplish them, the Mackinac Center being the example at hand. Though they work farther up the field and away from the goal line, ideas determine the score as much as, or even more than, the government officials who bask in the goal-line glory.

No matter which way the political winds blow, you can count on the Mackinac Center to stand for time-honored ideas of limited government.

How true! Some malign political leadership by calling it an oxymoron, but such people cannot be serious students of history. The American Revolution was fueled by sublime ideas of liberty and carried out by a historic confluence of individual political leaders and statesmen. In our time, the Reagan and Thatcher "revolutions" are eponymous reminders that ideas alone do not enact public policies friendly to liberty. As my gently chiding friend wrote, "It is a partnership."

No matter which way the political winds blow, you can count on the Mackinac Center to stand for time-honored ideas of limited government. Larry Reed, our president emeritus, told our anniversary celebrants what makes him most proud. "This organization's principles are the same today as they were 20 years go. No drift, no corners cut, no waffles, no ifs, ands or buts. How many parties or politicians can you say that about?"

A congressional chief of staff once joined the Mackinac Center team. After observing the public policy process from a think tank's perspective, he said politicians are the hammers and think tank ideas are nails. It's obvious that you can't build much of a house without both.

Note to political leaders and statesmen: We're ready when you are. I

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Hoekstra, Ruhland Join Center Staff

The Mackinac Center will take its government accountability initiative to a new level with the addition of long-time Michigan broadcaster Kathy T. Hoekstra to its communications team.

Hoekstra, a University of Michigan graduate, spent nearly 15 years in broadcast journalism, including the last decade as a television news reporter and anchor at WEYI-TV 25 in Saginaw. She also hosted a public affairs program on which Center scholars were regular guests.

"I've been a fan of the Mackinac Center for a long time, dating back to my first radio job in Port Huron," Hoekstra explained. "My boss would have us read the Center's commentaries on air as our editorial position."

In her new role, Hoekstra will be shining the klieg lights of transparency on government entities and officials throughout the state. Her background and contacts in the broadcast media will allow Center research to gain an even



Kathy Hoekstra and Lauren Ruhland

greater level of visibility.

"My role with the Mackinac Center is multifaceted," said Hoekstra. "I'll be venturing into new multimedia efforts, increasing video production and engaging in investigative journalism as part of our Michigan Transparency Project."

"It's inspiring to work with people who care so much about the principles of the free market, and I plan to do everything I can to help move the Center forward in that regard," she added.

The Center also brought on Lauren Ruhland as editor of MichiganScience. Ruhland is a 2008 graduate of Alma College, where she majored in biology. She

worked as a summer intern at the Center and was a Koch Foundation fellow.

MichiganScience is a quarterly magazine that explores science-related policy matters. The periodical is distributed to the media, policymakers, educators, libraries and science museums.

"I've admired the Center's progress from afar for years," Ruhland said. "But having the opportunity to work here with so many talented people has been wonderful."

MichiganScience is a critical policy resource in the state, Ruhland said. "With technological innovations and environmental concerns at the core of many policy debates, a basic understanding of science is essential," she said. "The relationship goes both ways: scientific literacy is crucial for understanding topics like public health or energy, but policymakers also influence the scientific community by the laws they enact." **I**

Student Uprising

Getting college students to turn out for anything early on a Saturday morning is no easy task. Yet the Mackinac Center's college outreach project, Students for a Free Economy, drew more than 50 energetic and intelligent student leaders from 15 different universities to a day-long freedom forum on a Saturday in November.

The event, held at the University of Michigan, was geared toward free-market student activists in the Midwest who want to know how to spread the ideas they are so passionate about. SFE co-hosted the event with a nationwide student organization called Students for Liberty.

Attendees spent the entire day hearing from 13 different expert speakers and panelists on how to market the ideas of freedom. There were presentations on advancing freedom in the policy world, the academic world, the political world and through popular culture. Sessions on blogging and video helped students learn to use technology to maximize

the impact of the free-market message, and a student panel discussion covered how they could effectively host events and run freedom-friendly student groups on their campuses.

Many of these students are already busy spreading the message of freedom on their campuses by leading student groups, hosting events, writing articles and promoting campus dialogue. Many hope to find careers in advancing free-markets when they graduate. They left the forum knowing that there are myriad ways they can continue to fight for the precious ideas that made this country great.

"This conference was a great place to learn how to spread the message of liberty and economic freedom," said Kyle Latham, a student at Grove City College. "I've never taken 16 pages of



notes so enthusiastically or happily."

"This conference was an intense forum which provided us as an organization with more of the tools and resources that we needed to spread our agenda of liberty," added Charles Fehl, a student at the University of Michigan."

To those who are pessimistic about the future of freedom, the caliber of students attending this event should serve as a source of hope and encouragement. Seasoned Mackinac Center Legislative Analyst Jack McHugh, after attending the event observed, "Where did all those smart, cool, idealistic, principled college kids come from, anyway? Maybe we're not 'all gonna die' after all." **I**

Bailout from Page One

steward of our hard-earned dollars.”

Littmann appeared regularly on “The Paul W. Smith Show” and “The Frank Beckmann Show” on WJR 760 AM. He was quoted several times in The Detroit News, the Detroit Free Press, the Port Huron Times Herald and elsewhere. He did interviews with “Fox Business News” in New York, Bloomberg News, the Minneapolis Star Tribune, German newspaper Die Zeit, Canada’s National Post and numerous other print and broadcast outlets.

LaFaive also fielded calls from reporters across the nation on the financial crisis, the possibility of a government bailout for the Big 3 automakers and related subjects.

He was interviewed by such diverse outlets as National Review, CNS News, The Saginaw News, WJRT-TV, WEYI-25, WNEM-5, WEMU, WTCM and WMKT.

When President-elect Barack Obama named Gov. Jennifer Granholm to his economic advisory



WJRT-TV12 reporter Dawn Jones asks Fiscal Policy Director Michael D. LaFaive about options for the Big Three automakers.

team, LaFaive was quoted in coverage in the New York Times, the BBC, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, WKLA, Gongwer News Service, MIRS Capitol Capsule, WTBB, WOOD radio and WSGW, among others.

LaFaive told The New York Times that Gov. Granholm’s appointment was troubling. “There’s a reason people are fleeing the state, and it has much to do with the bad public policies this state has embraced over the last 6 to 12 years.” **I**

Remembering Joe *By Lawrence W. Reed*

We should never be so blind or arrogant as to forget those on whose shoulders we stand. I’m a firm believer in that, which is why I try never to miss an opportunity to remind colleagues and friends of the inestimable contributions of the Mackinac Center’s late senior vice president, Joe Overton.

Our 20th anniversary is one such opportunity.

Joe served as a volunteer for the Mackinac Center early in its history and joined the staff full-time in January 1992, eventually attaining the position of senior vice president and earning the boundless esteem of a grateful, admiring staff. He was a fountain of ideas, a genius at marketing and strategic planning, and a powerful motivator of people on behalf of liberty and sound public policy.

Much of the Center’s growth was made possible by his wise and thoughtful direction. He authored many of the Center’s most effective studies and programs, including the innovative “Universal Tuition Tax Credit.” The hundreds of tributes received from all over the world in the wake of his untimely death in a light plane crash on June 30, 2003, bear testimony to his profound impact far beyond the state of Michigan.

Several times since we lost him, I have distributed to the Center staff a lengthy list of

examples of Joe’s impact and influence. Among the items are these: He came up with the idea for MichiganVotes.org and brought it to fruition. He was the prime author of our first study of the MEA’s teacher health insurance scheme and was an architect of the Center’s successful and much-celebrated defense against an MEA lawsuit. He was the first to insist that Mackinac Center publications look as good as if they came from a Fortune 500 company.

Life to Joe was an endless exercise in learning and building character. Kind, honest, candid, humble, generous and professional at all times, Joe was a Christian of impeccable character who raised the standards of speech and conduct simply by his presence. He gave selflessly of his time, wisdom and resources — always helping others to improve themselves or, in some way, to advance the noble causes to which he dedicated his adult life. He employed his talents as engineer, attorney, manager and counselor to coax the best out of everyone he met. No one saw the “big picture” or the “long term” more clearly than he did. He thought of even the most mundane tasks as essential to the process of “building a cathedral.”

Joe Overton is, and always will be, deeply missed. But his imprint on the Mackinac Center is powerful and as indelible as ever. **I**



Joseph P. Overton

Sublime to the Serious: 20th Anniversary and Bailout Coverage

The financial crisis prompted reporters to turn to Center scholars for a free-market, limited-government view (see related story on page 1).

Senior economist **DAVID LITTMANN** conducted scores of interviews, including “**The Paul W. Smith Show**” Sept. 8 on **WJR 760 AM**. Littmann also appeared on WJR both on Smith’s program or “**The Frank Beckmann Show**” on Sept. 15, Sept. 22 and Oct. 9. Beckmann cited Littmann in a column he wrote for **The Detroit News** on Sept. 26. Littmann penned his own Op-Ed for **The Detroit News** on Sept. 24 and was cited in the **Detroit Free Press** on Sept. 19, Sept. 26 and Oct. 6, as well as in the **Port Huron Times Herald** on Oct. 2 and Oct. 6. He did television interviews with **WJRT** in Flint on Sept. 30 and Oct. 19, and was cited on **WZZM** in Grand Rapids Sept. 30. He was quoted in a Nov. 22 interview with **Bloomberg News**.

MICHAEL D. LAFaIVE, director of fiscal policy, was interviewed about the automotive bailout Nov. 10 by **WEYI** in Saginaw, was cited by **CNS News** on the same topic Nov. 18, and did a live interview Nov. 19 on **WJRT** in Flint. LaFaive also discussed free trade and consumer interests in the Sept. 2 **Saginaw News**. LaFaive was cited in the Sept. 8 **Jackson Citizen Patriot** about job creation and on Oct. 9 by **WPBN TV 7&4** regarding a Nebraska company recruiting workers in a Michigan Works! office.

A Sept. 5 Op-Ed by LaFaive on school privatization appeared in the Sept. 5 **Oakland County Legal News**, while other education-related stories citing the Center included school choice (Sept. 24, **WDIV**); teacher health insurance (Oct. 7, **Detroit News**); illegal teacher strikes (Oct. 7, **Detroit Free Press**); and school support service privatization (Nov. 6, **Macomb**

A number of the state’s newspapers recognized the Center on its 20th anniversary. On Nov. 8, **The Detroit News**, wrote that the Center “deserves congratulations as it prepares Tuesday to celebrate 20 years of serving Michigan and improving the public policy debate.” The piece praised the Center’s “worthy ideas to improving state and local government” and credited the Mackinac Center with exposing the Reform Michigan Government Now ballot proposal as a partisan power grab. “The Mackinac Center should keep shining a light on government and advancing ideas to improve the quality of life in Michigan,” The News concluded. **The Midland Daily News** (Nov. 12), **Detroit Free Press** (Nov. 12) and **The Saginaw News** (Nov. 13) all wrote about the Center’s success and longevity. An editorial in the Nov. 24 **Oakland Press** called the Center a “strong watchdog voice,” that is “impressive in the way it documents its positions. Articles on any topic are well-written, thoughtful and well-researched.” Dawson Bell, writing for the Free Press, said the Center is “arguably Michigan’s most prolific idea factory and steadfast advocate of economic freedom.” The Saginaw News said the Center has “successfully inserted itself into statewide discussion” and has “provided intelligent discourse and civil balance to Michigan’s public policy debate.”

Daily). **MICHAEL D. JAHR**, director of communications, was quoted in the Sept. 8 **Livingston County Daily Press & Argus** about teacher contract negotiations in Pinckney.

A Dec. 1 story in **The Flint Journal** highlighted **MARK PERRY**, an adjunct scholar with the Center and a professor at the University of Michigan-Flint, who has been sought out by national and international media for his thoughts on problems affecting domestic automobile producers.

PAUL KERSEY, director of labor policy, was cited in the Aug. 29 **Detroit News** on right-to-work laws and Sept. 2 regarding union dues. The Center also drew mention in the Sept. 22 **Chicago Daily Herald** regarding right-to-work protections for workers and Oct. 29 in **Forbes** about chard-check. A Viewpoint by Kersey about union expenditures appeared in the Sept. 12 **Saginaw Press**. **JAMES M. HOHMAN**, fiscal research assistant, was cited in the Nov. 13 **Los Angeles Times** about the success of right-to-work states.

RUSS HARDING, director of the Property Rights Network, was cited on wetland issues in the Sept. 18 **Big Horn County News** (Hardin, MT.) and Sept. 28 in the **Detroit Free Press**. On Oct. 3, he was cited in the **Elk Rapids Town Meeting** regarding smart growth and on the same day an Op-Ed he authored on energy policy appeared in **MiBiz**. A commentary written by Harding exposing the fallacy of tying economic recovery to “green jobs” drew a mention Dec. 1 at **National Review Online**. Harding was quoted extensively in a lengthy article on wetlands in the Oct. 3 issue of **Congressional Quarterly**.

KEN BRAUN, policy analyst, was cited in the Nov. 20 **Detroit News** about plans for a publicly funded mass transit system in southeast Michigan.

An Oct. 16 story in the **Royal Oak Mirror** about a forum the Mackinac Center hosted to discuss merit pay for teachers described the Center by saying, “In essence, they are known as the ‘think tank’ for public schools in Michigan.” (For more details about the forum, see page 12.) **I**

Gala from Page One

“it’s people to whom we owe boundless gratitude because ideas can go nowhere without them.” Reed, the founding president of the Mackinac Center, recognized several Keystone Award winners — those who have donated to the Center for 15 or more consecutive years. He also presented Jim Barrett, retired CEO and president of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, with the Mackinac Center’s Jefferson Award, and former board member Bruce Maguire with the Champions of Freedom Award (see related story on page 8).

“WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING”

I have found the Mackinac Center and its experts to be a tremendous resource for my radio show, but more importantly, I have found you to be a great provoker of deeper thought on public policy.

— Frank Beckmann, talk show host, WJR 760 AM

Reed discussed his transition to president emeritus, where he would remain active with the Mackinac Center, while assuming the role of president of the Foundation for Economic Education. Reed said that in President Joseph Lehman the Center has a “superb new leader” with a “sterling reputation throughout the country.”

Reed said that he is proudest of one thing during his 20 years guiding the Center: “This organization’s principles are the same today as they were 20 years ago. No drift, no corners cut, no waffles, no ifs, ands or buts. How many parties or politicians can you say that about? Under the leadership of Joe Lehman and this fine board of directors and staff, this will not change.”

Stossel, co-anchor of ABC’s “20/20” news magazine, began his remarks with a tongue-in-cheek poke at the audience. “What are you people doing here?” he asked. “You people of free markets. Don’t you know that’s over?”

Stossel bemoaned the current push for more government regulation and meddling in the markets when it was government involvement that produced the financial crisis in the first place. He also blamed the media for hyping economic crisis despite the fact that the unemployment, inflation and interests rates remain low. An atmosphere of crisis, he said, is “a friend of the state,” which leads to more government interference in markets.

“We’re told the bailout is absolutely necessary,” Stossel said. “If we didn’t, would there be another Great Depression? No. Assets would fall to their true value.”

Stossel recounted his early years as a consumer reporter, doing investigative journalism that led to government regulatory bodies intended to help people. The result was large, do-nothing bureaucracies that ended up costing taxpayers more money.

“The more I started to watch market competition work, the more I saw it worked better,” he said.

Stossel thanked those in attendance for helping the Mackinac Center, which he said was the only state-based think tank “that’s really on the national map.”

In closing remarks, Lehman noted that “the shocks to our economy, our public policy and our politics over the last few weeks” might leave some feeling “gloomy.” While understandable, he added, such feelings must give way to resolve. He noted that Nov. 11 is Veterans Day, “a day set aside to honor those who personified resolve,” and asked for all veterans in the room to stand. Those who did were greeted with a thunderous standing ovation.

Lehman then pointed out that the fight for liberty never ends. “Individual liberty and the economic freedom that goes hand-in-hand with it, has never had a golden age, even in this nation best known for freedom and free markets,” he told the audience.

Some people, however, make a crucial error in thinking that supporting liberty means supporting the right politicians. “That’s because when lawmakers change public policy to favor liberty, they are only taking the final step in a long march,” Lehman added.

“Up the field and further away from the goal line glory is where ideas begin their march toward becoming public policy,” he said. “Those ideas are developed, and communicated, by think tanks like the Mackinac Center. When a politician gets his bill passed, he’s probably just completing what some political economist in a think tank began years before.”

Lehman reminded the crowd of the bleak circumstances and overwhelming obstacles facing the state when the Center was first founded. “It may be hard to believe,” he said, “but Michigan public policy was actually worse when the Mackinac Center opened its doors than it is now.”

He then noted a litany of successes the Mackinac Center contributed to over the past two decades, including advancements in school choice, the elimination or capping of a variety of taxes and enhanced protections for private property.

“Let us resolve that Michigan will be America’s brightest beacon of freedom and prosperity,” Lehman concluded. “Let us resolve that liberty will not finally yield on our watch. Carry on, friends.” **I**



“WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING”

The Mackinac Center has always shown great strength in two areas that are rarely compatible — rigorous public policy proposals based on solid facts, and clear language and real-world solutions that take into account the existing political reality. It is a rare feat to pull off both principled advocacy and practical politics, but Mackinac has found the formula.

John Fund, Wall Street Journal columnist



Men of Caliber

Our 20th anniversary gala presented us with the ideal time and place to honor two resolute and energetic champions of liberty with prestigious Mackinac Center awards. Businessman and former Mackinac Center board member Bruce J. Maguire and former Chamber of Commerce President James Barrett both received standing ovations from the sellout crowd.

Mackinac Center President Emeritus Lawrence W. Reed presented Maguire with the Champions of Freedom Award. Maguire was one of the earliest members of our board of directors and has frequently lent us his business, legal and financial acumen, reinforced by a steadfast belief in the power of personal and economic liberty.

In 1956, Maguire opened the first McDonald's restaurant in Michigan. Under his direction, none of the Maguire family enterprises has sought or received special treatment from government.

Were his generous financial contributions to free-market research and property rights protections not enough, Maguire also has been a tireless national promoter of the Mackinac Center.



Bruce J. Maguire



James Barrett

Reed presented the Jefferson Award to Barrett, who began working on behalf of Michigan residents as an employee of the Michigan

Chamber of Commerce in 1971. He would serve as president and chief executive officer of the Chamber from June 1976 to June 2008.

Barrett is only the second person in Mackinac Center history to receive the Jefferson Award. The award reads, in part:

“Mr. Barrett’s career has been marked by his exceptional commitment to protecting taxpayers, fostering enterprise and improving the quality of life in Michigan.”

While we bestowed honors on them, the real honor is that we have the good fortune to associate with two gentlemen of such caliber. **I**

Making History Behind the Scenes

What a night! More than 600 friends of liberty showed up in East Lansing on Nov. 11 to celebrate the Mackinac Center’s 20th anniversary. In addition to great food and better company, the audience was treated to a stellar lineup of speakers, including Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Cliff Taylor and ABC News correspondent John Stossel.

Behind the scenes, Mackinac Center staff like Kendra Shrode, Emily Holty, Sharon Millerwise, Daniel Montgomery, LeAnn Hadley and Pat Benner worked together on countless details to make the event shine.

Their hard work, commitment and passion for liberty — though performed outside of the spotlight — helped create an evening to remember for old friends, new faces, Debate Workshop essay contest winners and students from universities across the state.

Their unheralded efforts reminded me of how my colleagues at the Mackinac Center labor tirelessly in defense of liberty. Our staff does not work for re-election, fortune or fame. Instead, they dutifully and humbly add to the empire of ideas

designed to increase educational freedom and achievement, lower our taxes, protect property and expose cynical and destructive ballot proposals.

When freedom finally prevails, it won’t be the result of a sudden flash of inspiration. It will be the product of our commitment to principles, the constant drumbeat of common sense over misguided bureaucracies and the slow, gradual shifting of the political window of possibility. When victories are won, the Center’s fingerprints — and yours — will be evident.

Yet, we won’t ask for the spotlight. Once battles for liberty have been won, we know the next challenge lies just around the corner. We will press forward and work harder than ever until all Michigan residents can enjoy the blessings of freedom and its bounty.

Thank you for being a part of our team. You join thousands of others who have put their faith in individual men and women, voluntary association and true compassion as Michigan’s foundation for revival. You have added to the chorale of voices calling for change, and you are helping us set the stage for many future great shows. **I**



Justin W. Marshall,
Director of
Advancement



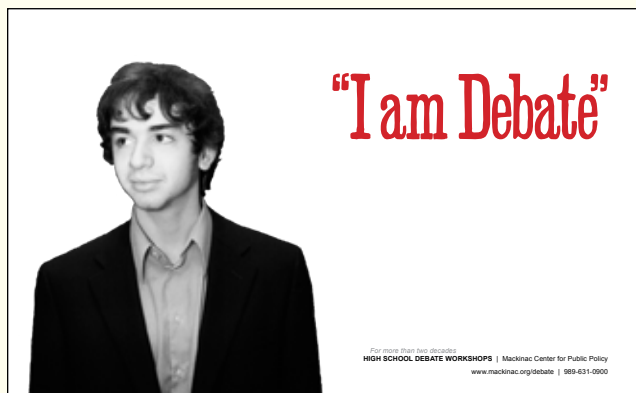
Your estate plans reflect the values you hold dear and hope to perpetuate. Join the Mackinac Center’s Legacy Society by calling Justin W. Marshall at 989-631-0900 and including the Center in your bequest today.

High School Debate Workshops

Powerful speakers and enthusiastic students participated in the Mackinac Center's 21st annual High School Debate Workshops in October. The national debate topic, "Resolved: The United States Federal Government Should Substantially Increase Alternative Energy Subsidies in the United States" drew questions and prompted discussions about clean coal, nuclear plants, electric cars, climate change, biofuels and solar power.

More than 475 students took part in the workshops, held over four consecutive days in Livonia, Adrian, Grand Rapids and Traverse City. Students attended from the following Michigan high schools: Richmond, Universal Academy, Faith Baptist, Saginaw Heritage, Adrian, Blissfield, Onsted, Lenawee Christian, Hudson, Forest Hills Central, Zion Christian, Kenowa Hills, Caledonia, Grand Rapids City, Lowell, Grand Rapids Catholic Central, Holt, Northville, Traverse City Central, Traverse City West, McBain, Petoskey, Gaylord, Cadillac and Bellaire.

Nearly 9,000 students, teachers and coaches have participated in the Center's workshops over the last 20 years, gaining insight and knowledge about each year's debate topic, as well as tips on research, affirmative and negative arguments and how the issues play a role in an expanding global market. Students have benefited from hearing speakers such as former Attorney General Edwin Meese, Club for Growth founder Steve Moore and documentary filmmaker June Arunga.



SNEAK PEEK - A new marketing campaign will be unveiled in early 2009 when the National Forensics League announces the debate resolution for the 2009-2010 school year. For more than 20 years, the Center has provided a unique voice challenging students to approach each year's topical public policy issue from a free-market perspective.

"The Debate Workshop program is the one we've hosted longer than any other, with the very first dating back to the fall of 1988 — the first full year our doors were open," said Kendra Shrode, assistant to the president and long-time workshop coordinator. "We have done our best to bring the free-market message to the brightest students. They return year after year and so often tell me what a difference the workshops have made in their debate seasons and in their very lives."

20 YEARS OF DEBATE WORKSHOPS



Students attending the workshops can write an essay on the topic and win one of four Mackinac Center \$1,000 college scholarships.

Comments from teachers and students alike once again proved the workshops are a valued and appreciated tool among debaters.

"Because of this workshop, I know I will have a much more successful debate season," wrote Molly Tompkins of Traverse City Central.

Nick Kloka, debate coach and English teacher at Saginaw Heritage, wrote, "I have brought my students to this event for several seasons now, and as a teacher I am never disappointed." Students from Kloka's program won scholarships after both the 2006 and 2007 workshops.

The speakers this year were Dr. Rich Edwards, a communications professor and debate coach at Baylor University; Greg Rehmke, editor of *Economic Thinking.org* and a frequent writer and lecturer on debate topics; and Mike Winther, a debate coach and lecturer. **I**

Principles — The Same Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

At a time when drift and opportunism seem to command a premium, steadfastness and faithfulness to core principles are all too rare. Supporters of organizations like the one I led for 20 years (the Mackinac Center) and the one I lead now (the Foundation for Economic Education) should be pleased that our principles today are no different than they were 20 years ago at Mackinac's beginnings or 62 years ago when FEE was born.

I can speak proudly of both organizations when I say that we reaffirm our founding principles.

The ideal we are striving to achieve is a world where people flourish in a free and civil society. There, the individual's creative, productive energies are unleashed; private property and the sanctity of contract are upheld; the use of force is confined to protecting the peace; competitive markets allocate scarce resources; and honesty is universally regarded as the best policy in both public and private affairs.

The future we envision is one in

which individual expression gives rise to great achievements in culture, medicine, science and education. Men and women will engage each other peacefully and voluntarily because they will respect each other's uniqueness, rights, property and aspirations. No one will be so lacking in humility and introspection as to fancy himself better equipped to plan the lives of others than they, individually, are able to plan for themselves, their families and their businesses.

A free economy in the long run is unlikely if not impossible without the widespread practice of sturdy character — including such traits as humility, self-discipline, self-reliance, patience and respect for others.

In material terms, free people are not equal and equal people are not free. Attempts through the use of government to create equality of income and wealth not only work against our natures as unique individuals but also lead inevitably to force and conflict.

Private property is a human right first and foremost. Its protection is an

indispensable foundation of economic activity in a free society.

Central planning is "planned chaos." The spontaneous order of free markets, competition, incentive, entrepreneurship, profit and loss, and flexible prices are infinitely superior in both moral and economic terms. Pioneering inventors, risk-taking wealth creators, and visionary assemblers of people and tools are among society's greatest heroes.

We rely entirely upon the voluntary support of those who share our values. We are "entitled" to nothing but the respect and support our work merits in the eyes and hearts of free men and women.

To be "principled" means you have principles that don't bend or blow away with the breeze. My advice to all people, and especially those in public office, is to decide what your principles are and then muster the courage to faithfully defend them. **I**

Lawrence W. Reed, president emeritus of the Mackinac Center



VIEWPOINTS

State Check Book Still Missing from Internet

October 2008 V2008-28

Gov. Jennifer Granholm’s office has twice refused Mackinac Center requests to replicate the online spending transparency found on the Secretary of State’s Web site. Claims by the governor’s office that such a project would be “cost prohibitive,” however, don’t add up.



Smart Growth is Neither

October 2008 V2008-29

Policymakers should forgo central planning such as smart growth, which hinders private property rights and affordable housing efforts, and let landowners use their own property as they see best.

Michigan Supreme Court Decision Limits Agency Powers

October 2008 V2008-30

A recent Michigan Supreme Court decision limits the powers of the executive branch and state agencies to make decisions that are the responsibility of the Legislature and courts.

Public Education: Time For Change Based on the Merits

November 2008 V2008-31

A merit-pay program for Michigan’s public schools would reward teachers based on student achievement, rather than longevity and advanced degrees.



American Greetings Says Hello to More Incentives

November 2008 V2008-32

Policymakers are quick to issue press releases about how many jobs will be created when they give discriminatory favors to certain businesses. Where are the press releases when those predictions fall short?



The Government’s Plan to Fix Wall Street Will Do More Harm

November 2008 V2008-33

Washington’s response to the mortgage crisis ignored the very government policies that created the problem.



Will We Move Forward or Backward on Union Transparency?

December 2008 V2008-34

New financial accountability rules make unions more transparent to the men and women they represent, but will a new administration in Washington, D.C., change that?

How to Save Detroit

December 2008 V2008-35

Domestic automobile producers should work with Washington to change corporate income taxes, shed onerous environmental regulations and pursue sound energy policy, rather than plead for taxpayer bailouts.

Requiem for Reason

December 2008 V2008-36

It is self-destructive and self-defeating when the Department of Environmental Quality drives away the types of high-tech jobs other state agencies are trying to attract.

JOURNALS



Capitol Confidential

MCC2008-05

Key stories: Great Lakes water compact, binding arbitration, spending transparency, state budget.

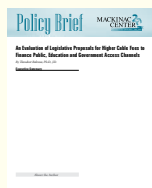


Capitol Confidential

MCC2008-06

Key stories: Energy mandates, right-to-work laws, reader feedback.

STUDIES & REPORTS



An Evaluation of Legislative Proposals for Higher Cable Fees to Finance Public, Education and Government Access Channels

S2008-11

The State should not allow municipal governments to increase public, education and government channel fees when there is no evidence of additional demand.



“Tobacco Taxes and Smuggling: A Statistical Analysis and Historical Review”

S2008-12

This nationwide study examines the effect of cigarette excise taxes on cigarette smuggling and suggests that policymakers reassess the value of these taxes as a revenue enhancer and public health tool.



Survey 2008: School Privatization Grows Again

S2008-13

The Mackinac Center for Public Policy’s sixth privatization survey of Michigan’s 552 conventional public school districts found that the percentage of districts contracting for the management or operation of at least one of the “big three” support services — food, janitorial or busing — increased for the fifth survey in a row to 42.2 percent, up from 40.2 percent in 2007. That is a rate increase of almost 5 percent.

How to order

All publications are available at www.mackinac.org. For telephone orders, please call the Mackinac Center at 989-631-0900. The Center accepts Visa, MasterCard and Discover/NOVUS for your convenience. Please have your card and item titles handy when calling.

Merit-Pay Forum Draws a Crowd

The idea of merit pay for school teachers attracted an eclectic, inquiring and enthusiastic group of educators to a Mackinac Center forum in Livonia in early October. Patrick J. Wright, the Center's senior legal analyst, was joined by Tom Watkins, former state superintendent of public instruction, and Matthew Carr, education policy director for the Buckeye Institute, in a discussion of private foundation funding for teacher merit pay in Michigan schools.

Superintendents from public and private schools; school board presidents, treasurers and other board members; a teachers union chief negotiator; human resources managers; university officials; a representative from the Detroit Regional Chamber, a special assistant to the attorney general; present and former teachers; and others turned out to hear a noteworthy team of panelists discuss merit pay and an innovative idea for funding it.

Attendees represented a number of districts, including Detroit Public Schools, the Oscoda Area School District, Hillsdale Community Schools, Caledonia Community Schools, Novi Community Schools, Jackson Public Schools, Grosse Pointe Public Schools, Whitmore Lake Public Schools, Gull Lake Community Schools and several others from around the state. Charter school representatives also attended.

Following the panelists' remarks, there was more than an hour-long question-and-answer period. For what is often perceived as a controversial issue, the discussion was productive, thoughtful and frank.

The forum was an outgrowth of a Mackinac Center policy brief titled, "A Merit-Pay Pilot Program for Michigan Public Schools." Authored by Wright and

Marc Holley, an adjunct fellow with the Center and a doctoral academy fellow in public policy at the University of Arkansas, the brief found that most teacher pay structures do not reward educators for student achievement. The brief, made possible with support from the Broad Foundation, recommended a privately financed merit-pay pilot program in a Michigan school district.



Despite a four-hour drive each way, six Oscoda Area School District personnel — including the superintendent, school board president and chief negotiator for the Oscoda Education Association — attended the forum. In September, the school district and the local union established a four-year merit-pay program of \$25,000 annually. The district was one of many to express interest in the Center's pilot program concept.

Op-Eds on teacher merit pay written by Wright and Watkins ran in *The Detroit News* on Oct. 3, *The Midland Daily News* on Oct. 5 and the *Straitsland Resorter* on Dec. 4. On the day of the forum, they discussed the issue with Frank Beckmann on WJR 760 AM. They were also interviewed on WTCM in Traverse City, WILS in Lansing and the Gongwer News Service. The forum was cited in the Oct. 15 *Oscoda Press* and in the Oct. 16 *Royal Oak Mirror*. **I**