

# DONOR BEWARE



“Identity politics and groupthink have taken over professional philanthropy just like it’s taken over K-12 education, higher ed, corporate America, really every aspect of our society. It’s hurting the very people that we all want to help. We can no longer have important conversations and honest dialogue to find the best solutions to help people in need.”



That was **Elise Westhoff**, *President and CEO of the Philanthropy Roundtable*, updating Impact Fund members on the current landscape of philanthropy. Westhoff went on to stress the importance of protecting donor intent and donor privacy.

In the breakout session, **Strategic Philanthropy and Preserving Donor Intent**, **Jessica Dean**,



*Senior Vice President at the Bradley Impact Fund*, and **Jason Kohout**, *Partner, Foley & Lardner LLP*, and *Chair of Foley’s Family Office Team*,

shared practical approaches Impact Fund members can and should take to ensure their giving aligns with their values.

Another breakout, **The Do’s and Don’ts of Giving to Your Alma Mater**, focused on protecting donor intent with gifts to higher ed institutions. **Emily**



**Koons Jae**, *Director of the Fund for Academic Renewal at the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA)*, and **Michael B. Poliakoff**,

**Ph.D.**, *President of ACTA*, encouraged Impact Fund members to utilize the comprehensive guidance for college donors available at no charge through the Fund for Academic Renewal.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT DONOR INTENT, LET’S HAVE A CONVERSATION. We’ll help you take advantage of the many Impact Fund resources for strategic philanthropy and connect you with the Fund for Academic Renewal if you’d like to make university gifts. Please get in touch today.

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BRADLEY  
IMPACT FUND®  
PRINCIPLED PHILANTHROPY

# BRADLEY IMPACT BRIEF

FALL 2021 ISSUE



## FROM THE DESK OF GABE CONGER

Dear Friends,

Courage, so often in short supply, was ever present as the Bradley Impact Fund community gathered last month at our annual conference. However, it wasn’t just found by listening to the keynote speakers and panel discussions. Allow me to explain.

At our opening session, Chris Rufo spoke passionately about his efforts to combat critical race theory and its insidious implementation in institutions across the country. While Chris spoke, one conference attendee stepped out of the session to take a phone call. How could someone leave?

This person left to act on the very topic Rufo was discussing. The attendee, who forwent a successful career to direct admissions at a small classical Christian school, left the room to take a call from a resolute parent who “wanted her child out” of her local school district. This parent had the courage to make sacrifices and pursue what she thought was best for her child’s education.

This same call would repeat itself no less than three more times just during the conference itself. As this Bradley Impact Fund member put it, she left the conference “validated and vindicated” by what she heard from those speaking and reflected on the courage needed in her own life.

Courage is necessary, but it’s not sufficient to truly restore and strengthen America’s founding principles and institutions. In a 1794 letter from George Washington to Charles Thruston, then a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, Washington wrote “truth will ultimately prevail where pains is taken to bring it to light.”

Attendees at this year’s Impact Conference had the opportunity to meet and interact with a number of leaders who have dedicated their lives to put in the work and develop the means to apply effective strategies to advance our principles. As you read this issue and reflect on your own giving, I hope you’ll be as encouraged as I am by the opportunities ahead of us.

Onward,

Gabe Conger  
*President, Bradley Impact Fund*

## BY THE NUMBERS

Cancel culture is causing Americans to self-censor ...

68%  
of college students

77%  
of Republicans

59%  
of independents

... agree they have opinions they are afraid to share

SOURCES: College Pulse 2019 study, Cato Summer Institute 2020 survey



**11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BRADLEY IMPACT CONFERENCE**  
*E Pluribus Unum – A republic, if we can keep it.*



*“If we will tell freedom’s story to younger Americans, younger Americans who have all those choices before them, we won’t just win a generation, we’ll win the future for freedom.”*

– **THE HONORABLE MIKE PENCE**  
 48TH VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



*“This is a time to re-engage, not a time to retreat.”*

– **THE HONORABLE MARK MEADOWS**  
 WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF FOR PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP AND SENIOR PARTNER, CONSERVATIVE PARTNERSHIP INSTITUTE

**ORGANIZATIONS**  
 at the 2021 Bradley Impact Conference

- Acton Institute
- American Council of Trustees and Alumni
- California Policy Center
- Conservative Partnership Institute
- Emergent Order Foundation
- Ethics and Public Policy Center
- The Foundation for Government Accountability
- Franklin News Foundation
- God Touch Milwaukee
- Institute for Reforming Government
- Kite & Key Media
- Lighthouse Christian School
- Manhattan Institute
- National Center for Public Policy - Free Enterprise Project
- Philanthropy Roundtable
- The Policy Circle
- Racine Vocational Ministry
- Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty



*“My husband and I don’t know how to pretend that the United States of America isn’t burning to the ground around us.”*

– **LARA LOGAN**  
 AWARD WINNING JOURNALIST AND, HOST, LARA LOGAN HAS NO AGENDA, FOX NATION

**E**very year members of the Bradley Impact Fund look forward to connecting with other philanthropists and learning from the conservative movement’s brightest minds and innovative leaders at the Impact Conference. The 2021 event at The Grand Geneva Resort in Wisconsin delivered a blend of tough news and well-founded hope.

Even the most well-informed Impact Fund members learned more about the extent of the spread of cancel culture and ideologies like Critical Race Theory and Environmental, Social, Governance. At the same time, panelist organizations offered promise for America as they described their state-of-the-art work and invited the Impact Fund community to join them in protecting and promoting equal opportunity for the American Dream. We can take heart in the shared vision so strongly expressed in the following stories.

You can view 2021 Impact Conference sessions at [vimeo.com/showcase/bic2021](https://vimeo.com/showcase/bic2021), password BIC2021, unless content was limited to live-presentation-only by speaker request. Audio-only recordings are available for certain sessions.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**12<sup>th</sup> Annual Bradley Impact Conference**  
 October 6 & 7, 2022  
 Grand Geneva Resort  
 Lake Geneva, WI



“The best ideas do not necessarily win. Those that are have captured undemocratic and anti-democratic power. They’ve embedded themselves in bureaucracies and by sheer force, by sheer mass, can dominate our public institutions, can siphon off public funding to promote private political ideologies.”



That was firebrand **Chris Rufo**, *Senior Fellow and Director, Critical Race Theory Initiative at the Manhattan Institute*, who briefed the audience on Critical Race Theory (CRT) in his keynote, **Waging the Culture War**. Rufo

and his team have built increasing public resistance to CRT in the last two years by exposing formal CRT policies in government agencies and school districts in the national media.

Rufo focused on the false narrative of CRT as “anti-racism” and urged Impact Fund members to support the fight against CRT by amplifying public voices speaking against it. “In order to translate public sentiment into public action, you have to deliver a narrative, you have to deliver information, and you have to deliver people’s passionate energy in a way that is there. That has to be channeled through what I think of as ‘political entrepreneurs’ who can deliver outside results,” he said.



The cancel culture theme was further addressed at **Acronyms Galore: The Real Threats Behind ESG and DEI**.

Moderated by **Dr. Samuel Gregg**, *Research Director at Action Institute*, this panel turned the spotlight on policymaking in American businesses that prioritizes ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) and DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion).



Panelist **Justin Danhof**, *Executive Vice President at the National Center for Public Policy Research*, spoke about the formidable culture war the

three largest asset management firms (which control \$20 trillion in assets) are waging in American society by putting proxy vote pressure on the leaders of large, publicly traded companies. Danhof leads the battle in filing right-of-center shareholder resolutions, but the fact remains: 92% of all ESG shareholder proposals in 2021 were filed by Progressive groups.



Panelist **Andrew Puzder**, *Former Chief Executive of CKE Restaurants Holdings*, pointed out that in many cases, these company

leaders don’t want to stray from their profit-driving strategies. However, they are under fire from investors, their own employees, and public opinion to manage their businesses according to ESG priorities. The result is a strong influence on American culture, not by a representative government, but by the ideology of a few.

Danhof encouraged the Impact Fund community to make clear to the companies they invest in that they do not support ESG policy-oriented management. Members can also visit [www.nationalcenter.org](http://www.nationalcenter.org) to download the Free Enterprise Project’s annual Investor Value Voter Guides for information on proxy voting that upholds traditional American values. Listen to this session at [vimeo.com/showcase/bic2021](https://vimeo.com/showcase/bic2021), password BIC2021.



*“The counterparts to what I do, the 80 to 120 groups on the left, don’t care about the profits of the companies they engage in as investors. They’re using the companies as a proxy for a fight in the culture wars.”*

— **JUSTIN DANHOF**  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT,  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR PUBLIC  
POLICY RESEARCH, AND  
DIRECTOR, FREE ENTERPRISE  
PROJECT



### IMPACT OF SPRING 2020 SCHOOL CLOSURES ...

- Wisconsin schools failed to complete +10% of curriculum
- Wisconsin students cumulatively lost \$7.7 billion in lifetime earnings

SOURCE: Dreams Deferred: The Economic Cost of Learning Loss in Wisconsin, Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, February 2021

## ADVANCING PARENTAL CHOICE IN WISCONSIN

Though Wisconsin is a national leader in advancing parental choice in education, and despite the pandemic's catalyzing effect on American support for school choice, there is still much to be accomplished, according to experts. **After the Pandemic: Advancing Parental Choice in Education in Wisconsin** was moderated by *Bradley Impact Fund Senior Philanthropic Advisor Sherry Street* who, earlier in her career, worked with former Mayor John Norquist to expand Milwaukee's school choice program to religious schools. During this engaging session, panelist C.J. Szafir noted, "One thing that we don't discuss enough...there are 70,000 children in Milwaukee public schools, and if we were to abolish MPS tomorrow there's not enough good, high-quality schools for them to go to."



**Szafir**, who is President of the *Institute for Reforming Government*, went on to say, "There's not enough Lighthouse Schools in Madison

if we would abolish Madison public schools. So we also have a supply problem, and that can't get lost. We need a sustainable education policy so we can ensure that



these high-quality schools can expand. They should never have waitlists. We need as many kids in those schools as possible."



**Libby Sobie**, Director of Education Policy at Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, highlighted another key concern in the school choice

arena. "Over the last two days we've heard concerns about CRT and how public schools are educating our children, and that is the other battle that has to be recognized today," said Sobie. "We're not just talking about great schools and helping economically-disadvantaged families use a state voucher to attend a private school of their choice. We're also talking about helping suburban families who aren't economically disadvantaged but now feel trapped in their public schools because during the pandemic they realized that the lies they were told, that they had this great school and that their kids' interests were front of mind, was not real." View this session at [vimeo.com/showcase/bic2021](https://vimeo.com/showcase/bic2021), password BIC2021.

*Wisconsin choice school enrollment increased by more than 2,700 students in the 2020-21 school year.*



### LIGHTHOUSE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL: FIRST CHOICE SCHOOL IN MADISON, WI

A ministry of Lighthouse Church, Lighthouse Christian School provides a Christian environment for learning and welcomes students of all backgrounds. The school was started in 2004 to offer children a safe, quality elementary program that would nurture the spirit, mind and body of the child in a bilingual setting. It has grown to include a K4 program and kindergarten through 8th grade. The school believes that parents have the ultimate responsibility to educate their children, and relies on parent support in all aspects of its program.

*"There's a great opportunity. Just for K4 we have over 50 children on the waiting list... but we don't have a place to put them. We are building, we are expanding, but the funding just isn't there right now. Parents are saying we want a change and we want it now."*

— **MARCIO SIERRA**  
PRESIDENT, LIGHTHOUSE  
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AND 2021  
BRADLEY IMPACT CONFERENCE  
PANELIST



## DEFEATING CANCEL CULTURE

2021 Bradley Impact Conference sessions examined the pervasive cancel culture in America and effective strategies for defeating it. In **The Future of Media**, panelist **John Papola** observed, “For all the talk about cancel culture, which is very real, it’s never been easier to get your message out to as many people as possible.” Papola is an *award-winning filmmaker and CEO of Emergent Order Foundation*, a non-profit studio dedicated to heroic storytelling that promotes a culture of American freedom.



It was a theme echoed by moderator **Chris Krug**, *President and Publisher of Franklin News Foundation*. Under Krug’s leadership, Franklin publishes The Center Square, a national newswire service that delivers high quality statehouse journalism in 43 states.



Panelist **Vanessa Mendoza**, *CEO and Founder of Kite & Key Media*, illuminated the importance of creating easier access to online, digestible, and verified public policy information, saying “The vast majority of Americans care about the direction of this country but they’re going to work in the morning, they’re raising their kids, they’re thinking about an elderly parent, they’re not thinking about public policy in the ways that we do. Kite and Key is trying to create a bridge from that public policy space to the everyday person who doesn’t think to reach out for it. They’re making decisions that are public policy relevant every single day, but they’re not always thinking about how they grab the right resource. They’re most often listening to opinions of their neighbors and friends or people on social media rather than getting to original sources they can trust.”

Since 2016, use of digital media has increased 39%, surpassing use of traditional media in 2018. At the same time, public trust in media is plunging: Just 33% of likely U.S. voters trust the political news they are getting.

2021 SOURCES: Statista, Rasmussen Reports



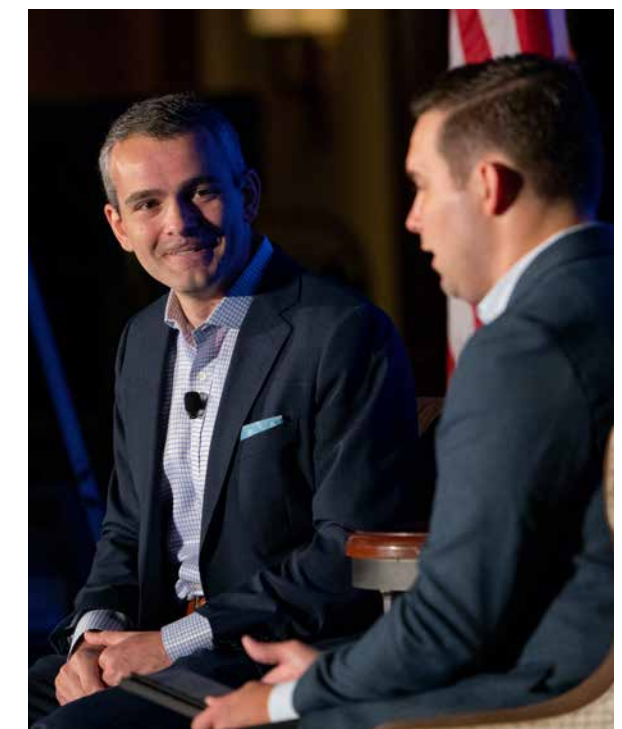
This conversation about the duality of cancel culture and media as both a source for its spread and a solution for overcoming it continued in **Defeating Cancel Culture**. Moderator and Bradley Impact Fund President **Gabe Conger** had an insightful conversation with **Dr. Ryan T. Anderson**, *President of the Ethics and Public Policy Center*. Anderson focused on one of the reasons cancel culture is so dangerous to the American republic when he explained, “The nature of cancel culture is it’s not that we’re going to have a debate on the Second Amendment, we’re going to prevent you from even having that debate by saying you can’t fund the organizations that are going to give voice to your position. We’re going to shut it down prematurely from even happening.”



Later, Anderson responded to an Impact Fund member in the audience who asked for a recommendation on practical actions for counteracting cancel culture. Anderson said, “We [the conservative movement] shouldn’t cancel people. We should disagree with them more. The way that we’ve done this historically is to say look,

part of what equality means is that we respect the law, we each have the right and freedom of speech to say our piece.”

View these sessions at [vimeo.com/showcase/bic2021](https://vimeo.com/showcase/bic2021), password BIC2021.



## SOLUTIONS FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

In **Solutions for Civic Engagement**, *Impact Fund Senior Philanthropic Advisor Sherry Street* moderated a lively dialogue between grant recipients engaging different citizen groups in civic life. **Jonathan Bechtle**, *COO and General Counsel for The Foundation for Government Accountability*, highlighted election reform, saying, “The hidden story in Florida is that they tackled the problem of local election leadership. You can have the best laws in the country, but if the leaders aren’t going to carry them out at the local election level then you get bad outcomes. In Florida, there were two in particular...that had patterns of sloppiness, not following the law, negligence that just really wrecked confidence in the election system. Ron DeSantis had them voluntarily resign from their jobs and put new people in those jobs.”



**Stacy Blakeley**, *Executive Director of The Policy Circle*, noted, “We believe civic engagement, civic life is much broader. We all tend to look at those fundamental civic duties, voting, serving on a jury, but we can look much bigger. Civic



life is participating in the Rotary Club, it’s being part of your neighborhood association. There are so many positive ways you can step up and contribute...It’s really about bringing back the power of association to rebuild trust in institutions because you’re there.”



A common value across these grant recipients is that everyone in America has a voice. **Lance Christensen**, *Executive Vice President for the California Policy Center (CPC)*, talked about ways CPC is uniting and elevating voices when he noted, “We’ve realized there’s a different model conservatives on the center right need to engage in, a hub and spokes approach. We need to think about branching out and collaborating with others who share our values and want to advance the vision.”

Listen to this session at [vimeo.com/showcase/bic2021](https://vimeo.com/showcase/bic2021), password BIC2021.



### WHAT WORKS — HOW TO TRANSFORM FORMER PRISONERS INTO CONTRIBUTING CITIZENS



In this breakout session, **Marty Calderon**, *Executive Director of God Touch Milwaukee*, spoke about the impact of his organization’s residential program for men who are struggling with addictions or recently released from prison, saying, “We’re helping transform men’s lives within the home and they’re helping transform neighborhoods outside the home. So where once they were terrorizing neighborhoods now they’re going back into neighborhoods and making them safe.” **James Schatzman**, *Executive Director of Racine Vocational Ministry*, an organization helping former inmates re-engage in the community, noted that forming relationships with family members, on the job, with God, and in their community is the difference-maker in former inmates’ ability to create healthy lives and pursue the opportunities available to all Americans.

