FALL 2026

A publication of PATRICK HENRY COLLEGE

FOUNDERS

Let Freedom Ring!



the DECLARATION *of* INDEPENDENCE

HAVE WE ABANDONED OUR ROOTS?

by GOD'S PROVIDENCE

THE STORY OF PHC'S INTELLIGENCE PROGRAM

PRESERVING AMERICA

ANSWERING "WHY PHC?"



UP FRONT

with JACK W. HAYE

President, Patrick Henry College

the VIGILANT, the ACTIVE, the BRAVE!

This year marks the 250th anniversary of America's independence. While we look in retrospect and celebrate the victorious conclusion of the War of Independence, we see that the great struggles that led up to that historic turning point are perhaps even more instructive for us in our own cultural moment.

For it was in those years prior to the war that brave men and women had to be stirred from their complacency to consider the unthinkable: rebelling against a government that was increasingly deaf to their concerns. They were at a turning point where the *status quo* was no longer acceptable. The trend lines pointed to greater and greater loss of freedoms.

Something had to be done as the government demonstrated over and over again its eagerness to ascribe to itself ever increasing power over the lives, commerce, and rights of the colonists. All for the purpose of consolidating its own power.

The escalating violence, confiscation of weapons, and suspension of the colonists' right to self-rule created an environment where families, churches, and communities were divided over their hereditary allegiance to the English Crown. Passionate debates took place around tavern tables, in town halls, and in churches, about how far was too far. Most understood the horrible price of war. **They also realized that liberty would be costly to obtain and even more costly to preserve.**

While some clung to an elusive hope that somehow the next concession would be the one that would be enough, many realized that it was time for action to secure their liberties, even if it meant the loss of everything they held dear, or the loss of their lives.

On March 23, 1775, Patrick Henry rose to address the Second Virginia Convention which had met to decide how the colony should respond to growing tyranny from the British Crown.

His words that afternoon have inspired freedom-loving patriots for the past 250 years. Listen closely...

"They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot?

Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us.

Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come.

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that the gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased with the price of chains and slavery?

Forbid it, Almighty God! ***I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"***

Patrick Henry's legacy lives on in this place—a place where we wrestle with complex ideas with both respect and resolve; where we understand that we have been given a heritage of freedom to preserve for the next generation; where generations will follow for the next 250 years, by

Freedom is costly and conviction alone isn't enough. We must be willing to take a stand and

PUSH BACK the DARKNESS.

God's sovereign grace; **where we understand that freedom is costly and that conviction alone isn't enough. We must be willing to take a stand and push back the darkness;** to carefully and courageously articulate the problems facing the nation, and offer solutions anchored in a recognition that man's wisdom is limited but God's is not.

Our aim is to do everything for the glory of God.

So, as you read headlines and see man-on-the-street interviews on college campuses across the U.S., remember that all is not lost. God has always had a remnant, and each of you are a part of that remnant. Be encouraged! He has placed us all here "for such a time as this."

As a result, we each have a role to play in living out the Gospel in ways that are unmistakable—to look at our history with clear eyes, tracing the steps of shortfalls, progress, and redress that has occurred over the years as we have sought to live up to the ideals set forth in our founding documents.

But to also look ahead with a sense of hope that America has yet a bright future as long as we remember the source of our strength—people made in the image of God, imbued with certain inalienable rights—rights that flow to us from God, not from our government.

To steward this precious gift of freedom embedded in our form of government, and defend it against those who would deride and minimize its efficacy.

To recognize that we all have a role to play at this turning point in our country's history—a juncture when we must decide which way we will go.

May we always be found among those numbered as the vigilant, the active, the brave—faithful to the task and all for the glory of God, ready to stand up and be counted.

Haye

Jack W. Haye

Scan or visit to watch the video of President Haye's speech
WWW.PHC.EDU/THE-BRAVE

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MISSION

The mission of Patrick Henry College is to prepare Christian men and women who will lead our nation and shape our culture with timeless biblical values and fidelity to the spirit of the American founding. Educating students according to a classical liberal arts curriculum and training them with apprenticeship methodology, the College provides academically excellent baccalaureate-level higher education with a biblical worldview.

WWW.PHC.EDU

Patrick Henry College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and by the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS).

Featured Contributors

JACK W. HAYE

Jack Haye became the third president of Patrick Henry College in 2015 after 30 years in the banking world as Senior Vice President of Corporate Lending, and later as Executive Vice President and National Manager of Corporate Global Payments Solutions. Jack was a founding member of Patrick Henry College's Board of Trustees in 1998 and served as Chairman of the Board from 1999-2015. Jack is beloved by the entire PHC community for his wisdom, his Christian sensitivity, and his practical insight. He teaches Leadership & Organizational Behavior and Competitive Strategy as part of the Economics & Business Analytics program. Each summer he leads high school students in a PHC Teen Leadership Camp focused on Leadership & Worldview. Jack and his wife, Carol, have been married for over 45 years. They are blessed with one daughter, seven sons, and many grandchildren.

MICHAEL FARRIS, J.D.

Mike Farris is a litigator, educator, and public advocate. He is the founder and Chairman of the Home School Legal Defense Association and founder and Chancellor Emeritus of Patrick Henry College. Most recently, Farris served as the President and CEO of Alliance Defending Freedom, and he currently serves as General Counsel for the National Religious Broadcasters. Farris is the author of over 15 books, as well as law review and other scholarly articles, and countless pieces for the popular press.

GORDON MIDDLETON, D.S.L.

Gordon Middleton served as the Director of the Strategic Intelligence Program at Patrick Henry College from 2004 to 2026, where he taught courses in intelligence history, research and analysis, national security, and strategic intelligence. A retired U.S. Air Force Colonel and former member of the Senior Executive Service at NSA and CIA, Gordon held leadership roles in research and development, systems acquisition, space policy and operations. Gordon is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and of Regent University, and has published and presented widely on intelligence education, AI ethics, and national security.

THOMAS ZIEMNICK

Tom Ziemnick has served as the Vice President for Advancement at Patrick Henry College since 2013. In that role, he oversees all of PHC's fundraising, development, communications, and marketing efforts. He has spent the last 30 years in sales, management, and development positions, beginning his professional career in aviation as a flight instructor.

Tom and his wife, Nancy, began their PHC adventure back in 2002 when they met founder Michael Farris, who eventually led the family to Christ. The Ziemnicks became financial supporters of the College before beginning work at PHC in 2007. Tom and Nancy have three children (two PHC graduates and a recent high school graduate) and three grandchildren.

Other Contributors

MADELEINE BURR, Communication Intern, PHC Class of 2028 (English: Writing)

GRETCHEN WHITTINGTON, Advancement Services Coordinator, PHC Class of 2026 (Journalism & Digital Media)

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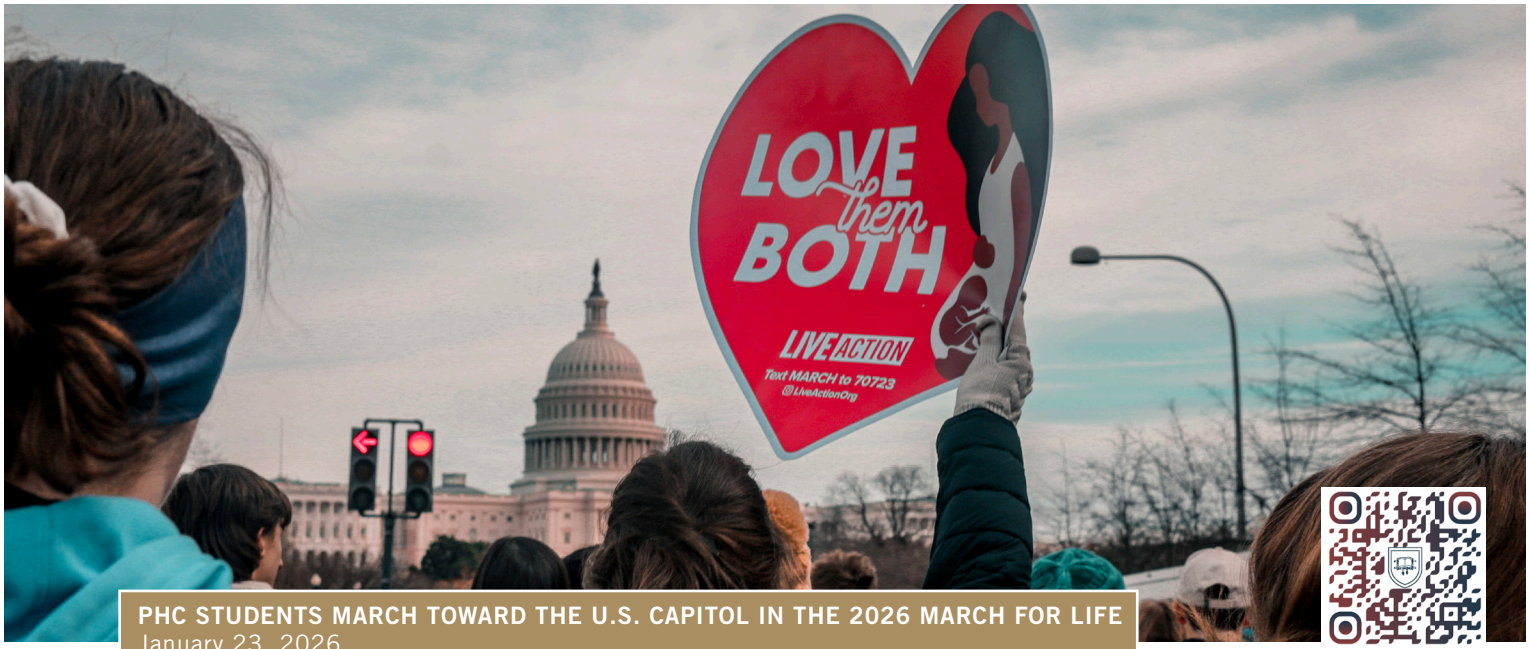

PHC STUDENTS MARCH TOWARD THE U.S. CAPITOL IN THE 2026 MARCH FOR LIFE
January 23, 2026

Watch Video

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August 11, 2026

Watch Video


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Thomas Ziemnick, Vice President for Advancement



PARENT PRAYER GROUP

Offering prayer for our students along their college journey

Join fellow PHC parents in prayer for your student's faith, friendships, and future—and for the faculty and staff who guide them. Learn more from Scott Bedrosian: smbedrosian@phc.edu.

FAITH & REASON



Photo credit: zkmcbride_photography

DR. TRUEMAN'S CHALLENGE TO CONSECRATE CULTURE

The discussion of technology, human nature, and Christian hospitality gave the PHC community another opportunity to consider how Christians can faithfully understand and engage the culture around them.

Patrick Henry College welcomed Dr. Carl Trueman as the Spring 2026 Faith & Reason speaker. Professor of Biblical and Religious Studies at Grove City College, Trueman is the author and editor of more than a dozen books, including his most recent: *The Desecration of Man*. His visit gave the PHC community an opportunity to consider a question: What happens when modern technology begins to shape not only how we live, but how we understand what it means to be human?

Trueman's lecture drew from themes in *The Desecration of Man*, examining the transition from what he described as disenchantment to desecration in modern culture through technology. "Technology makes us feel unlimited and self-creating to the deepest point," Trueman said.

The concern, Trueman explained, is not simply that technology is changing the way people work or communicate. When technological power begins to influence how people understand themselves, it can also begin to change how they understand human nature and human dignity.

"Mankind enjoys the capacity to desecrate, which has risen significantly in modernity," Trueman said. "If the problem is *desecration*, then Christianity offers the answer of *consecration*."

Trueman pointed students toward hospitality as one practical expression of that Christian response. Rather than allowing technology and modern culture to determine the meaning of human relationships, Christians are called to consecrate culture through the way they welcome and care for one another, opening their hearts and homes, and giving as Christ gives to us.

The lecture was only the beginning of the conversation. Afterward, students were released to enjoy lunch and attend discussion groups, where a professor facilitated each group and helped students formulate questions for Trueman during the Q&A session.

Dean of Academic Affairs Dr. Mark Mitchell led the final segment of Faith & Reason. A faculty panel sat with



If the problem is desecration, then Christianity offers the answer of consecration.

– Dr. Carl Trueman, 2026

Trueman to respond to his lecture and ask further questions. The panel included Theology professors Dr. Graedon Zorzi and Dr. Travis Wright, as well as Professor of Government Dr. Roberta Bayer. Dr. Mitchell also incorporated questions from the student discussion groups into the conversation.

The format of Faith & Reason gives students an opportunity to do more than simply hear from a visiting scholar. They have the opportunity to take the ideas presented in the lecture, discuss them with their professors and peers, test their own understanding, and then bring their questions directly to Trueman.

The event closed with a standing ovation for Trueman. Students poured out of the room to enjoy the rest of their day, further discussing the lecture, studying, or reading a newly purchased copy of *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*, signed by Trueman.

Faith & Reason is a long-standing PHC tradition, but its purpose extends beyond bringing a distinguished speaker to campus. It gives students and faculty time to step back from their ordinary coursework and wrestle together with questions that reach beyond a single class or discipline. This semester, Trueman's discussion of technology, human nature, and Christian hospitality gave the PHC community another opportunity to consider how Christians can faithfully understand and engage the culture around them.



Watch Video

By
MADELEINE BURR
Class of 2028, English

Photo credit: zkmcbride photography

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PHC'S TURNING POINT USA CHAPTER HOSTS A "CELEBRATE 250" COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

Patriots from around the region gathered at PHC on Saturday, September 5th, to celebrate 250 years of American freedom, history, and the enduring spirit of our great nation. The PHC TPUSA chapter hosted this event to provide students and visitors a chance to engage in politics with a Christian worldview.



MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM WINS BIBLE COLLEGE NATIONAL INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT

The Men's Sentinels, coached by Brian Roynestad, took 1st place at the Bible College National Invitational Tournament (NIT). The victory stands as the crowning achievement of an already remarkable season for men's basketball. The Championship game announcers described PHC as the most complete and disciplined team in the tournament.



THE PHC MOCK TRIAL PROGRAM LEAPS SEVEN POSITIONS

PHC's Amber Mock Trial team moved up from 30th to 23rd in the American Mock Trial Association (AMTA) power rankings. PHC students compete against more than 800 teams from over 400 programs around the country, including many teams from the nation's top Ivy League institutions. Fierce competition hones their critical thinking skills and equips them to clearly articulate passionate and well-reasoned legal argumentation.



OBEYING THE GREAT COMMISSION

The Great Commission Association (GCA) of Patrick Henry College seeks to follow Christ out of love for Him, particularly by obeying the Great Commission through fostering a lifestyle of evangelism and discipleship as articulated in Matthew 28:19-20.

Members of the GCA club have evangelized in Loudoun County and Washington, D.C., visited with residents in a local nursing home, and volunteered with a local, gospel-centered ministry that serves the needy in our community.



Watch Video

2026 EUROPEAN CHORALE MINISTRY TOUR

More than 50 members of the Patrick Henry College Chorale toured Europe from May 10th to 25th, performing public concerts in cathedrals, churches, schools, and other venues. From the first planning meeting to their flights home at the conclusion of the tour, the purpose was clear: Christian ministry.

Before each performance, students hit the streets, personally handing out concert invitations to residents and passersby. The Lord used the text of the music and the witness of the Chorale team to minister to their bus driver. He was deeply moved. He wept at the end of each concert and ultimately trusted Christ for his salvation.

Related: See page 39 to learn about the Chorale's visit to Selden College.

PHC IS NAMED VIRGINIA'S COLLEGE RAPTOR HIDDEN GEM (AGAIN)

Patrick Henry College has been named CollegeRaptor's 2027 Hidden Gem College for Virginia, earning recognition among high-achieving institutions for the second consecutive year. In the Southeastern region, PHC was ranked 9th out of 59 institutions—ahead of some of the nation's oldest and most distinguished educational institutions.

Now in its 12th year, the Hidden Gem list recognizes under-the-radar colleges and universities that offer exceptional programs and a high-quality academic experience. Rankings are based on factors such as retention rates, graduation rates, student-to-faculty ratio, endowment per student, selectivity, and other key metrics.



NEW & NOTABLE



In *State of West Virginia v. B.P.J. & Little v. Hecox*, decided on June 30, 2026, ADF won its nineteenth and twentieth victories at the U.S. Supreme Court.

PUBLIC UPDATE FROM ALLIANCE DEFENDING FREEDOM

In last year's update, we asked for your prayers as ADF prepared to argue *First Choice Women's Resource Centers v. Davenport*. Today, we give thanks to all of you who prayed, and to God who answered those prayers, and report that the Supreme Court issued a landmark decision unanimously affirming that state officials who harass ideological opponents by violating their First Amendment rights can be held accountable in federal court.

And, epitomizing God's ability to do more than we ask or imagine, ADF has won three *other* cases before the Supreme Court in the last calendar year. All three, along with *First Choice*, are the fruit of ADF's focus on two essential goals: countering global censorship and resisting the lies of gender ideology. In *Chiles v. Salazar*, the Supreme Court rendered another ground-breaking free-speech win, confirming that pure speech by professionals receives full constitutional protection and holding that Colorado cannot discriminate against viewpoints on sex and gender in the counseling room.

In *West Virginia v. B.P.J.* and *Little v. Hecox*, the Supreme Court halted the advance of gender ideology on the playing field. In a legal sense, these are two more "landmark" decisions. But in a practical sense, they simply affirm one of the most basic propositions of our reality: men and women are different. Based on that truth, the Court ruled that state laws may "provide separate women's and men's sports teams defined by biological sex."

Thank you for your continued prayers and support for ADF.

Alliance Defending Freedom is the world's largest legal organization committed to protecting religious freedom, free speech, marriage and family, parental rights, and the sanctity of life.

Meet new full-time faculty at PHC

PROFESSOR ALLEN BLOCKER, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE



A retired U.S. Navy commander, Professor Blocker brings more than thirty years of experience in military aviation, aerospace engineering, intelligence, technology development, and organizational leadership.

At Patrick Henry College, he draws upon his experience to prepare students to pursue truth with intellectual rigor, exercise sound moral judgment, and serve God faithfully in positions of national responsibility.

DR. ISAAC TUTTLE, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY



Dr. Tuttle is a cultural and intellectual historian of the late-nineteenth century United States, whose research focuses on religion, race, memory, and identity. He holds a Ph.D. in History from Baylor University, an M.A. in History from the University of Alabama, and dual B.A. degrees in History and Philosophy & Theology from Gardner-Webb University. Dr. Tuttle has published multiple articles on race and religion in the late-nineteenth century. He is also the recipient of Baylor University's Guittard Fellowship.

DR. DANIEL MAIENSHEIN, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS AND CHEMISTRY



Dr. Maienshein is a Pennsylvania native who majored in both chemistry and mathematics at Grove City College. He finished his graduate studies in the mathematics department at the University of Pittsburgh, specializing in analysis and partial differential equations—viscosity solutions to a novel class of non-linear equations—under the oversight of Juan Manfredi.

FAREWELL to DR. ROB SPINNEY



Dr. Spinney, PHC's beloved Professor of History, has retired after more than 20 years of service to the College. Dr. Spinney shaped countless lives through his teaching, mentorship, and friendship.

Before every class, Spinney pursed his lips, scrunched his face, closed his eyes, and silently prayed, not that all of his students would love history, but that they "would be good thinkers," he said. "Because I really believe good thinkers end up being good Christians."

- Read the full article celebrating Dr. Spinney's lasting legacy.
- View Dr. Spinney's three-part video series about some of the most serious challenges to Christian education.
- View Dr. Spinney's May 2026 Baccalaureate sermon, reminding us that we worship a "Big God."

Scan the code or visit: www.phc.edu/farewell-dr-spinney.

INCOMING CLASS

Get to know the newest members of the PHC family



115
STUDENTS

NOTEWORTHY STUDENTS

1 NATIONAL BIBLE BEE CHAMPION
1 NATIONAL DEBATE CHAMPION
1 WV STATE CHESS CHAMPION
17 PRIOR PHC STUDENT SIBLINGS

TOP 5 PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

#1 GOVERNMENT
#2 ECON. & BUSINESS ANALYTICS
#3 STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE
#4 ENGLISH
#5 CLASSICAL LIBERAL ARTS

AVERAGE SAT SCORE

1337

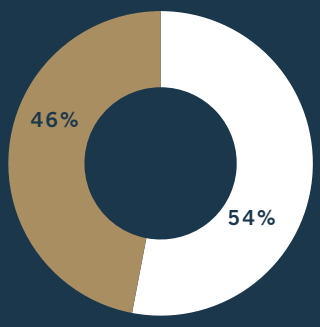
89th percentile

DISTANCE FROM HOME

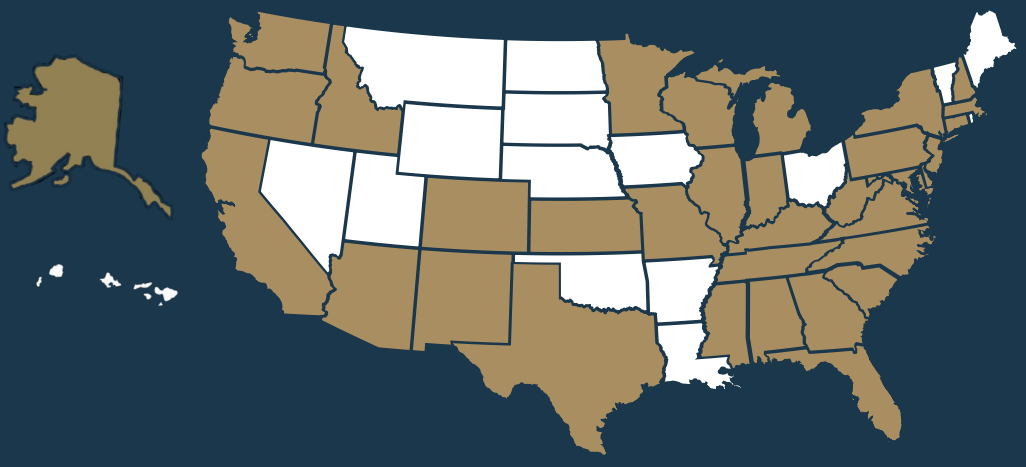
33 FEWER THAN 100 MILES
29 101-500 MILES
53 GREATER THAN 500 MILES

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

77% HOMESCHOOL
19% PRIVATE SCHOOL
4% PUBLIC SCHOOL



MALE
FEMALE



34 STATES REPRESENTED IN THE CLASS
(47 STATES REPRESENTED IN TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION)


1776-2026

WHY STUDY HISTORY?



Both question and answer are rooted in what studying history does for us. Perhaps more precisely, they are linked to what it does *to* us. The short answer to this question is that **studying history can make you a more effective Christian, because it will make you a better thinker**.

[The study of history] will train you to understand issues from perspectives other than your own. It will sharpen your analytical skills, especially as you learn to break down complex events and ideas into their constituent parts. It will equip you to recognize unstated presuppositions. It will make you more aware that the true story is not always what the majority of people accept as the true story. It will make you humble because you will see how the plans of smart men often lead to unexpectedly regrettable consequences. It will deepen your realization that sinful actions typically lead to misery.

And if you are a better thinker, you will be a more effective servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. Why? Because Christians who are good thinkers are more likely to interpret the Bible correctly. Good thinkers will be more skilled at applying biblical truth accurately. Wisdom is invariably related to thinking, and good thinkers are more likely to be wise in how they manage their families, jobs, and interactions with non-Christians.

– Robert G. Spinney, Ph.D.
Professor of History, *emeritus*

Introduction, The History of the United States: A Christian Perspective, available on Amazon

Patrick Henry College's distinctive emphasis on civics and Western history sets it apart from leading universities.

The subject areas of U.S. government and history are not the only casualties. The form of education that our founding fathers received is dying.

"Well-designed core academic requirements help to cultivate a sense of shared civic vision—by requiring all graduates to gain a basic understanding of the country's Founding principles, history, and political institutions," says Dr. Mike Poliakoff, president of ACTA (the American Council of Trustees and Alumni). "Today, however, only 19% of colleges and universities require a foundational survey course in U.S. government or history. And the danger to our democratic republic is real."[1]

For Charity Kim, a 2023 Classical Liberal Arts graduate, the PHC Core Curriculum challenged assumptions she brought with her to college. "Freedom's Foundations I and II surprised me the most," Kim said. The course traces the Western discussion of freedom from the Greeks and Romans through the American founding. "True freedom," Kim adds, "must take into account who we are as human beings."

The liberal arts make connections outside of disciplines, to the formation of free citizens, to the formation of human beings as they live not just to themselves but in relationship with others.

— PHC Philosophy of Education
https://www.phc.edu/core-curriculum

[1] Michael Poliakoff, foreword to *What Will They Learn? 2020–2021: A Survey of Core Requirements at Our Nation's Colleges and Universities* (American Council of Trustees and Alumni, 2020), https://goacta.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/What-Will-They-Learn-2020-21.pdf. The statistic cited in the original foreword has been updated from 18% to 19% with the permission of ACTA's editors.

FORENSICS at PHC

THE #1 PROGRAM IN AMERICA

PHC'S PREMIER FORENSICS PROGRAM TEACHES STUDENTS TO THINK CRITICALLY, SPEAK ARTICULATELY, AND WRITE PERSUASIVELY.



PHC's Amber Mock Trial team secured an impressive top-10 finish while facing powerhouse programs including Haverford, Princeton, Penn State, and Duke at the 2026 AMTA National Championship.

Forensics competition prepares students to excel in the public arena by teaching them to think deeply, speak articulately, and write persuasively. These skills will enable them to be effective ambassadors for Christ as they engage our culture with compassion and integrity.

Patrick Henry College's forensics program is the best in the nation. Our teams compete at the highest levels in Moot Court, Mock Trial, and Civic Debate, and numerous championship banners and trophies demonstrate our heritage of excellence. Yet the most important aspect of our program is the dedication and focus of our coaches, students, and alumni on elevating Christ in everything they do.

Because of its rigorous and effective approach to education, forensics at Patrick Henry College is not simply an extracurricular activity—it is a vital co-curricular and fully-recognized element of PHC academics. The program continues to grow in both size and impact. In the 2025–2026 season, the PHC Moot Court Program fielded **52** in-house teams and **18** travel teams, while Mock Trial fielded **3** travel teams and **3** in-house teams. The Civic Debate Program fielded **55** competitors in various in-house and travel teams. **PHC trained and developed over 130 competitive orators in a single year, making us the largest forensics program in the nation.**

THE PHC 2025–2026 SEASON OVERVIEW



Three PHC students brought home the win at the 2026 Transatlantic Dialogues tournament hosted at École de guerre (French War College) in Paris, France! This marks PHC's third year competing and its second 1st-place finish.

MOOT COURT: PHC was again ranked the **#1 Moot Court Program in the country**, earning **2nd place National Championship in Oral Advocacy** and **7th Place Respondent Brief!** Eighteen 2-person teams competed at Regionals, with 9 teams earning bids to the super-regional ("Pre-Nats") level of the National Championship. Five teams earned spots at the AMCA National Championship, 1 more than the maximum 4 allotted per school. Three PHC teams advanced to the elimination rounds at Nationals, with **Haley Bock and Luke Buck taking runner-up in a close 4-5 decision!**

MOCK TRIAL: **PHC's Amber team earned a spot at ORCS** (Opening Round Championship Series) and moved on to earn **10th place at the National Championship.** In all, individual competitors won 11 outstanding attorney or outstanding witness awards.

CIVIC DEBATE: PHC teams won **1st place in both the Open and Novice Divisions** of the Civic Debate Consortium's Social Justice Fall Championship! Debaters **brought home the Gold in both the Transatlantic West and Transatlantic East Debates!** PHC also earned **2nd place at the Schuman Challenge** hosted by the European Union! Closing out the year, **PHC earned 1st Place at the Transatlantic Dialogues hosted by the École de guerre** (**French War College**) in Paris, France!

PRE-LAW ADVISING UPDATE

PHC'S LSAT SCORES RANK AMONG THE BEST IN THE UNITED STATES

Since Dr. Jesse Merriam joined the faculty in 2020, PHC's Pre-Law Program has grown steadily in both reach and achievement, with an ambitious long-term goal: to become the best undergraduate pre-law program in the nation.

The results so far are striking. Across the five law-school admission cycles from 2020–21 through 2024–25, PHC students and alumni applying to law school posted an average highest LSAT score of 169.5, according to the Law School Admission Council's Prelaw Advisor Action Reports. That is roughly equivalent to the 94th percentile on the current LSAT distribution.

The results have also been remarkably consistent: PHC's applicant average has never fallen below 168.7 in any of those five years. Some classes have gone higher still. In 2024, for example, PHC seniors averaged 175.3, near the very top of the national distribution.

The PHC LSAT performance, when compared to the nation's most selective colleges, is especially impressive. In the 2015–2017 Top 240 Feeder Schools for ABA Applicants, the most recent comprehensive undergraduate LSAT comparison that is publicly available, Yale, Harvard, and



Princeton were the institutions reporting the highest mean LSAT scores. PHC's five-year average of 169.5 since 2020 exceeds the mean LSAT reported for every institution in that dataset.

Because PHC is much smaller than the major feeder institutions covered by the report, it was not itself included. And because the comparison data are older, they do not establish a current national ranking. Those numbers do, however, provide striking context for the level and consistency of PHC's performance.

These results reflect a pre-law curriculum that is unusually rigorous at the undergraduate level. Logic & Law, a course Dr. Merriam designed specifically for PHC's pre-law students, combines advanced formal logic with an introduction to legal reasoning, tailored to both the LSAT and the demands of the first year of law school. Constitutional Law, part of PHC's core curriculum, is taught in the style of a law school course, requiring students to read and analyze judicial opinions. The program recently added a second semester, Constitutional Law II, devoted to individual liberties.

The program expanded outside of the classroom in 2022 when Dr. Merriam founded the Pre-Law Society, a student-run organization that hosts several law-related events each semester. Its Pre-Law Mentoring Program connects current students with practicing attorneys across a wide range of legal fields. Under Dr. Merriam's leadership, the program has created more than 25 mentor-mentee relationships, with the broader aim of developing a strong network of Christian lawyers serving throughout public and private life.

Together with individualized advising and close faculty guidance, these elements reflect Dr. Merriam's larger vision for the pre-law program—not simply to help students earn high LSAT scores and gain admission to excellent law schools, but to send them into legal education having already been trained in rigorous analysis, disciplined reasoning, and principled argumentation. The goal is to build an undergraduate pre-law program whose academic preparation, professional formation, and student outcomes set the national standard.

PRE-LAW ADVISING at PHC is "SECOND to NONE"

I appreciate the opportunity to learn about PHC and its pre-law program. It is an impressive program that I would recommend to any student whose values align with the mission of PHC. Indeed, I would recommend PHC over other schools with similar missions and over the top nationally ranked colleges and universities. PHC's preparation of students for law school and a successful life in the law is second to none.

– from an evaluation of PHC's Pre-Law program by University of Virginia law professor Dr. Gregory Mitchell

INTRODUCING the PATRICK HENRY COLLEGE LOGO

Patrick Henry College is growing, and the brand recognition of the college is broadening. For 26 years, PHC lacked an official logo. That changed on September 1, 2026!

Developed through a four-year collaborative process, including more than twenty individuals in three focus groups, and the expertise of graphic design artist Jen Olmstead (Journalism, 2008), PHC's first official logo creates a unified visual identity that complements—not replaces—the existing College Seal and Shield, while also supporting future uses in athletics, student life activities, merchandise, and digital media.

PHC's mascot—the Sentinel—gets its name from the Old Italian word *sentina*, meaning "vigilance," and the Latin word *sentire*, meaning "one who hears" or "one who perceives." A sentinel is charged with standing guard and keeping watch over the city. The stars on the logo represent PHC's three commitments: (1) High Academic Rigor, (2) Fidelity to the Spirit of the American Founding, and (3) Unwavering Biblical Worldview.

Along with the College's existing Official Seal, existing Official Shield, and new Official Logo, there is an entire new suite of PHC logo assets that are able to serve various purposes. You can view them at www.phc.edu/phc-logo.

May God continue to show His favor to Patrick Henry College and be our Sentinel—the One who never slumbers, hears all things, perceives all things, is always vigilant, and keeps watch over PHC.

the TEEN LEADERSHIP CAMPS

2026 Season

445 CAMPERS OVER 4 WEEKS



Reach High. Grow Deep. Influence the World for Christ.

In summer 2026, we had 445 teen campers attend one or more of the 11 camps over 4 weeks—the 4th largest year on record and the 6th year in a row over 400. President Haye's Leadership & Worldview camp breached another record and several others reached all-time highs.

Most importantly, we want to prepare our campers to enter their college years confidently—both academically and spiritually—so they can pursue God's calling on their career and lives. **Several students recommitted their lives to Christ this summer, and many more said the classroom learnings and counselor team impact changed their lives.**

Whether you are attending for your first year or your fifth, we'd love to see you at Teen Leadership Camps in 2027!

See page 20 for the list of camps!







STEPHEN PIERCE
DIRECTOR OF STUDENT RECRUITMENT

WEEK 1



WEEK 2











VISIT PHC.EDU/TEENCAMPS AND SAVE $75

when you register before April 1st

WEEK 3



WEEK 4



*Photography: zkmcbride_photography

Beads on a String

Dr. Hake reflects on 26 years—and counting—at Patrick Henry College

by GRETCHEN WHITTINGTON

Being involved at PHC is like cooking, Dr. Hake says.

"[Some people] just pick at the food and leave it. You don't have motivation as a cook for them to improve your skills, to work hard at cooking something that people just don't have an appetite for. But on the other hand, if you're cooking for people that are just ravenous … [who] want more and better … that motivates you to grow."

And PHC is full of those ravenous people, and not just the students. Hake says that he and his colleagues must bring the same appetite to the table, and then be ready to grow with the students. People can't thrive here by just "hunkering down and coasting."

You have to stay involved.

Dr. Steve Hake is a literature professor at PHC, and has been since the college opened in 2000. At 74, he is the last member of the original faculty team. He would be the first to tell you that the journey has been all God, too. Those 26 years have brought him to many seasons and positions: from raising twins from Taiwan, to leading book studies and campus events, to living out of his office on campus.

Today, he is a mentor, a widower, and a professor. But above all else, he is a missionary.

Before coming to PHC, Hake was an ordained minister and church-planting evangelist in Taiwan. Then, after reading a book about calling by Richard Nelson Bolles, he realized God was calling him to teach literature.

"God opened the door, and I walked through it. It was amazing. I never looked back," Hake said.

He went on to teach English literature at a major Chinese university while raising and schooling his own children. A picture hanging in his office shows two of them gathered with a crowd of Taiwanese children he'd ministered to years ago—two blondes in a crowd of dark heads.

Then, in 1996, he felt the call to return to the US and start a small organization in Pennsylvania, which he called Rivendell Study Center.

"[It was] basically PHC in a small scale, motivated by a lot of the same things," Hake said. "The combination of being a college professor and a homeschool father made me think, 'We can do higher education better than is being done [now].'"

He ran the small school for four years before moving to join PHC after hearing that they were working for the same goals, but in a college environment.

He describes his life before PHC like a bracelet or a necklace—a series of beads on a string that leads directly to PHC. "Everything I've done has prepared me for what I'm doing now. But the strength of all the beads is [that] I've always tried to be where God wanted me to be, doing what he wanted me to be doing," he said.

Today, Hake spends his time in prayer and fellowship with the students of PHC. He takes special care to meet individually with every incoming freshman, getting to know them and encouraging them at the beginning of their college experience. He remembers being a "basketcase freshman" himself, shortly before he came to Christ.

"I say, you're young. You are at the beginning of your life. You don't want to get to be my age and realize you blew it, because at that point you've got a harvest of regrets you can do nothing about. The way to not blow it is to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added as well."

Hake does not regret following God's plan in coming to PHC. He never saw it coming, of course, but he was prepared to follow through with it.

"Most of the things that I've done, I never would have believed if you had told me," Hake said. "That's been God's leading in my life: lots of surprises. I was just doing them in obedience to God. Kind of like Abraham—I want you to go to this strange place. No idea what this strange place is all about, but God says go and you go."



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Visit phc.edu/teencamps and register by April 1 to SAVE $75.



PHC ALUMNA EVIE FORDHAM SOLHEIM

EMPOWERING YOUNG WRITERS

TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CONSERVATIVE WRITERS

In a media landscape often dominated by older voices, many pundits claim to speak for Generation Z. PHC alumna Evie Fordham Solheim (Class of 2019, Journalism), a winner of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute's "Top 20 Under 30" award in 2022, is helping young conservatives find their own voice.

From the beginning, Evie knew she wanted to work in journalism. "My parents said I came out of the womb wanting to be a journalist," she recalls.

Evie loved to write, from running a neighborhood newspaper as a child, to entering every writing contest available. "I just always wanted the scoop and to find out what was going on," Evie remembers.

When she graduated high school, the question in her mind was not whether she would study journalism, but where. When she heard about Patrick Henry College's small classes and connections with Christian news organizations, the choice was clear.

Thinking about PHC, Evie remembers, "I felt like I would learn the most from PHC. I would have Dr. Sillars take a red pen to my articles every week. While a lot of the schools I was considering had huge class sizes and really big programs, I knew I would not be getting that kind of help."

Despite the appeal of intimate instruction, she worried that a smaller school would lack the network and connections necessary for success in the field.

During her sophomore year, she found the opposite was true. While interning with a local paper, she realized she was the only intern getting paid. Her time at PHC connected her with the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI), which sponsored her internship.

"I definitely made the right choice," Evie recalls thinking.

Today, Evie continues to stay in touch with classmates from classes above and below her. "Even though we might have a smaller network," she said, "it's just so much more close-knit and supportive."

While still in school, Evie accepted a job at *The Daily Caller* News Foundation. In addition to making lifelong friends there, Evie felt she had the opportunity to stretch her journalistic legs as a reporter. At *The Daily Caller*, she reported on the latest political news.

After a year with the *Caller*, Evie went on to work for FoxBusiness.com in 2019. By the time she left in 2021, she'd transitioned to writing chiefly for FoxNews.com and had written multiple lead homepage stories.

Later that year, she began work at a boutique public relations firm focused on conservative causes. She continued to work there until the birth of her daughter Margot in 2022.

While working for the firm, Evie won ISI's "Top 20 Under 30" award for distinguishing herself as an ISI alumna.

Though she has been and continues to be published in major publications, Evie says her priorities have shifted. "My nine-to-five is my kids," Evie explained. "The great thing is, the world comes to me for my writing."

Today, her family resides in West Virginia, where Evie spends most of her time wrangling almost-four-year-old Margot and two-year-old Sawyer. In addition, Evie writes "The Girl's Guide," a blog focused on providing advice on all subjects that affect women. She is a regular contributor to *The American Conservative* and has been published by *Newsweek*, *The Federalist*, *The Daily Wire*, and *First Things*, among others; and she is also the Director of the Chesterton Media Fellowship, a new project of New Guard Press (NGP).

As Director of the Chesterton Media Fellowship, Evie mentors a small cohort of writers, guiding them as they brainstorm, write, and publish one op-ed per month over a six-month period. NGP will help them place their pieces in a national outlet. The Fellowship will also provide resources like training webinars with expert journalists, training the next generation of conservative writers, and providing an on-ramp into media.

"Through the fellowship, we'll be empowering young writers to share what it really means to be a young conservative today," Evie said.

"My goal is to get to know each of them individually so I can help them write pieces they'll be proud to have in their portfolios for years to come," Evie said. Among the 2026 Chesterton Media Fellows are Cooper Cobbs and Grace Plath, both upperclassmen at Patrick Henry College pursuing degrees in Journalism & Digital Media.

The tagline for the Chesterton Media Fellowship is "cultivating swordsmanship of the pen." Evie emphasized that putting forth a positive vision for the culture is the fellowship's most important goal. "I'm going to help these young writers learn to cut down the lies that pervade our culture, but our goal isn't just to destroy and expose. It's to create and inspire," she said.

Evie herself, who holds a degree in journalism from PHC, is a great example of that preparation paying off. With experience in major media outlets and a growing portfolio of published work, Evie now turns her focus to mentoring the next generation—helping young conservatives not only enter the media landscape but shape it. Evie said, "I don't expect these young students and recent graduates to have answers to all of society's ills, but I know that they have stories and ideas inside of them that other people will want to read." ◆





Have We Abandoned the Declaration of Independence?

by **MICHAEL FARRIS, J.D.,** *CHANCELLOR EMERITUS*

The United States is the oldest constitutional republic in the world. Two hundred fifty years ago, the Declaration of Independence created our nation. This is a remarkable milestone, and even though we have our detractors, both internal and external, it is an objective reality that the United States is the most consequential nation on earth since that fateful beginning on July 4, 1776.

There are three questions that I would like us to consider today as we reflect on the state of our nation in the light of this major milestone.

First, we need to understand the nature, purpose, and philosophy of the Declaration.

Second, we need to understand the interplay between the Declaration and the Constitution.

And third, we need to ask ourselves whether our government operates in a manner that is consistent with the principles embedded in the Declaration. I will tell you up front that I believe we have strayed badly from the Declaration, and I believe that our nation faces a potentially existential crisis as a result.

The Nature, Purpose, and Philosophy of the Declaration

The Declaration created a nation, not a government. We need to understand what that means.

Before July 4, 1776, we were thirteen British colonies attempting to act as a de facto coalition as colonial leaders reacted to a series of

provocations from London that disturbed a one-hundred-fifty-year period of self-government concerning domestic law and taxation.

Although many things had to be worked out as to the shape of our new nation that would require formal documents of governance, on this singularly important day we began to act as a unified country. We didn't just run away from home, if you will allow a family-based analogy; on July 4, we got married.

It should be noted that our nation is distinct from—or perhaps we should say—more comprehensive than our government. A nation includes its people and its culture as well as its government.

One of the reasons there is so much turmoil over the question of our status as a Christian nation at the time of the founding is the failure to understand the distinction between the people, the culture, and the government.

There is utterly no doubt that the American *people* and our *culture* were predominantly Christian at the founding. But, our government was significantly different from the coercive religious regimes that were common in Europe and Great Britain. In 1776, America began the process of creating a free nation. The most Christian culture of the era, perhaps of any era, created a nation with unparalleled freedoms for society at large. I do not believe that free nations can be sustained without a Christian cultural foundation.

Though it did not create a governmental structure, the Declaration declared the philosophical foundation believed to be essential for the government that was to be created.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights...

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed..."

Implicit in this passage is a proclamation that our nation is founded upon a belief in God. God created us in equality and gave us rights that are dependent upon no government for their existence. Our rights are unalienable. This simply means that because rights come from God, no person can take them from us, nor can they be bought, sold, or mortgaged. This phrase declares the nature of man, the centrality of God, and the limits of government.

Our government was to operate on the basis of the consent of the governed. And, the mission of this government is to secure our God-given rights.

For many years, I believed that this passage was just describing the unique mission for the government of America. That is not the best reading of the text.

The Founders were saying something far more profound. Their language is clearly framed as a declaration of universal principles that should apply to all people at all times.

- *All* men are created equal.
- *All* men are endowed with unalienable rights.
- The proper purpose for *all* governments is the protection of these rights.
- *All* governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.

This cluster of ideas produces freedom, protects human rights, and encourages prosperity. These ideas were not just the best path for American government; the Founders were saying this is the *only* path for *any* government. Why is it universal? Because all people everywhere are created in the image of God.

Any form of government that is built on a rejection of this understanding of the nature of man is, by definition, built on a lie. This is not merely "one way" to look at mankind. It is the only *accurate* way to look at mankind.

The Relationship Between the Declaration and the Constitution

We need to understand the distinct purposes of the Declaration and the Constitution. The Declaration created our *nation* while the Constitution created our *government*.

It is unfortunately common for Americans to conflate these two documents. I remember sitting in the Congressional House gallery decades ago listening to a debate on the ERA when a congresswoman argued that the promise of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness *contained in our Constitution* should be extended to women. She was doubly wrong. First of all, the passage she quoted was from the Declaration and not the Constitution. Secondly, her suggestion that women are unprotected by the existing Constitution was simply wrong. The 14th Amendment guarantees equal protection for all, and the 19th Amendment specifically protects the right of women to vote.

Despite my hope that people would accurately know both the content and distinctions of these two founding documents, there is a sense in which it is proper to look at the Declaration and the Constitution as a seamless whole. The Declaration establishes the philosophical foundation of our nation, as well as the mission and purpose of our *government*. The Constitution formalizes the powers and duties of government, while the Bill of Rights limits the powers of government.

The Supreme Court has clearly embraced the concept that the Declaration should be taken into account when interpreting the Constitution. In more than 200 cases, the Court has referenced the Declaration, not in a binding sense, but as an authoritative

historical foundation for understanding the meaning of our constitutional system.

Have We Abandoned the Principles of the Declaration?

While I can make the case that our current federal government operates in violation of the original meaning of the Constitution, there is an even more troubling truth. Our *government* has abandoned the foundation of our *nation* found in the Declaration. We now pursue a different purpose than the one established in 1776.

The Declaration proclaimed that the purpose of any legitimate government was to protect God-given rights. Today, our government functions on the premise that its central purpose is to provide for the needs of the people.

I am nearly finished writing a book about the dangers our country faces today stemming from the fact that our country cannot afford a government with this new mission. History also demonstrates that the more governments seek to provide for the needs of the people, the fewer legal protections there are for God-given rights and the more repressive the governments become.

We should not think that one political party is the champion of God-given rights while the other pursues the elusive goal of providing an ever-widening array of programs seeking to meet the needs and desires of the people.

Both major parties seek to provide for the needs of the people as their core mission. It is like we have a singular team controlling the levers of government, although there are different components of this overall team. There is a blue squad that says, "Vote for us to provide for the needs of the people while we drive the nation off the cliff at 190 miles an hour." And there is a red squad that says, "No, no. Vote for us, and we will more efficiently supply the needs of the people while we drive the nation off the cliff at 150 miles per hour."

Both squads are on the same ultimate playbook. They seek to provide for the needs of the people, and they are addicted to growing levels of debt to finance such programs.

My forthcoming book analyzes the history and the projected growth of the national debt. A few facts about the debt are worth noting for now. The current $40 trillion debt includes borrowing that goes back to 1934. We paid off the Civil War in 1920. We have not yet paid off FDR's New Deal, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, LBJ's Great Society… or anything else that we have borrowed money for since 1934.

We have not paid even a single dollar toward the principal of the debt since 1957. (The idea that Bill Clinton paid down the debt ignores the borrowing his administration did from the Social Security trust fund. He went into debt less rapidly than others, but we still went into debt during each year of his presidency.)

The interest on the debt that we pay now surpasses both $1 trillion a year and the total amount spent on national defense.

And most importantly, in my opinion, is the fact that it currently requires 19.1% of all tax revenue to pay just the interest on the debt that we have kept refinancing for over ninety years. This percentage used to be between 6% and 10% for many years, but it has grown rapidly since COVID and continues to escalate rapidly.

It is my educated guess that when 25% to 30% of tax revenues are required to just pay the interest on the debt, the system cannot be sustained. We will not be able to borrow fast enough to keep up with our needs when this level of our tax revenue is required simply to pay the interest.

We have no more than ten years until we hit these levels. If the interest rates shoot up even a little more than today, we may hit these levels much, much sooner.

In this precarious scenario, we find that we have aroused a growing set of revolutionary activists from both extremes of our political world. I do not believe that these revolutionary forces are yet strong enough to crash the country as they desire. I see them more like vultures hanging around the edge of a field waiting for a staggering victim to fall flat on his own.

Socialism is growing rapidly, especially among younger people. And there are totalitarian forces on the right, people like Nick Fuentes, who share many of the characteristics of the Socialists, including their mutual rejection of the principles of the Declaration of Independence.

Socialists reject the idea that the purpose of government is to protect God-given rights. The right-wing totalitarians reject the idea that all men are created equal.

Neither faction is currently strong enough to achieve their goal of tearing down our current system of government. Both wait for the red and blue squads to drive the nation over the cliff with the anticipation that their faction will dominate when the crash occurs. Both are willing to do their part today to tear down our civilization, but both cannot be right in terms of who will dominate in a post-crash era.



And make no mistake, if we do not dramatically change our addiction to ever-increasing federal debt, the crash is clearly coming.

We are running the lite beer version of a European welfare state. American Socialists claim that their theory will work as is evidenced by the "democratic socialism" operational in most of Western Europe. But the Socialist states in Europe—including Germany, France, and the U.K.—all face debt crises that are just as bad, if not worse, than the situation here in the U.S. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) released a landmark report in November of 2025 with a title that tells much of the story: "How Can Europe Pay for Things That It Can't Afford?" The article's answer? It can't. There must be cuts.

The economic reality is not subject to legitimate debate. No country, no matter how prosperous, can finance a social welfare system for a sustained period. Socialist programs are Ponzi schemes that require a geometric growth in new taxpayers to fund the benefits promised to prior generations. And with the population cliff, that is the common reality all through Western Civilization, all the welfare systems (including Social Security and Medicare) that depended on new taxpayers to fund payments to their parents and grandparents have hit the point of mathematical impossibility.

The Soviet Union failed. The Third Reich failed. Europe is on the verge of failing. And the richest country in the history of the world is clearly headed in that direction—as is obvious to anyone who takes a serious look at the escalating rate of our debt.

China likewise faces a crisis rising from its long-term policy of one child per family. But China has successfully learned to postpone its coming collapse by living off of transfers of wealth from the United States. We are running a huge trade imbalance with China, which is artificially propping up their economic system. If the U.S. economy implodes, the entire world, and especially China, will be rocked by the financial tsunami of such an event.

The crisis boils down to this: We have defied the truth contained in the Declaration of Independence. The founders told us the proper purpose for government was to protect the God-given rights of the people. At least since FDR, our government has chosen to ignore that limited but noble purpose and instead try to take the place of God by seeking to provide for the needs of the people. Calamity follows in the wake of such defiance.

When the purposes of government are aligned with the created nature of man and the truth that God, not government, provides for our needs, then such governments can be sustained for as many generations as remain faithful to these principles. In short, God's way of governing is the only one that works over time.

This is not a call for a Christian totalitarian state. There are voices on the far right arguing for such an approach. (And for me to admit that there are people to my right who took a lot of getting used to.)

This is a call for a free nation that can only arise from a Christian culture. The founders understood this balance and pursued both goals. Freedom was the goal of government. A godly culture was the goal of the family and the church.

It is not too late for America—although the hour appears to be growing very late. Bold and decisive action by our government leaders will only happen when there are sufficient people who understand the threats posed by debt and profligate living.

We must join together to insist that government stop living in luxury so that all the people can avoid living in abject poverty. If we don't return to the principles of the Declaration of Independence, that is exactly what is going to happen.

P.S. My book will detail a plan to solve this crisis. It is not a quick fix, but I believe there is a realistic path for a solution if we have the courage to limit the federal government to its original constitutional parameters.



Michael Farris, J.D.

Michael Farris is a litigator, educator, and public advocate. He is the founder and Chairman of the Home School Legal Defense Association and founder and Chancellor Emeritus of Patrick Henry College. Farris served as the President and CEO of Alliance Defending Freedom (2017-2022), and he currently serves as General Counsel for the National Religious Broadcasters. Farris is the author of over 15 books, as well as law review and other scholarly articles, and countless pieces for the popular press.



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Patrick Henry College exists to prepare Christian men and women who will lead our nation and shape our culture with timeless biblical values and fidelity to the spirit of the American founding.

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— Ecclesiastes 4:9 ESV

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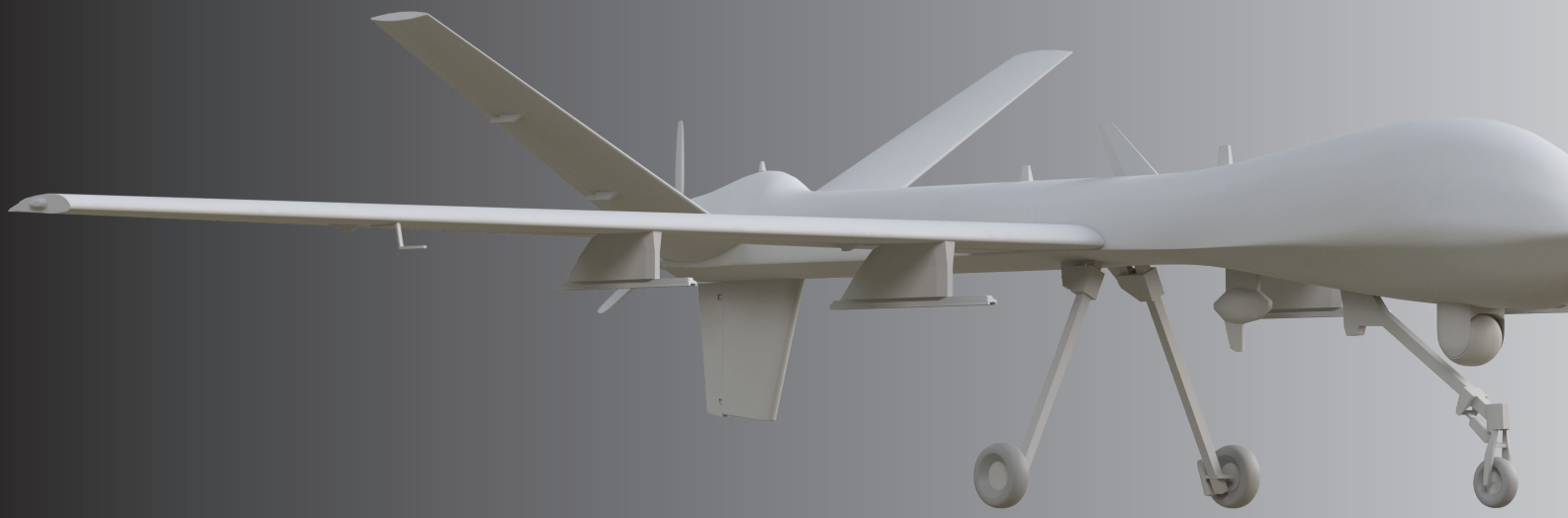

By God's Providence

The Story of the Strategic Intelligence in National Security Program at Patrick Henry College

By DR. GORDON MIDDLETON, Colonel, U.S. Air Force (Ret.)

I. The Crucible of Crisis: Learning Statecraft and Constitutional Restraint

In a high-tech White House Situation Room simulation during Patrick Henry College's Crisis Management Exercise (CME), a catastrophic national security crisis erupts: an experimental, autonomous AI defense system has malfunctioned, accidentally destroying a Russian submarine in international waters. As breaking intelligence flashes across monitors, student role-players representing every echelon of American governance are plunged into high-consequence decision-making. In the Oval Office, the students role-playing **President** and **Vice President** confer urgently with the **Director of National Intelligence**, **CIA**, and **Defense agency heads** to evaluate military readiness, covert options, and diplomatic fallout.



Instantly, the constitutional framework of checks and balances springs to life. On Capitol Hill, student **Congressional Committee Chairs**—exercising statutory oversight under Title 50 and the War Powers Resolution—demand emergency briefings, threatening subpoenas and funding freezes to prevent unilateral executive escalation without legislative consultation. Across town, student **Supreme Court Justices** convene an emergency docket to assess potential petitions regarding presidential war powers and emergency executive orders. Simultaneously, **federal law enforcement officials** (**DOJ/FBI**) resist calls for sweeping domestic electronic surveillance, enforcing strict Fourth Amendment guardrails and statutory Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act limits to protect U.S. persons' civil liberties in spite of the crisis environment. Surrounding the entire government apparatus, a relentless **National Media corps** presses the White House Press Secretary for transparency, testing whether public officials can maintain integrity under public scrutiny.

Seeking to avert global conflict at all costs, the student President makes a pivotal choice: full unilateral disclosure, and immediate public restitution to placate Moscow. The decision backfires catastrophically. Adversarial state actors seize upon the admission, weaponizing it as a diplomatic embarrassment to paint the United States as reckless and unstable. In her post-exercise reflection, the student President realizes a profound lesson: while her response was guided by "truth and innocence," she had failed to employ strategic wisdom. She came to realize that avoiding conflict at all costs against ruthless adversaries is a flawed strategy in statecraft.

Through such non-traditional simulations, PHC students literally learn as much or more from strategic "failure" as they do from success—a unique pedagogical approach that makes the CME a key training exercise in dealing with information overload and decision making under intense pressure, risk, and uncertainty. It has also become a primary student recruitment driver as a version of the exercise is used in the summer Strategic Intelligence Teen Leadership Camp. Ultimately, participants internalize a vital truth: preserving a free republic requires not only an internal moral compass, but strategic wisdom, prudent statecraft, and an unyielding respect for statutory guardrails, civil liberties, and the separation of powers even in the heat of crisis. It is precisely at this intersection of moral integrity and practical wisdom that the SI Program at Patrick Henry College strives to accomplish its educational mission.

II. Preserving the Republic: Moral Leadership in a Dangerous Era

The United States has entered a perilous era, one in which intelligence leadership capabilities are vital to safeguarding the nation's future. Yet effective national security requires more than analytical rigor; the U.S. Intelligence Community faces unprecedented ethical challenges that demand leadership anchored in a firm moral foundation. Patrick Henry College addresses this critical need through its Strategic Intelligence major. I believe that the SI major intuitively appeals to individuals who are service-oriented and sense their calling to protect our families, communities, and our nation. In an age of complex global threats, this commitment to service honors the Providence of God and those who sacrificed so much in the founding of America as a constitutional republic built on God-given individual rights.

For a Christian institution, protecting national security aligns directly with the biblical meta-narrative of Creation, the Fall, Redemption, and Restoration. Human rebellion introduced brokenness into the world, creating the tragic necessity for national defense, protective intelligence for the innocent, and government authority to restrain evil (Romans 13:3–4). Connecting this civic duty to America's 250th anniversary, author Eric Metaxas observes in his book, *Revolution: The Birth of the Greatest Nation in the History of the World*, that the American Founders viewed their endeavor as divinely directed by God's Providence: "Without Christian faith... there could be no liberty as they understood liberty," and concludes that we cannot hope to preserve the Republic "without returning to their understanding of why and how it began in the first place."

America's covenantal history reflects this deep reliance on Divine Providence and higher law, and explicitly recognized transcendent moral accountability to them in key foundational documents long before the 1787 Constitution. The Mayflower Compact (1620) began "In the name of God, Amen" and was framed "for the glorie of God." The Fundamental Orders of Connecticut (1639)—often considered America's first written constitution—was premised on the biblical conviction that God is the ultimate source of liberty. Likewise, the Declaration of Independence (1776) appealed to the "Supreme Judge of the world" with a "firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence," and the Articles of Confederation (1781) explicitly acknowledged "the Great Governor of the World," and in so doing both implicitly referenced a higher law to which even earthly governments are accountable.

Preparing young people to defend this rights-based civil order acknowledges both our historical heritage and our emerging security requirements. The strictly secular design of the 1787 U.S. Constitution was a deliberate mechanism that, alongside the First Amendment, prevents national religious factionalism and protects religious diversity across the states. A holistic understanding of

this design reveals that, while our legal system remains secular, the character of those who serve must be anchored in moral truth.

As the United States navigates the existential threats of the 21st century, equipping intelligence professionals who respect both constitutional guardrails and transcendent moral accountability is essential to preserving liberty for generations to come. The tangible impact of this philosophical approach is already proven: PHC SI alumni currently serve in nearly all of the U.S. Intelligence Community agencies, demonstrating that moral grounding and rigorous tradecraft produce proven, high-caliber national security leaders.

III. The Strategic Intelligence Program: Emergence, Growth, and Development



In the immediate aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Patrick Henry College established its Strategic Intelligence and National Security Program in 2002. Its leadership recognized that the United States was in an era of unprecedented national security challenges that demanded not only heightened analytical capability, but principled, morally-grounded leadership. It also understood that preserving a constitutional republic requires public servants equipped with both intellectual rigor and transcendent moral accountability. Grounded directly in PHC's classical liberal arts core and biblical worldview, the program initially began as a specialized track within the Government major. Under its founding Director, Eliot A. Jardines—who was subsequently appointed as the nation's first Assistant Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Open Source (ADDNI/OS)—the program established its core mandate: preparing young men and women to positively influence and lead America's national security endeavors.

In 2004, I became Program Director and had the privilege of working alongside veteran practitioners, including former FBI agents Jim Ohlson and Jock Binnie. Together, we restructured the SI Track around five foundational intelligence disciplines, laying the groundwork for the program's continued growth. The disciplines include the History of American Intelligence, Intelligence Research and Analysis, Counterterrorism, Counterintelligence, and Intelligence, Law Enforcement, and Civil Liberties—all of which paired directly with practical apprenticeships.

During this decade of institutional development (2004–2014), annual student cohorts grew from 6–8 students to 10–15 students per year. This period also birthed innovative applied research projects, notably the 2011 creation of the *Border Security Alert*, a student-run publication initially distributed across the DHS INTELINK network that expanded and now weekly reaches over 400 national security professionals. Simultaneously, PHC extended its educational and recruiting outreach to rising high school students by establishing the SI Teen "Spy Camp," which grew into the College's largest summer program, hosting over 140 teenagers annually.

Responding to expanding national security demands, Patrick Henry College formally approved Strategic Intelligence in National Security as a standalone major in Spring 2015, formalizing the program for the 2015–2016 academic year. This transition sparked a new wave of growth, with incoming SI student enrollment doubling by the 2021–2022 academic year. To support this expanding student body, the College added distinguished senior practitioners and scholars to the faculty, including Ed Waltz, Will Williamson, Sam Watkins, and former Defense Intelligence Agency Acting Director, David Shedd.

As the major matured, it expanded its curriculum with regional threat studies, specialized electives, and strategic government partnerships and brought onboard Tim Waltz, Bill Osborne, Chris Miller, and Mirriam MacIntyre. Transition of overall leadership of the SI Program from me to Allen Blocker, former U.S. Navy Commander and former Chair, aerospace engineering, at the U.S. Naval Academy, began in July 2026.

From its origins as a post-9/11 concentration to a premier standalone major, the history of the Strategic Intelligence Program at Patrick Henry College demonstrates how a vision for principled, constitutional service has systematically grown over more than two decades.



THE STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE COURSE OF STUDY

A 4-YEAR JOURNEY OF MIND AND CHARACTER

HTTPS://WWW.PHC.EDU/STRATEGIC-INTELLIGENCE-COURSE-OF-STUDY

IV. Applied Research and Apprenticeship: Cultivating Practical Tradecraft and Moral Imagination

The Strategic Intelligence major's apprenticeship model bridges classroom theory with real-world national security practice, preparing students to excel in internships and transition rapidly into responsible Intelligence Community roles. Central to this experiential learning are SI Special Projects—faculty-guided, student-led research initiatives that give undergraduates hands-on experience in open-source collection, analytical methodology, team dynamics, and leadership. Upperclassmen direct day-to-day work while training underclassmen in professional tradecraft, fostering technical proficiency, strong Intelligence Community ties, and the moral imagination needed for complex challenges.

Through these projects, students produce unclassified, actionable intelligence products across military, political, economic, and cultural domains. Long-standing efforts include the *Border Security Alert*, a weekly open-source digest on U.S. borders and ports, and the *SOUTHCOM Security Bulletin* tracking organized crime, corruption, unrest, and narcotics in Latin America. **Specialized teams examine other security topics**, including human trafficking networks; Chinese influence operations and mineral extraction in Africa; Chinese Communist Party People's Liberation Army Reserve structures; and historical Chinese strategy alongside advances in AI and brain-computer interfaces.

Complementing the research are high-intensity crisis simulations and strategy competitions. Students, alumni, and faculty design complex global scenarios for the annual Crisis Management Exercise (CME), immersing participants in domestic political friction, international conflict, and ethical dilemmas. Students synthesize intelligence and formulate policy rooted in a Christian worldview while demonstrating professional responsibility. Likewise, the Cyber Strategy Challenge team competes in Atlantic Council events that simulate National Security Council decision-making involving policy, legal, and operational trade-offs in global cyber crises.

The capstone is the strategic internship program. Leveraging these experiences and proximity to Washington, D.C., PHC places students in federal agencies, and with defense contractors, industry leaders, and think tanks. There they apply analytical skills in operational settings and often obtain security clearances before graduation. **By uniting classical education, student-led open-source production, immersive simulations, and D.C. internships, the apprenticeship model equips graduates to enter national service, graduate studies, or public policy as seasoned, ethically grounded analysts.**

V. The AI Revolution in U.S. Intelligence: Here and Now

Artificial intelligence has moved from being just a future possibility to an increasingly important functional reality in multiple Intelligence Community agencies. The Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) has gone so far as to publish its view that we must harness AI capabilities due to keep up with the growing volume of data and the imperative of staying ahead of our adversaries and transnational threats. The ODNI has made AI a centerpiece of its strategy to maintain a competitive edge, with the 2023–2025 IC Data Strategy explicitly making the creation of "artificial intelligence-ready" data a priority that in turn will enable advanced analytic capabilities to leverage both human and machine capabilities.[1]

This strategic directive is being turned into actions across multiple IC agencies:

- **The Central Intelligence Agency** (**CIA**) has progressed beyond pilot programs to implementing AI "at scale" across all aspects of the agency.[2] CIA Chief Information Officer La'Naia Jones has publicly discussed AI use in domains as varied as cybersecurity, finance, and human resources.[2] This shift is so central that Chief AI Officer Lakshmi Raman characterized AI as "not just an emerging technology, but as a strategic necessity."[3] Even going further, a new fourth pillar of the CIA's AI strategy projects moving beyond mere democratization of AI access toward "commoditization," where officers incorporate AI into the workflows they use every day to accomplish their mission.[4]

- **The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency** (**NGA**) is confronting a nearly impossible data volume, making the key use of AI "imperative, not an option."[5] Its strategy for this gargantuan task leverages computer vision (CV) and generative AI to automate the analysis of overhead imagery, orchestrate collection tasking. It is integrating AI into the analytic workforce through flagship programs like MAVEN.[6]

- **The Defense Intelligence Agency** (**DIA**) is similarly actively working toward replacing its critical foundational military intelligence database with the new Machine-assisted Analytic Rapid-repository System (MARS), a system designed to enable AI to "make sense of big data."[7] DIA planned to reach full operational capability for MARS in early 2026 but they have not provided public information on the latest status of these activities.[8]



- **The National Security Agency** (**NSA**) is using its AI Security Center (AISC) as a key component of its cybersecurity mission and to collaborate with the Intelligence Community to protect AI systems throughout AI development and operations. AISC's goal is to defend the nation's AI infrastructure through collaboration with industry, academia, and other agencies in the Intelligence Community.[9]

The evolution of the CIA's strategy is illustrative of the profound shift in the Intelligence Community's relationship with AI. The initial three pillars—understanding AI of adversaries, improving internal operations, and responsible stewardship—treated AI as a discrete, specialized capability to be managed. Their strategy's new fourth pillar of "enabling access" and achieving "commoditization" is a clear move toward making AI a utility, similar to secure email or internet access, that every analyst and operator will be expected to routinely use in their daily work.[4]

This is a clear signal that future intelligence professionals will not just be passive users but active orchestrators of AI systems and tools. These changes make **AI literacy essential for all PHC SI graduates, not just for a technical few.**

VI. The Educational Dilemma: Frictionless Products and the "Artifact Illusion"

As artificial intelligence becomes a ubiquitous operational utility across national security agencies, it simultaneously creates a profound dilemma for higher education. In an academic environment, AI tools may generate an "Artifact Illusion"—the assumed reality that polished essays, intelligence briefings, and annotated bibliographies can now be produced effortlessly without internal cognitive struggle. But we've seen already as AI has proliferated that a finished written product is no longer reliable evidence of genuine student learning. If educational rigor remains focused solely on output quality, institutions risk graduating analysts who rely on frictionless intelligence products. In a high-consequence national security setting, this shallow competence introduces potentially lethal failure modes, including unexamined assumptions, premature cognitive closure, hallucinated sourcing, circular reporting, and ethically blind policy recommendations.

VII. The PHC SI Program Strategy: Hardening Judgment and Cultivating the "Skeptical Orchestrator"

Recognizing these operational hazards, the Strategic Intelligence Program at Patrick Henry College has executed a deliberate educational pivot: shifting the focus of academic rigor away from simple product generation and placing greater emphasis on the formation of critical judgment under pressure. The institutional mission is to harden students' internal cognitive capabilities before they enter high-stakes operational environments. Rather than treating AI literacy as mere technical mastery of algorithms or prompt templates, PHC prepares students to serve as "Skeptical Orchestrators"—professionals who skillfully leverage machines for collection, processing, and synthesis while ensuring that human logic, strategic context, and ethical boundaries remain in supreme command.

Through disciplined training in alternative hypothesis testing, hidden assumption identification, and source evaluation, the program aims to equip young professionals to manage operational load with advanced AI tools without surrendering independent thought. By actively guarding against algorithmic anchoring, the goal of the SI Program is to ensure that core intelligence questions, critical evaluations, and final strategic judgments remain driven by students' intellect harnessed to transcendent moral accountability.

VIII. The Road Ahead: Image Bearers for a Challenged Workforce

The Intelligence Community that our graduates will enter looks very different from the one the program was founded to serve in 2002. Artificial intelligence is reshaping how analysis is done, cyber operations have become a primary arena of conflict, and the workforce itself is under strain from rapid change, shifting expectations, and deep divisions in our culture. In that environment, technical skill alone is not sufficient. The SI Program's path forward is to deepen our connection to PHC's classical liberal arts core and its Christian distinctives, and to build our expanding work in cyber and AI directly on top of that foundation.

We describe the goal in three parts. *Conceptual literacy* is the ability to see clearly and understand the ideas, technologies, and

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2. Fed Gov Today. "Operationalizing AI Across the CIA: How the Agency Is Scaling Innovation for Mission Impact." fedgovtoday.com.
3. Vanderbilt University, Institute of National Security. "AI Is a Strategic Necessity in Modern Intelligence Work, National Security." May 9, 2025. vanderbilt
4. Ross Gianfortune. "CIA Adds Fourth Pillar to AI Strategy, CAIO Says." GovCIO Media & Research, June 18, 2025. govciomedia.com.
5. National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. "NGA Prepares to Use Generative AI for Mission Support." nga.mil.
6. Everforth ECS. *The NGA Maven Program: Maintaining Decision Advantage on the Battlefield*. inforeliance.com.
7. Defense Intelligence Agency. "DIA's 'MARS' Initiative Reaches Another Key Milestone." April 5, 2021. dia.mil.
8. Kristen Smith. "DIA Nearly Ready to Run AI-Enabled Intel Repository on SIPRNet." ExecutiveGov, October 14, 2024. executivegov.com.
9. National Security Agency. "Super Intelligence Security Center." Accessed October 1, 2026. nsa.gov/aisc/.

human nature within a biblical and historical context; literacy formed through the great texts and the study of our nation's founding. *Moral acuity* is the ability to discern and name what is right when pressure, ambiguity, and convenience push the other way, grounded in Scripture and tested regularly through targeted assignments, new courses such as Cyber Domain Fundamentals, and special projects like the Crisis Management Exercise. *Technical fluency* is the ability to use AI and cyber tools skillfully and appropriately, developed through new courses such as Strategic AI Literacy, Cyber Threat Intelligence, Cyber Threat Modeling, and Digital Forensics & Incident Response, and then practiced in the real world through apprenticeships.

Together, these prepare students for more than entry into the intelligence workforce. They prepare them to thrive in it, and to serve as salt and light in institutions that will face hard years ahead. And when called upon, they will be ready to meet our nation's toughest challenges. Our aim in the SI program is to send out graduates who clearly reflect the Imago Dei into a dark world that seeks to distort it; and to be people whose competence earns trust, whose character holds under pressure, and whose work points beyond themselves to their Creator.

IX. Conclusion

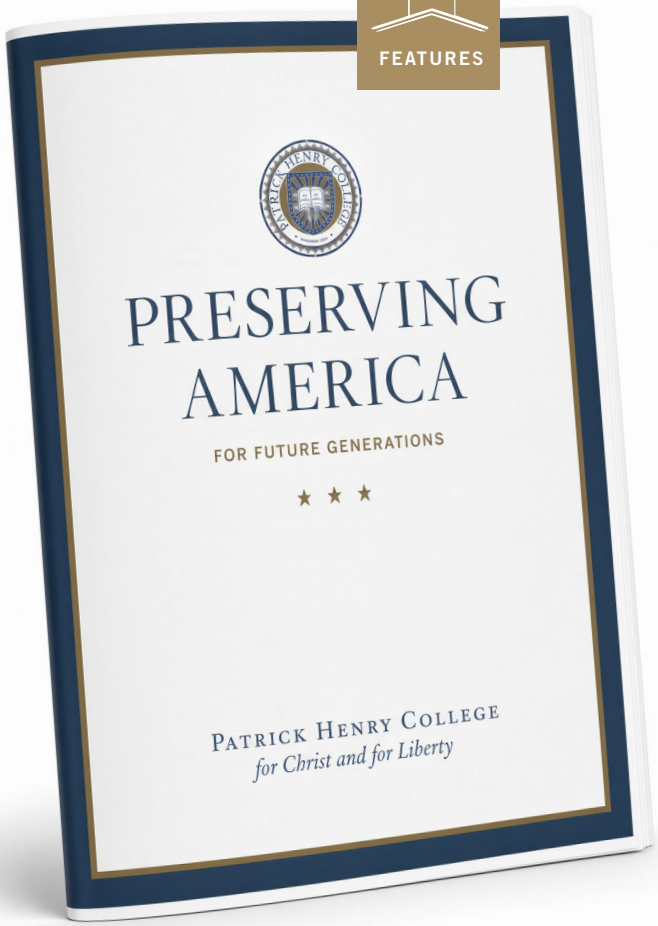
From a simulated White House Situation Room briefing on a major international security crisis to the President of the United States, to students huddled over their computers researching the latest in Russian military capabilities or the potential impact of Sun Tzu's writings on Chinese strategy to take control of Taiwan, students in the Strategic Intelligence major are learning the skills necessary to lead the nation and make an immediate and enduring impact for Christ and for liberty.

At Patrick Henry College the unique combination of academic rigor, fidelity to the spirit of the American founding, and unwavering biblical worldview combine with professional levels of experience gained in the SI Program to foster moral integrity and practical wisdom. This potent combination aims to produce intelligence leaders that are vital to safeguarding the nation's future as the United States navigates the existential threats of the 21st century. Young, vibrant intelligence professionals from PHC's SI Program with seasoned judgment in orchestrating the latest technology tools and who also respect both constitutional guardrails and transcendent moral accountability are the means prepared "in God's Providence" to preserve our liberties for generations to come.

Dr. Gordon Middleton

Dr. Middleton served as the Director of the Strategic Intelligence Program at Patrick Henry College from 2004 to 2026, where he taught courses in intelligence history, research and analysis, national security, and strategic intelligence. He continues to teach and serve students in the SI program. He is a retired U.S. Air Force Colonel and former member of the Senior Executive Service at NSA and CIA, who held leadership roles in research and development, systems acquisition, and space policy, and operations.





WOULDN'T CHANGE A THING

by **TOM ZIEMNICK**

Discover the story behind the making of "Preserving America for Future Generations."

I arrived at the parking lot of the local McDonald's on a cool February morning in 2019. Before our little town of Purcellville experienced an explosion in growth (and restaurants), the trek from Patrick Henry College to McDonald's, a little over a mile each way, was a longtime tradition for the students.

But it wasn't for me, and I wasn't there to eat. I had been at PHC for over 12 years, leading the Advancement Department for much of that time. I was there for a meeting, but this one was different. I was nervous.

I entered the restaurant and picked a booth that was a little out of the way. I like to be early, but not too early. "Five minutes early is on time" is one of those expressions I heard once, never forgot, and use all the time. This time, I was much earlier than normal. I sat down and pulled the manila folder out of my laptop bag, placing it in front of me, but I did not open it. Inside was a year's worth of work, often painful, but worth it—I hoped.

Mike Farris walked in.



McDONALD'S IN PURCELLVILLE, VA

He saw me and came over to the booth. I had not told him why we were meeting, just that I had something very important to show him. Ready as always, he smiled and said, "OK, what is it?" I opened the folder and slid the document to his side. "This is our attempt to capture your voice and the original vision you had for PHC. Please read it all the way through and then tell me what you think at the end."

Mike began to read.

As I watched him scan the pages, my anxiety climbed. He seemed to like the cover, the look, the feel, but would he hear himself in it? I waited. He flipped some more pages. I waited. The document was not very long—sixteen pages, with illustrations, graphs, and pictures—but I had asked him to be thorough, and he was. Finally it was over. He set it down in between us, looked at me a little misty-eyed, and said, "I wouldn't change a thing."

I wouldn't change a thing…

An overwhelming sense of relief hit me when I heard those words. Getting to the end of a year of work is one thing. Hearing it from the man we had been trying to represent was another. I had spent the morning imagining it going the other way—all that work for nothing. I broke into a grin. "That is awesome. You have no idea how much I was sweating this. We needed to get this right."

I was sweating it for personal reasons too. Mike was why my family and I had moved from California to Virginia. He had led me, a former atheist, and my wife to Christ in early 2003. He had baptized us in a friend's pool and asked me to work at PHC.

We needed to get it right because for almost twenty years, the mission had only one voice, and that was Mike.

Michael Farris founded Patrick Henry College in 2000. Plenty of people helped him, but ask any of them and they will tell you that Mike was the catalyst. He was the visionary, and he was the one who could sell it. In those early years, he traveled the country speaking at the many homeschool conferences about the Home School Legal Defense Association, which he and Mike Smith had started in 1983, and about this far-fetched idea: a new private Christian liberal arts college for high-performing conservative Christian students and their families.

"But as much as everyone at the college loved the mission, loving the mission is not the same as being able to articulate it."

In 2006, Mike Farris left the presidency and became chancellor. He continued to engage with the homeschool community and he was still the person our largest supporters wanted to hear. But as the years passed, no one emerged who could convey the PHC message as effectively as he could.

The risk was obvious. A mission that lives in one man is already exposed. He might be called to do something else, or be ready to hand it down. But as much as everyone at the college loved the mission, loving the mission is not the same as being able to articulate it.

In August of 2015, I was returning home from a family camping trip with no cell service. I quickly made my way through the many voicemails until one stopped me in my tracks. "Hey, Tom! This is Jack Haye. It looks like you and I are going to be spending a lot of time together!"

If anyone knew the mission of PHC, it was Jack. He was there from the beginning as the first and only chairman of the PHC board. But



1998, MIKE FARRIS PITCHES THE VISION OF PHC TO REPORTERS

Jack also knew that he wasn't going to be Mike Farris. Jack decided that one of his first priorities was for everyone at PHC to know how to answer the question: Why PHC? If we couldn't do that as an institution, we would never grow beyond that founding voice.



MIKE FARRIS BAPTIZING TOM ZIEMNICK

As Jack led us on that journey, 2017 brought further clarity to the question. Mike Farris was asked to become the president of Alliance Defending Freedom. It was the ideal role for Mike at this time in his life, and although he stayed connected with PHC as chancellor emeritus and a member of the board, he could no longer be the messenger.

That same year, Jack asked Howard Schmidt, a member of the PHC board, to leave a successful business career to become the executive vice president. Howard, a turn-around specialist and experienced chief executive, set out to rebuild and improve every system at the college. He also wanted the PHC message codified. Jack's question and Howard's arrival were now the same assignment: put Mike's message down on paper in a way that was clear and easy to deliver.

To craft the document, Jack formed the Why PHC? working group. There were five of us in the room: Howard, Janna Bowman, Stephen Allen, Brooks Freeland, and me. All of us came from areas that would have to use the message. Brooks was also a PHC graduate, giving us an alumni perspective.

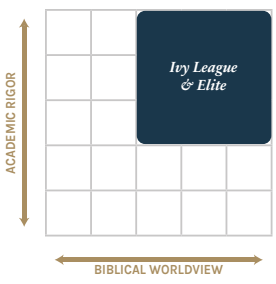
Then the work began. We met every week and hammered it out for over a year. It was brutal at times. Every word and punctuation mark was fought over. But through it all, we knew this would be the Lord's document. We prayed together before and after every meeting. At every impasse, we stopped, took a breath, and prayed

The Ivy League and elite universities have bowed to shifting cultural norms and abandoned the idea that absolute truth is essential to education. – from *Preserving America for Future Generations*

1650-1750

How It Started

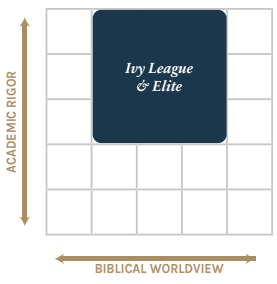
Ivy League & elite universities educated leaders at the highest level of academic rigor with a commitment to a biblical worldview.



1750-1850

Gradual Shift

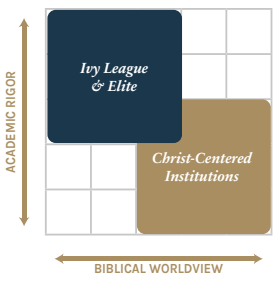
Over time they shifted, abandoning the notion that the pursuit of knowledge must start with a biblical worldview.



1850-1950

Faith-Based Movement

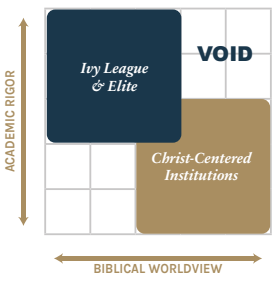
In response, Christian leaders established colleges committed to a biblical worldview, yet few reached the academic rigor of the Ivy League and elite universities.



1950-2000

A Void Emerges

A void emerged as institutions failed to educate leaders at the highest level of academic rigor with a firm commitment to a biblical worldview.



our way through it.

The outline of the story was probably the easiest part. We identified the problem and the solution, which was really the "Why PHC?" answer. Once the outline was complete, the words were needed. That was generally my job. Write the draft and then join in the shredding. Everyone's pride, especially my own, needed to be checked at the door. Credit didn't matter. The result did.

I remember one instance when we were stuck on an aspect of "the VOID" section. We had been going back and forth about the nature of the void created by the Ivy League colleges moving away from a biblical worldview, but the words we were using to describe it just weren't working. In a moment of clarity, Brooks realized we were describing the remedy before we had shown the damaging result. Simple, once we saw it. But it wasn't simple getting there.

"The document was done, but staying true to it had only started."

Stephen Allen worked the computer while the rest of us edited out loud. Calling it a challenge understates it. He had to manipulate text as well as the graphics (provided by PHC alumna, Jen Olmstead).

Out of that year came an unlooked-for treasure. The mission statement of PHC is thorough but somewhat academic. It contains sixty-two words! Too many to remember, and far too many to say to someone who asks the "Why PHC?" question. Mike would put it into his own words, but we needed to make it portable for anyone.

Three main ideas began to emerge and survive the shredding: high academic rigor, fidelity to the spirit of the American founding, and an unwavering biblical worldview. Sixty-two words became fourteen. In those fourteen words all of us began to see the unique nature of PHC. All three were necessary. Many colleges could claim one. A few could claim two. But we could not find one that could claim all three. Those fourteen words became the PHC Formula.

As Howard likes to say, the hardest part of any project is the last 10%. With the Formula behind us, it felt like we had turned the corner, but we still had a lot of work to do. And as we finished the last sections, we hit a significant snag: what would be the title?

This turned out to be one of our great challenges. For Christ and for Liberty? Patrick Henry College? Advancing the Kingdom? Fidelity to the Founding? These were just a few of the options we sweated over. In the end, after many vigorous debates, Preserving America for Future Generations was the one we could not get rid of. In that title, I could hear the echo of what Mike set out to do so many years before.

We did have some anxiety over the final title. The United States is not in the Bible and the success or failure of our country will not determine ultimate victory. That is God's alone. But the work we did reminded us of what we have been given. As we wrote, this nation has been "a force for good, a harbor from which the Gospel has spread, and a haven for those seeking refuge from tyranny." America has been a blessing from God. It is not an idol, but preserving it for our posterity is our task.

With the completed document in hand, it was now time to introduce it to the rest of the college, our alumni, and our financial supporters. We knew that a companion video would be an essential asset, but the thought of creating a video ourselves was daunting, and we did not have the money (probably $20,000 or more) to ask someone outside PHC to do it.

Taking a chance, I reached out to the one film producer I knew. Maybe he would have some ideas. George Escobar was very familiar with PHC. He and his wife were alumni parents, and he had also produced the film *Come What May* on campus in 2009. He even put Mike in the cast.

I met George at PHC, showed him the completed document, and explained our predicament. I was unprepared for his response. He said the story needed to be told and that he would do it—and donate it to the college. I was speechless.

As we worked with George on the video, we ran into a snag. None of the narrators we tried sounded like the document. George looked at me one day and said it needed to be me because I knew the story. I was skeptical. I did not want the microphone. The voice on the film is mine.

The video resonated with our donors and potential students. What has surprised us is that we have not had to make any substantial changes (except the number of moot court championships) over the past seven years.

Then I began to see freshmen on campus wearing t-shirts with Preserving America for Future Generations on the front and the Formula, all three lines, on the back, the fourteen words and the title we had been so anxious about. In fact, those three lines have permeated every part of the PHC lexicon. They are the answer to the question Jack asked, "Why PHC?"

The college began with an inspired voice. As time goes on, fewer students, parents, and supporters will have heard that voice. The Preserving America document is how that message will carry on. But it is not enough. A message cannot maintain a mission. Patrick Henry College will only stay the course if the leadership, faculty, staff, and students remain true to those fourteen words, and faithful to the One who truly authors all our inspiration.

"I wouldn't change a thing."

The document was done, but staying true to it had only started.

Tom Ziemnick

Tom has been serving as the Vice President for Advancement at Patrick Henry College since 2013.

Scan the code or visit **WWW.PHC.EDU/PRESERVE-AMERICA** to read *Preserving America for Future Generations* and watch the video.



The Sentinel Society

Supporting PHC in your estate, will, or trust

God has used committed friends like you to launch and sustain this college, while the guardrails established by our founders have kept us from drifting, unlike so many once-faithful institutions.

We've just marked our 25th anniversary. Now we invite you to now imagine a different future—one in which there is no Patrick Henry College.

Imagine a generation of bright, young leaders sitting only under professors who are hostile to the principles of self-government, constitutional liberty, and, most importantly, the Gospel. Imagine the impact on our nation, our communities, and our churches once that generation rises to lead. It's not hard to imagine as we already see glimpses of that future taking shape around us.

Throughout history, God has entrusted His people with vision and resources to combat evil and bless His creation. At Patrick Henry College, we share that conviction. As a partner in our mission to honor God who called us and to ensure that freedom still rings in this great nation, we invite you to join a new circle of friends we call the Sentinel Society. Members of the Sentinel Society stand watch with us over PHC's future, helping to safeguard our mission and strengthen the next generation of Christian leaders. As a token of our gratitude, participants will have the opportunity each year to personally receive an annual update on the progress of the college's confidential strategic initiatives, either in person or through a private online forum. These gatherings provide an insider's perspective on PHC's current challenges, our plans for the future, and the ways God is at work through this community. Becoming a Sentinel is both a commitment and a calling to uphold truth, preserve liberty, and ensure that the light of faith and freedom continues to shine brightly for generations to come.

SCAN THE CODE OR VISIT WWW.PHC.EDU/SENTINEL-SOCIETY to learn how you can help secure the blessings of liberty and faith for the families and nation we hold dear.

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SELDEN COLLEGE

ALLOWING the LIGHT

A college based on PHC starts its second academic year in the United Kingdom

by GRETCHEN WHITTINGTON

How would your college experience have changed if you had been able to fit the entire school around the college founder's table?

Would you have built different friendships? Become passionate about different subjects? Connected more closely with your professors?

How would it have changed who you are now?

Selden College began its first academic year in the fall of 2025 with an inaugural class of four students. This year, four more joined them, and one of last year's students finished after the first year.

And yes, they all fit around the principal's table. Every Friday, in fact.

"I love … the Friday afternoons," said Dr. Tim Edwards, Selden College's founder and principal. "It's the end of the week, [the students] are tired, their filters are down a little bit, and there's quite a lot of laughter."

Every week, the students set aside time for a book study apart from their graded coursework, talk it through with their professors, and share a meal in Dr. Edwards' home.

For a student body of seven, it seems a natural way to bring everyone together at the end of a long week.

As the United Kingdom's only classical Christian college, Selden is carving out a niche that is completely unoccupied across the pond. Its founders have looked to schools such as Patrick Henry College for inspiration, drawing on PHC's core principles as they built their own method. The aim is a local path to that kind of education for students in and around Oxford.

"We have very few explicitly Christian higher education establishments in the UK," explained Selden's financial development manager, Julie Burrows. "If students wanted to take on higher education within a broader range of subjects, and see it through the Christian worldview, they either [had] to do theology degrees [at schools in the UK] … or increasingly they had to go to America, to [schools like] Hillsdale or Patrick Henry. … So that was a gap we wanted to fill."

The school's founder never expected to be the one filling it. Dr. Timothy Edwards traveled widely for his studies, earning an M.A. from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a Ph.D. from Oxford. He then spent nine years in the United States as academic dean at New Saint Andrews College in Idaho.

At New Saint Andrews, while thinking through how to improve the college's systems, he began to notice how few schools held both a solid biblical worldview and a high standard of learning. Even his alma mater, he came to believe, had closed itself to the convictions it once claimed. Oxford's Latin motto translates to "The Lord is my light," but Edwards says "the windows are closed, the curtains are drawn, the shutters are shut—no light is allowed. That light isn't allowed into the classroom, because it's considered not 'objective,' as they would say."

Dr. Edwards was a homeschool father and a scholar. Founding a college was not even a dream until he returned to the UK in 2023. Once there, he concluded that God had given him the life experience for exactly that.

"It seemed like that was the next step the Lord had for us to do—or to at least try," he said.

So he set out to gather support. The new school would not be a traditional college, at least not at first. What mattered most to Edwards was community: "a gathering of young men and women with a common purpose and a common life under the Lordship of Christ," in the words of Selden's Community Vision statement. Students should be able to build real relationships with peers and professors, and the whole of it should be for Christ's glory.

The college is named for John Selden, a seventeenth-century lawyer, historian, and member of Parliament. He studied at Oxford, taught himself Hebrew, and spent his life in old English law and the biblical record, then used what he found to tell both the king and the House of Commons when they had misread the limits of their authority.

John Milton called him the most learned man in England. He was also a Christian, and his reading of Scripture and the broader Hebrew tradition gave him the ground to stand on when crown and Parliament alike pressed past the law.

John Selden's legacy, and Edwards's years in American Christian education, gave the school its three aims for students: consistent worship of God, the growth of Christian virtue, and the advancement of learning. Selden held all three. Thus, the college that bears his name hopes to raise more leaders like him, for Britain first, and then for communities farther off.

"He made a huge difference to the nation at the time," Burrows said. "And you know, that's what we're aiming to do with our students too: to not go down a narrow channel, but to be learned in a variety of disciplines that you are able to lead [with] in your nation, community, church, and family."



To Edwards, Selden is part of "a vision that has fallen into disrepair" in the UK.

"It has been preserved in some institutions in America who, in seeking to recover Christian higher education, have looked back to Britain. Therefore, Selden is attempting the work of recovery for Christian education in this country by offering a liberal arts degree," he said.

The year is built on three nine-week terms: Michaelmas in the fall, Epiphany in the spring, and Trinity in the summer. September 30th marked the start of orientation for incoming first-years; Michaelmas term began on October 5th.

The schedule is light. Three days of the week are devoted to classes, opening with morning worship and psalmody, and running through four sessions. Two days are left for work and study. Fridays keep only a couple of the ordinary classes, then move into the Selden Seminar: a shared reading of an edifying text, with no academic testing attached. Last year's readings included Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*. Each year ends with a required study tour, alternating yearly between locations like Israel, Greece, and Rome.

Marta, a second-year student and one of the inaugural four, calls the Friday seminar "unbeatable."

"It's an informal time at the end of the week to just wind down a little bit to have a good discussion," she said.

She hopes to use her training at Selden to move into curriculum publishing for English Christian homeschoolers. At present, those families often have to have materials shipped from America.

"I think if you're choosing to homeschool your children, you're already doing something which is difficult, and you're going to be making sacrifices. I'd like to streamline that process for people as much as I possibly can," Marta says.

The school itself meets in several halls spread across a church and a nearby community building. Students live at home if they are close enough, or with families from local Oxford churches. Burrows says the college does not plan to seek ordinary dorm housing. It prefers the community of shared accommodations and host families.

Applicants take a three-hour exam and have an interview spread over two days, with sections on reading comprehension, language aptitude, and an essay. Marta found the language section the most interesting: within the period, students study, read, and write in a made-up language, including translating an English text into it.

"[It] was a very fun process. It was difficult, but it was something that I hadn't done before," she said.

Now, a year and a study tour to Israel in, she would not have chosen anywhere else.

"Obviously I've never been to an English university, so I don't know exactly what that would look like. But one of the reasons I wanted to go to Selden was because I didn't really want to know what that would look like. We spend our Friday evenings singing Psalms and having dinner together, which, you know, if you say that to someone who doesn't 'get' the classical Christian world, might raise a few eyebrows. … It [is] such a good way to just grow closer together, but also closer to God."

The little college's greatest challenge now is funding. The UK does not have the same "culture of philanthropy" that the United States does, and the school is still building relationships with supporters overseas, including PHC. In May 2026, the PHC Chorale visited and performed at Selden in Oxford while on their Europe Ministry Tour.

"We're a bottom-up, grassroots, slowly evolving college, which is why we started small," Burrows said. "It's a micro-adventure at the moment, but it's encouraging."



Images courtesy of Selden College

Interested in getting to know Selden College? Visit seldencollege.org to learn more about their goals and recent updates.

SELDEN STUDENTS SOCIALIZING WITH VISITORS



DR. EDWARDS TEACHING



SELDEN COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH DR. EDWARDS



DR. EDWARDS, PRINCIPAL OF SELDEN COLLEGE





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MY CAREER-SHAPING

INTERNSHIP



Addie Lee // Kentucky's 6th District, Congress

I was honored to intern for Congressman Andy Barr, who represents Kentucky's sixth district. This opportunity gave me the chance to learn the mechanisms of a congressional district office and how things work at the federal level. **I had just taken Western Civilization, Freedom's Foundations, and Economics for the Citizen, and these courses shaped my mind by pulling back the curtain on the history of our country and its institutions**. I was excited to get to take a small part in the workings of our democracy.



Chase Hope // *The Daily Mail*

Work at *The Mail* was fast-paced. On a typical office day, I would write at least two stories. I've had over five dozen stories published since May. On less normal days, *The Mail* would have me visit hearings on Capitol Hill in case some argument or controversy erupted—just the thing our readers would be interested in. Only once did a story come from a hearing, but it was my favorite, partially because **I was able to use niche knowledge from PHC's U.S. History class to improve the story**. For *The Mail*, I've also recorded a short video explainer, sweated in a press gaggle during a lengthy media stake-out for a Senate candidate, and done some man-on-the-street interviews.



Angelina Gibson // Texas Public Policy Foundation

I had the wonderful opportunity to intern at the Texas Public Policy Foundation this summer as a member of their Life: Powered team! My research centered on water policy, in particular, data centers' use of water in cooling systems, and AI tools to identify leaks in utility networks.

As a part of my internship, **I had the opportunity to attend weekly "Philosophy of Freedom" lectures, which were a natural progression of much of what I have learned at PHC**, as well as Young Professionals training courses focused on professional development.



Ben Rutten // White House, Office of the Vice President

Last summer, God gave me the experience of interning at the White House in the Office of the Vice President. I saw first-hand the workings of the Executive Branch and felt like I lived a lifetime of experiences every single day. Walking through the doors each morning filled me with awe, wonder, and a sense of humility at the power of God to bless me with such an experience. **I am abundantly grateful to God, my family, PHC (most specifically Dean Hodge), and all those who prepared me for this internship.** I could not have done it without them.



Abbagael Sullivan // White House, Domestic Policy Council

I served as an intern for the Domestic Policy Council at the White House, enabling me to assist in many areas of the nation's domestic policy. **I credit my academic experience at PHC with preparing me to enter the workforce as a follower of Christ** and a true patriot. Serving in the White House this summer was an incredible and life-changing experience.

from the NATIONAL BIBLE BEE to PATRICK HENRY COLLEGE



Participating in the high-pressure environment of the National Bible Bee Competition has taught me to trust the Lord's strength when mine is insufficient, and to rely on His grace both in what I accomplish and what I fail at. This is a lesson I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

Hannah Chew
1 Corinthians 1:26-31

2025 National Bible Bee Champion
PHC Class of 2030, Undeclared

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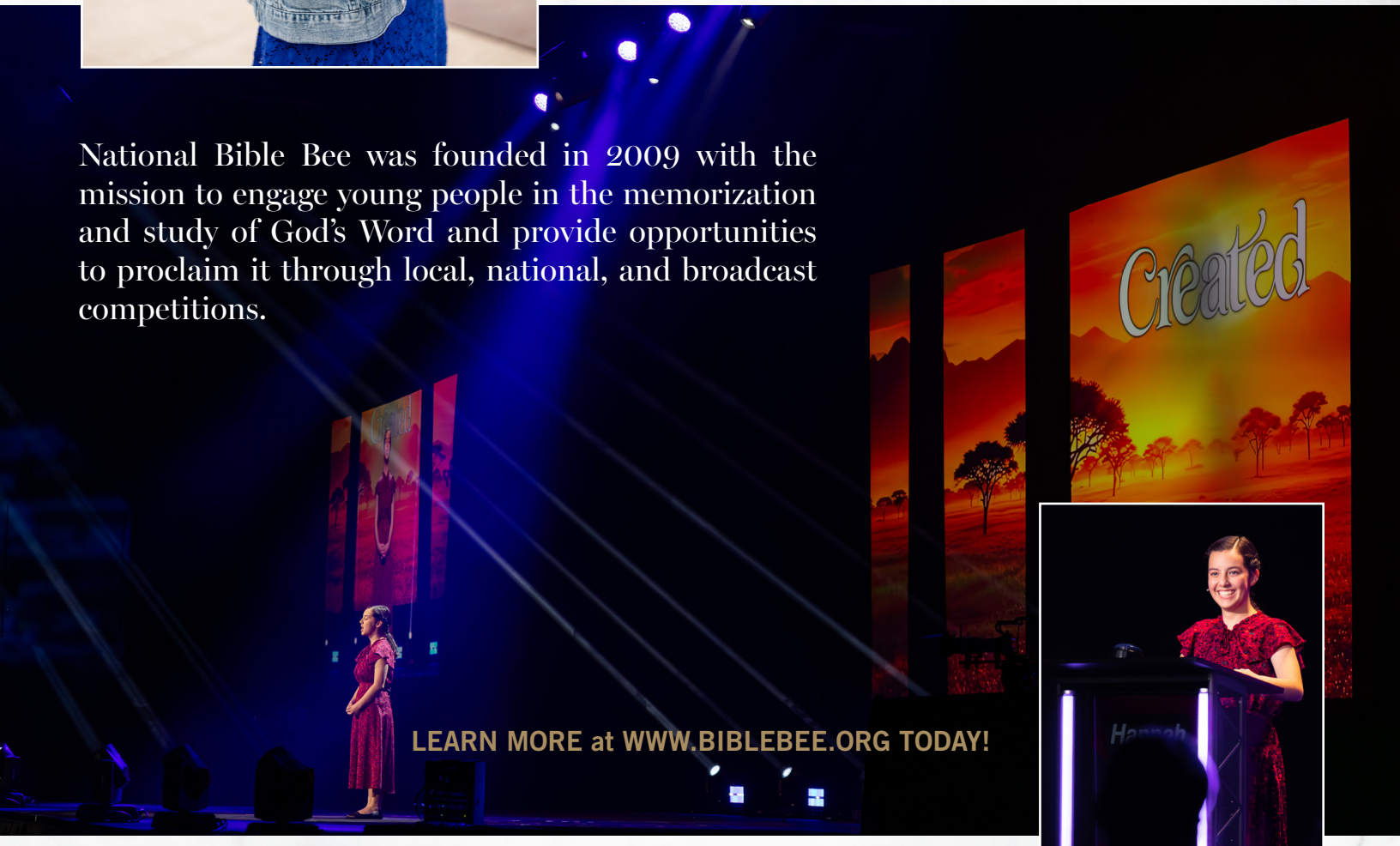

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SNAPSHOTS OF THE PAST THROUGH THE EYES OF PHC ALUMNI

Re (COLLECTIONS)



RUAN AND ELLEN MEINTJES

2016, GOVERNMENT: POLITICAL THEORY

The state: Pennsylvania. The hotel: cheap. The weather: a petulant wintry mix that made this Texan yearn for a cleansing blast of 104-degree heat. The trip: one of my last as a student at PHC. I was with my PHC Mock Trial team at a qualifying tournament and the late Dr. Frank Guliuzza had just finished putting our team through the Guliuzza-tournament-prep crucible.

We were beat and fine dining wasn't on the itinerary. There was, however, a McDonald's within walking distance (basically Michelin star food if you asked us). Taking our lives in our hands, we bundled up and slipped/walked to said culinary institution where, for the first time in my life, I experienced a Shamrock Milkshake at the behest of the milkshake sommeliers on the team. It paired nicely with the fries.

We spent at least two hours at that McDonald's visiting, decompressing, and enjoying the comradery that comes from shared hours of grueling work and lots of stress. And, to my mind, that's the best milkshake I ever had or have had since. A decade later, however, I realize that the sweetness of the memory is unrelated to the sugary beverage and has everything to do with the caliber of the company and the knowledge that I was spending precious time with lifelong friends doing something we loved. I miss those days a lot.



MEREDITH MONROE

2019, ECONOMICS & BUSINESS ANALYTICS

Tonight I'm sitting at a coffee shop in Jerusalem, enjoying a warm evening and a hot chai latte. Though I'm here with a tour group, for me this is a homecoming. I called Israel home for nearly a year in 2021/22 while completing the Global MBA program at Tel Aviv University (TAU). But I cannot mention TAU without mentioning PHC, because these two experiences go hand in hand.

PHC is where I became courageous. 2015-19 were transformative years at PHC, and as a student I got to experience the harvest of firstfruits from the strategic decisions the leadership took during my tenure.

I remember the excitement when President Haye was announced as our new president my freshman year. Dr. Kucks handed the mathematical baton to Dr. McGrath just in time for me to take Real Analysis, where I really analyzed what on earth I was doing in that course. EVP Schmidt brought the EBA program out of its cocoon for its first flight my junior year, and I'll never forget the first assignment for business methods, when we were given a homework assignment without instructions. We had to figure it out for ourselves, like people do in the real world. I'm so thankful for all the leadership did during those years, most especially for the example they set for me of venturing with courage into the unknown.

At first it was a small bit of courage to leave California and go to school in Virginia to study in a brand new, untested business program. Then it took a bit more courage to leave the US and move to Israel for my MBA. God then stretched my courage even further by bringing me back to Israel as a civilian volunteer in the IDF following October 7th.

Now I'm here simply as a tourist for two weeks, but this trip has given me a precious opportunity to reflect on all God has done. It may be cliche, but God's command to Joshua rings just as true in the Barbara Hodel Center as it does tonight in Jerusalem: Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.



JENNY FREESTONE

2024, HISTORY

When I think back on my time at PHC, I immediately think of the innumerable late nights holed up in the cubes of D3 cramming for exams and writing papers, and how I've never worked so hard in my life! But, while I'm extremely grateful for how intellectually challenging and impactful my PHC experience was, what I'm most grateful for is the professors, supervisors, wingmates, and friends who made the experience a delight as well. From thoughtful conversations with the librarians during work shifts, to dining hall debates, tea parties and study sessions with wingmates in the wing hallway, and one-on-one conversations with such brilliant and caring professors, the PHC community never failed to encourage, challenge, and show up for me. And we knew how to have fun, too. I'll never forget walking into my Greek IV final exam armed with a collection of stuffed animal octopi to bolster our spirits, only to find another student had brought his entire Transformers collection! My PHC experience showed me that serious intellectual effort can and should exist alongside an equally serious effort to take delight in the smaller, childlike joys of life. I'll forever be grateful to have experienced the unique blend of intellectual sharpening and caring camaraderie created by the PHC community.



SHANE KEENAN

2019, HISTORY

One of my favorite memories from my time at PHC ironically centers around one of my most difficult seasons. During the second semester of my senior year, I struggled with Lyme Disease. Symptoms, including chronic fatigue and brain fog, made it difficult to remember words or even what I had done earlier that day, let alone what I was studying.

However, the grace and love that I experienced when I finally humbled myself enough to ask my professors for help was a wonderful example of the care PHC professors have for their students. They took time to pray with me and offered even more help and encouragement than I had asked for.

I especially appreciated Dr. Spinney, who was my advisor for my senior thesis, for his care and wisdom. I also fondly remember the sympathy from my friends and particularly from my then fiancée, Heather. Her support during that time only further confirmed that I had found the right person to spend my life with. Overall, the experience highlighted the wonderful community at PHC and made for a very memorable close to my time there.



'17

Literature

Graham Jackson

BOSTON, MA

After graduating from PHC, Graham ('17) returned home to the woods of New England and the Boston area and immediately jumped into the world of education—from teaching his first classes with HSLDA Online Academy to subbing in K-12 public schools. Since earning his Master of Education at Gordon College, Graham is in his third year at a small, classical Christian school, where he now instructs 9th and 11th graders in Language Arts, continuing to share his passion for writing poetry and reading good stories. When not teaching (and in fond memory of various productions with Eden Troupe during his time at PHC), Graham has taken to utilizing his love of the dramatic as a tour guide in Boston's North End, leading tours of the famed bell tower where Paul Revere had his lantern signal displayed ("one if by land, two if by sea," thanks to the poet Longfellow). Sharing Boston's unique and powerful history, steeped in themes of active citizenship, freedom, and slavery, enlivens and gives him a welcome change of rhythm from his typical duties as an educator during the year.

Graham is grateful for how his experience at PHC has enriched his faith and love of the written word as he seeks God's goodness, abundance, and calling in all areas of his life.



'12

Literature

Caleb Nelson

GILLETTE, WY

Homeschooled on a Colorado sheep farm until age 18, then educated on the East Coast for seven more years, Caleb Nelson ('12) was eager to return to the West. By God's grace, he has now served nearly 11 years as pastor of Harvest Reformed Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Gillette, Wyoming. The theme of his seven semesters at PHC, and six at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, was this: "A fool takes no delight in understanding, but only in expressing his own opinion" (Proverbs 18:2). As a PHC freshman, he shared a dorm wing with some wisdom-loving fellow students, like his roommate Brett Larson ('09), who often used chokeholds, arm bars, and other gentle persuasion techniques to get him to tap out and repent of coarse talk and foolish jesting. Between their efforts in the dorm hallway and the professors' labors in the classroom, Caleb gradually learned to take less and less delight in venting his own opinion, and more and more in understanding.

He and his lovely wife Alexa have seven children ages 10 and under, some of whom hope to attend PHC, largely because Caleb's time there was excellent preparation for pastoral ministry and fatherhood. Only one of these callings requires wrestling skills, but both call on him to teach his God-given flock to delight in understanding.

He reads Plato and Chaucer for fun and is discovering the pleasure of sharing good books, music, and food with his children; if you don't have a son who can finish your sentences, there's a part of your Heavenly Father's heart that you don't yet understand.

'14 / '12

Government: Int'l Politics & Policy

John & Mackenzi Ehrett

ALEXANDRIA, VA



After graduating, John ('14) and Mackenzi ('12), both IPP majors, reconnected as law students and bonded over mock trial. They celebrated 8 years of marriage in October.

John clerked for two federal judges and, following a stint in private practice, served as chief counsel to U.S. Senator Josh Hawley and chief of staff to Commissioner Mark Meador at the Federal Trade Commission. Today, he practices political law at Lex Politica PLLC, serves as an adjunct professor in PHC's Department of Government, and writes extensively on theology and culture. He is the author, most recently, of the book *Martin Luther's Theology of Antitrust* (Davenant Press, 2025).

Mackenzi's career has focused on civil and regulatory litigation at Sidley Austin LLP, and she served in the White House Counsel's Office in the first Trump administration, where she worked on judicial and executive branch nominations. She helped coach the school's mock trial teams in 2019-2022. She leads a busy life as a working mom but as a reminder, audio books count as reading!

John and Mackenzi live in Alexandria, Virginia with their three wonderful children—Jack (5), Patrick (3), and Ivy (2 months). Outside of work, their lives are filled with reading, nature hikes, hosting, aspirational crafting, and creative cooking.

'09 / '11

Government and Classical Liberal Arts

Derek & Tricia Archer

BLUEMONT, VA



Patrick Henry College still holds a sweet place in my life, not simply for what I learned while I was there, but for the journey it set me on. In the Lord's kind providence, that journey included my beautiful bride of now more than sixteen years and our six children, evenly divided between boys and girls. Our friends insist that calls for a tie-breaking baby, so we shall see!

As I write this at a church family camp in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Georgia, I'm watching my children explore the woods and put their imaginations to work. These mountains bring me back to the Blue Ridge of Northern Virginia, where my years as a PHC student gave way to life as a young husband, father, church deacon, and entrepreneur.

The freedom to build a business, establish a home, or serve a church is a gift. But freedom alone cannot tell me what kind of business to build, what sort of home to cultivate, or what faithfulness requires of me. Those questions call for judgment shaped by God's Word and practiced in life with His people, and often are handed to us in the time and place moments we each are given. In fact, most of the elements of our lives are handed to us by decisions made by others. It's time we embrace those moments as gifts from God's kind and loving providence and build upon them as best we can for future generations.

PHC helped begin that formation. What once seemed like preparation for something ahead has become part of the ordinary work of loving my wife, raising our children, serving our neighbors, and making things that are useful and good.

That is the freedom I hope to pass on to my children: not freedom from belonging, but freedom rooted deeply enough to bear fruit within the context that God plants each of us into each day.

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