

A Message From Roger L. Beckett



Today, Ashbrook is setting the standard for educating teachers, students, and citizens alike about our nation's history and founding principles. Thanks to your generous support, we've become one of the most respected and effective institutions actively reforming the way American history is taught in America's classrooms.

As you know, we are committed to teaching about America through the use of original historical documents. We focus on this commitment in our top-rated undergraduate Ashbrook Scholar Program, our Hilda E. Bretzlaff summer academy for high school students, our residential and online Master of Arts in American History and Government degree program, and our highly sought after Rediscovering America seminars, webinars, and programs at historic sites. Through these efforts, students across the country have come to know the great American minds and statesmen that have shaped our country.

In 2013, we put together a list of 50 Core American Documents that we believe are an essential starting point for students, teachers, and citizens to think more deeply about what it means to be American. This collection has been met with remarkable success. Since its inception, we have distributed more than 81,000 print and electronic copies.

I am proud to share that we are building on this success, and I invite you to read about our newest initiative to develop 35 primary source document collections that cover the full range of topics in American History and U.S. Government curricula. Introducing these new collections to our expanding network of teachers and students will only increase the good work your support makes possible as described in the pages of this newsletter. I am grateful for all you do to help us fulfill our purpose here at Ashbrook.

Roger L. Beckett, Executive Director

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Teaching Students, Teachers, and Citizens What It Means to Be an American.

Introducing New Document Collections

Studies have revealed that America is losing its memory by failing to teach the lessons of our history and constitutional principles to our youth. Over the next three years, Ashbrook proposes to address this critical problem by educating the next generation of informed citizens through the development of 35 primary source document collections on the full range of topics covered in the high school American History and U.S. Government curricula. Each unit will feature at least 25 core documents that will include brief introductions, annotations, and key discussion questions with which teachers can engage their students. Studies have shown that teaching with primary source documents has proven to be effective in engaging students at all ability levels. Ashbrook will pair these collections with professional development seminars to engage thousands of teachers and the millions of students they teach annually with the great ideas that define our American character. This powerful combination of document collections and content-rich professional development is unique to Ashbrook. If you are interested in more information about the launch of our new document collections, please contact Victoria Hughes at vhughes@ashbrook.org or 419-289-5730.

Test Your Knowledge!

Each month, thousands of people throughout the country are testing their knowledge with Ashbrook's Civics quizzes. These quizzes are written by Ashbrook faculty and staff and distributed through InsideSources.com — news syndicate to various papers throughout the country. Popular media outlet publications have included *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Newsweek.com*, *The Denver Post*, *San Diego Tribune*, *Dallas Morning News*, and *Newsday*.

We have introduced an interactive format of the quizzes on Ashbrook.org. Below are a couple of sample questions from a recent *Marbury v. Madison* quiz written by Professor Jeff Sikkenga.

What kind of judicial order did Marbury want the Supreme Court to issue to Madison in order to force him to hand over Marbury's commission?

- a. Writ of mandamus
- b. Search warrant
- c. Subpoena
- d. Writ of habeas corpus

Which of the following lines are in *Marbury v. Madison*?

- a. "We are under a Constitution, but the Constitution is what the judges say it is,"
- b. "Clear and present danger"
- c. "It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is,"
- d. All of the above.

Log on to Ashbrook.org/quiz to take this quiz in its entirety and test your knowledge on our other quiz subjects.

Ashbrook in the News

Recent Media Highlights

Print & Online

25 articles published in **6** states

7 op-eds published with features in major media including *The Wall Street Journal*

TV

5 Broadcast Television Features including

2 segments on Fox National News *Happening Now*

Donor's Commitment to Civic Education Directly Impacts Local Teachers

A champion of civic education in his home state of Pennsylvania, Ashbrook supporter Col. Warren Bulette penned an article to the *York Daily Record* and *Hanover Evening Sun* on the importance of civic education. An excerpt from his letter reads:

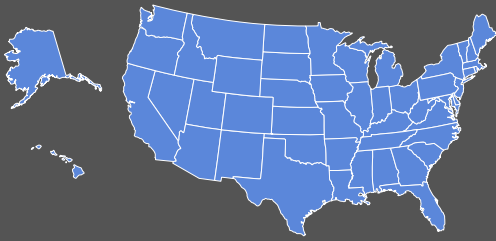
“Our generation must equip our children to keep this nation great by teaching them how to self-govern. Shouldn't this subject be the most important in the curriculum? Now is the time to require successful completion of a high school course that teaches the founding principles and the shaping of our nation's ideals contained in core documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist Papers, and the Constitution.... Let it be said by historians that our generation did not fail to educate the next generation to defend, protect, and preserve our beloved great Republic.”

Bulette recently took his support one step further by exercising the option to donate to Ashbrook with a gift of stock. This donation is being used to fund a program exclusively for teachers in York, PA. To learn more about stock donations or to fund a program in your area, please contact Sally Schramm at 419-289-5428 or sschramm@ashbrook.org.



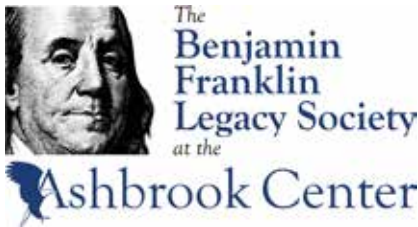
American freedom does not perpetuate itself. Self-government requires more of its citizens because it places the responsibility for perpetuating the nation's institutions upon the people themselves. In an effort to honor those donors who generously support Ashbrook annually, we have established the Director's Club. In addition to a monthly VIP Report, Director's Club members enjoy recognition in Ashbrook's Annual Report, invitations to live online seminars on important topics in American history and civics, reserved seating at select Ashbrook events, as well as an invitation to attend a Rediscovering America Weekend at a historic site.

The most important benefit of membership, of course, is being part of a mighty effort to help fight for America.



Rediscovering America

To date, more than 14,000 teachers, representing all 50 states, have participated in Ashbrook’s residential and online courses, webinars, professional development programs, and seminars at historic sites. An Ashbrook-trained teacher has the knowledge to use primary source documents as an indispensable path to understanding and affirming the principles of freedom and equality essential to being an American.



The Benjamin Franklin Legacy Society

The Benjamin Franklin Legacy Society was established to recognize those who make a commitment to the Ashbrook Center through their estate plans—by will or trust, through life insurance products, or through annuities, charitable trusts, or other life income agreements.

Through charitable gift planning, you can create a meaningful legacy while ensuring your own financial security. Your planned gift to the Ashbrook Center will have a lasting impact and will help preserve the blessings of liberty for your children and grandchildren.

Rediscovering America

Rediscovering America Program Report: Alexander Hamilton hosted at Fraunces Tavern, NYC

On Saturday, October 15, Ashbrook hosted a symposium entitled “Alexander Hamilton’s Commercial Republic” at the historic Fraunces Tavern in New York City – the very place where General Washington bid farewell to his troops at the conclusion of the Revolutionary War. Led by Dr. Stephen Knott, the symposium was attended by 48 teachers representing 36 different school districts. Alexander Hamilton was one of the most prominent figures in the American Founding, participating in nearly all of the major events of the Founding. In this symposium, teachers focused on Hamilton’s efforts to create a modern fiscal system to energize the American government. Teachers deepened their understanding of the Founding era and this prominent political figure, while becoming familiar with documents ready for use in the classroom.



Participating teachers shared the following comments:

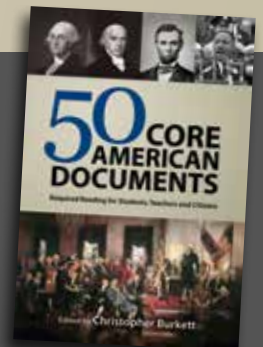
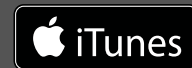
- “If all teachers could receive training offered by TAH.org, our national education system would be more rigorous, relevant, engaging, and successful.”
- “Not enough time is spent on history in the classroom yet it’s needed to understand current events, to participate in society, to facilitate critical thinking, and to understand cause and effect. Thank you.”
- “These programs are wonderful because they show educators how to effectively use the words of those who created history.”

Reading 50 Core American Documents reveals both sides of the major issues of American history and government

“Teachers say using original documents lets them teach in the most effective way: not by drilling students to memorize facts, but by helping them learn to read and analyze. Good social studies teachers don’t insist on a single ‘right answer.’ They let those who lived in the past tell their own stories. Then they push students to think about what the voices from the past say.... This approach prepares students to become responsible citizens, because it teaches them to reason through problems.”

– Professor Christopher Burkett, Editor

Get the Book
Purchase on Amazon
or download
for free on iTunes.



81,000 copies of *50 Core American Documents* have been distributed in print and e-book versions.

Developing Principled Leaders

Former Ashbrook Scholar Returns to Deliver Colloquium

National security expert and former Ashbrook Scholar, Rebeccah Heinrichs, was our guest for the first Ashbrook Colloquium of 2017. Her talk focused on what America’s role in the world should be, all while attempting to make sense of the new administration’s foreign policy. Having worked in national security, Heinrichs offered personal anecdotes and observations. Prior to the event, she made it a priority to meet with current students interested in national security. When asked about the role her Ashbrook education



played in her life, she noted that **“Ashbrook taught me the bedrock principles of how to think – not only about politics, but also about what it means to be an American. Knowing what life throws at you**

after college, I would have not been able to figure out these questions alone.” Heinrichs also made it known that she is always going back, referencing, and rereading the books she used in class, mentioning in particular Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Beginning college in 2001, Heinrichs pointed to 9/11 as a catalyst for her becoming interested in national security. “I think the question in Dr. Schramm’s class that day was ‘if the United States was to go to war with anyone who would it be?’ No one had an answer close to what happened only hours later,” she told students. Heinrichs provides research and commentary on a range of national security issues. Her work has appeared in major newspapers such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *The Washington Times*, and she has provided analysis on Fox News and CNN. She holds a Master of Arts degree in national security and strategic studies from the U.S. Naval War College. She also graduated with highest distinction from its College of Naval Command and Staff. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Ashland University in Ohio, and graduated from the Ashbrook Scholar Program.

Ashbrook Graduate Pursues Successful Career as Judicial Attorney

James Kresge is a 2007 graduate of the Ashbrook Scholar Program. After graduating from the Ashbrook program, he went on to pursue a law degree at Capital University, graduating in 2010. From there, he served as a Judge Advocate in the United States Marine Corps. While on active duty, he was a Special Assistant United States Attorney in the Eastern District of Virginia and a prosecutor in Okinawa, Japan and in Parris Island, South Carolina.



Ashbrook Alum James Kresge
Class of 2007

Kresge now serves as a Judicial Attorney for Justice Sharon L. Kennedy, Supreme Court of Ohio.

We recently spoke with Kresge about the lasting impact of his Ashbrook education:

What does an Ashbrook education mean to you?

Ashbrook shaped the trajectory of my life. It has provided a great foundation for my career as an attorney. I learned how to think critically and developed a deep appreciation for our founding principles. Through the program I have made life-long friends, connected with a wonderful community of engaged citizens, and married a fellow Ashbrook Scholar.

How did your Ashbrook education prepare you for your current career?

Law schools claim to teach students how to think like lawyers. For me, my Ashbrook education sharpened my writing and thinking as much as law school. One of the most important parts of my job is working with Justice Kennedy to interpret the Ohio

Engaging Students

New field of study: Political Economy

Ashbrook is proud to announce the introduction of a Political Economy major and minor at Ashland University. This new undergraduate program in Political Economy seeks to restore an understanding of the integral relationship between free enterprise and America’s form of constitutional self-government. By instilling in students the words and thoughts of the great thinkers of political and economic freedom, Ashbrook aims to teach the next generation of citizens the importance of free market economics in both our nation’s history and its future.

Brianne Wolf, the Thomas W. Smith Professor of Political Economy

New faculty member Brianne Wolf will serve as Assistant Professor of Political Science and Director of Ashland University’s program in Political Economy. She has an MA from the University of Chicago and expects to receive her PhD in May from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her doctoral

research examined themes of freedom and citizenship in the works of J.J. Rousseau, Alexis de Tocqueville, Adam Smith, and David Hume, who are among the primary thinkers who founded or analyzed the development and meaning of commercial society. The second field in her doctoral program was political economy, a course of study that she created herself because it was not available otherwise. Brianne has been awarded three Adam Smith Fellowships by the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, one of the world’s leading programs in the field. Her essay on Adam Smith, sympathy, and the poor law will be published in *Interdisciplinary Studies of the Market Order: New Applications of Market Process Theory*, and she has essays in progress on “The Economic Education of Emile: Reinterpreting Rousseau’s Use of Robinson Crusoe” and on Friedrich Hayek.



and U.S. Constitutions. Because of my Ashbrook education, I begin this important task with a deep understanding of the principles that shaped the founding of our country and state.

What was the most influential thing you read during the program and why?

The Federalist Papers. I wrote my senior statesmanship thesis on Federalist Number 10, and observing politics constantly reminds me of the practical and unchanging political wisdom contained in that work.

What would you say to a donor who helps support Ashbrook programs?

If you are concerned by the modern university, which tends to indoctrinate instead of educate, the Ashbrook Scholar Program is a rare gem that seeks to create enlightened citizens who love our Constitution and appreciate America’s imperfect greatness.

Ashbrook Academy

The application period is open for the prestigious Ashbrook Academy, a week-long summer program for rising high school juniors and seniors who share an interest in American history and politics. Serious education is about pursuing great questions, and the

Academy immerses participants in the deep study of the questions, challenges, and institutions that have shaped America. The Academy meets the third week in June on the campus of Ashland University in Ohio and offers a choice of two academic tracks: “Telling America’s Story” and “Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War.” **The deadline for application is May 1.** More information is available at AshbrookAcademy.org or by calling Ben Kunkel at 419-289-5431.

Ashbrook would like to express our sincere thanks to The Hilda E. Bretzlaff Foundation for supporting our academy.





Inspiring Teachers

Students “Unlock” Clues in Primary Documents

Joe Welch, an American history teacher in Pennsylvania, routinely directs his eighth graders online to Ashbrook’s Teaching American History website (TAH.org) to access primary historical documents. Reading the words of earlier Americans, students empathize with the way those Americans thought and felt, relating their own life challenges to those of the past. Welch tells his students, “Technology and styles may change, but human emotions do not change.”

After drawing inspiration from a TAH colloquium on Hamilton and Washington with MAHG Professor Stephen Knott and a later conference on classroom technology, Welch designed an in-class application of a “break-out” game in which students examined five sets of short primary sources to open six locks. Primary sources included short letters, speeches, images, even a hand-written Electoral College vote tally. Welch presented a scenario: “A new President has been elected, and he wants to create his own version of American history. He is destroying all of our primary source documents, but our Founding Fathers locked away one thing to prevent a tyrant from taking power and erasing our memories. What is it? Open the box to find out. You have 40 minutes until the President’s executive order takes effect.”

Each box had four external locks and one extra lockbox inside it along with a flashlight for reading invisible ink. The locks opened in different ways. One set of clues directed students to a key hidden in the room. Another lock was opened by a word; two required a combination of digits. Finding keys required making connections between documents. For

example, one set of clues contained a dated copy of the Gettysburg Address and a copy of the Declaration of Independence with the date blanked out. Students realized that the first words of the Gettysburg speech, “Four score and seven years ago,” referred to 1776, the year Americans announced their independence—and also the four digits that opened the lock. Students competed in teams, working on collaborative reading skills. “They divided to conquer, then worked as groups to figure out the remaining clues.” At the end of the game, each student received a Constitution booklet. Welch designed the game to show students “that they were going to have to dig underneath the surface of primary documents to find their meaning and to find connections between documents.”

Liberty Fund

Last semester, the Ashbrook Center and Liberty Fund continued their weekend colloquia series, hosting four sessions at various historical sites across the country. Venues included James Madison’s Montpelier, Lincoln’s home in Springfield, Illinois, George Washington’s Mount Vernon, and Andrew Jackson’s The Hermitage. These seminars allow teachers to engage in deep discussion, become well versed in the primary documents of American history and government, and to explore the themes of liberty and responsibility in America’s history.



Congratulations Graduates

In December, 11 students received their Master of Arts in American History and Government (MAHG) degree. Seven walked the stage at Ashland University’s winter commencement. Five of the seven were students from Florida, Arizona, South Carolina, and Minnesota. To date, the MAHG Program has 185 graduates representing 43 states.

Event Highlights

Jim Buchwald and Alex Wright

During a Major Issues Lecture Series Luncheon, Ariel Corporation Founder Jim Buchwald and his grandson, Alex Wright, who is Chief Operating Officer, had a conversation with Ashbrook Executive Director Roger Beckett for an audience of several hundred people. They talked about how an idea became a basement operation that later evolved into a state-of-the-art factory, which now employs more than 1,500 people. The conversation revealed a story of impossible challenges and a remarkable workforce that takes pride in producing the highest quality product in the world. It's a perfectly American story proving that free men can prosper. 2016 marked the 50th anniversary of Ariel Corporation. Ariel is headquartered in Mount Vernon, Ohio, and is the world's largest manufacturer of separable reciprocating natural gas compressors. Jim Buchwald has told this grand story of Ariel through a series of letters he wrote to his grandson. These letters are the basis for *Letters to Alex: A History of Ariel Corporation* that gives special insight into why Ariel became a success. The book can be purchased through paragraphsbookstore.com or by calling (740) 392-9290.



(L to R) Roger Beckett talks with Ariel Corporation's Jim Buchwald and Alex Wright.

Cal Thomas

Ashbrook Scholars and community members were treated to an evening with one of the most widely syndicated political columnists in America. Cal Thomas offered a thought-provoking and entertaining evening lecture where he examined hot-button issues such as national debt, excessive taxation, racial tension, economic decline, and a range of social and cultural developments. A writer of force and clarity, Thomas has authored 12 books, including his most recent and the focus of his talk *What Works: Common Sense Solutions for a Stronger America*. His extensive experience as an award-winning columnist, author, broadcaster, and speaker has provided him access to world leaders, U.S. presidents, celebrities, and educators which in turn affords him a unique perspective in political commentary.



Cal Thomas takes a question from Ashbrook Scholar Hayden Eighinger.

Rev. Robert Sirico

President of the Acton Institute, Rev. Robert A. Sirico visited Ashbrook to deliver a colloquium focused on political economy. The question of the human person is of foundational importance for political economy. Fr. Sirico discussed the separation and segregation of politics and economics that exists in our modern age. He called for the bringing together of politics and economics along the lines of the older model of political economy with a comprehensive and nuanced view of humanity, with all its foibles and flaws, as well as its virtues and dignity, as the only way forward today. Fr. Sirico's writings and commentary on religious, political, economic, and social matters are featured in a variety of journals and broadcast media.



Fr. Sirico signs his latest book, *Defending the Free Market*, for Ashbrook Scholar Reid Courtney.

Ashbrook *UPDATE*

Rediscovering America Weekend

Members of our exclusive Director's Club (p. 2) are invited to attend a special Rediscovering America Weekend. We will gather in historic Old Town Alexandria and travel to George Washington's Mount Vernon to enjoy VIP guided tours and great conversations with like-minded fellow members of the Director's Club. We will learn about America's first President from distinguished scholars.

For more information about the Rediscovering America Weekend or to learn how you can become a member of the Director's Club, please contact Stacey Cadman at 419-207-4912 or scadman@ashbrook.org.

