



Students.



Teachers.



Citizens.



**Ashbrook**

**2020 - 2021 ANNUAL REPORT**





# FROM THE CHAIRMAN & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

Can you imagine being a student during this past school year? Not only did our young people have to endure the pandemic with battles over masks and vaccinations, but they were also witness to a contentious election, economic disruption, and social unrest. To make matters worse, ideological warfare has spilled over into their classrooms as activists attempt to indoctrinate them with the idea that America is fundamentally a place of injustice, not hope; oppression, not freedom.

The silver lining is that the public has finally begun to recognize America's desperate need for civic education. Thanks to your support, Ashbrook was perfectly positioned to stand by America's youth and help them discover for themselves the true story of America.

We are in the midst of what can rightly be called "the Ashbrook moment."

Our progress in the past academic year, August 2020 - July 2021, is detailed in this report. We are pleased to present the results made possible by the generosity of supporters from across the country. Together we will restore the noble principles of our Founding to their rightful place in the hearts and minds of the American people. Together we will preserve the blessings of liberty for our children and grandchildren.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Sikkenga  
Executive Director



Marvin J. Krinsky  
Board Chairman



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# THE CIVIC EDUCATION CRISIS

The long-term health of our country depends on Americans—especially young Americans—who understand and appreciate our history and principles. Unfortunately, national tests reveal that young Americans are failing to learn basic facts about our history and unique form of constitutional government.

More importantly, they are not learning the most essential thing about America—the principles of self-government on which America was founded.

As a result, many of our nation's young people do not have the respect for and devotion to America necessary to perpetuate American freedom.

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Ashbrook Center is to strengthen constitutional self-government by educating our fellow Americans—students, teachers, and citizens—in the history and Founding principles of our country and the habits of reflection and choice necessary to perpetuate our republic.





OVER

5 MILLION

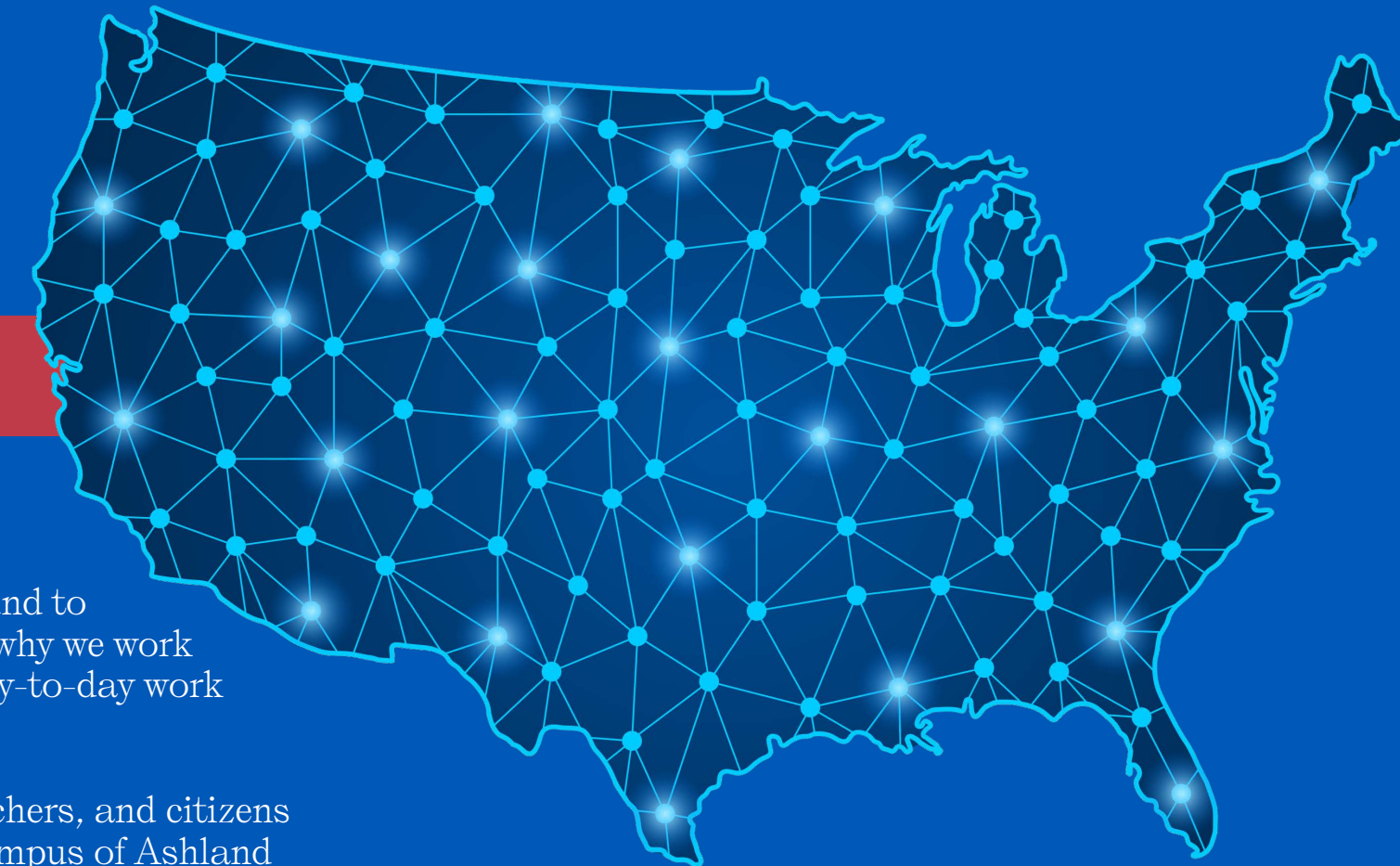
STUDENTS  
TEACHERS  
& CITIZENS

## THE ASHBROOK NETWORK

The principles of freedom are not bound to any particular time or place. That is why we work wherever American citizens do the day-to-day work of self-government.

You can find Ashbrook students, teachers, and citizens in every state. Some join us on the campus of Ashland University in Ashland, Ohio for seminars, courses, and special events before returning home with changed hearts and minds. Others learn with us in their own backyards at schools, museums, and historical sites across the country. And of course, many connect and learn the true story of America from the comfort of their own homes.

Ashbrook's network of students, teachers, and citizens includes Americans of all backgrounds—proving, as the Founders wrote in 1776, we are “one people.”





# THE ASHBROOK WAY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

At Ashbrook, we believe civic education is an education for self-government. It is not about information or indoctrination. It is about discovering the truth about America. We believe Aristotle's old maxim that "all men by nature desire to know," but we add, "they don't want to be told." They want to discover the truth for themselves.

## Documents.

Ashbrook programs teach the story of America using the words of the generations of Americans who lived and wrote our story. Their words—found in speeches, letters, court decisions, public papers, and diaries—tell the truth about America. Learning from the words of those who lived and wrote our history draws students into the wonderfully interesting story of America. So all Ashbrook programs are rooted in the primary historical documents and great texts of our country.

## Conversation.

Using primary documents, Ashbrook programs are rooted in conversations about the most important questions in American history and civics. Engaging in thoughtful conversations based on primary sources allows students to see for themselves the truth of the American story. It's no surprise research confirms that discovering the truth through conversation is the best and most long-lasting way of learning.



# ASHBROOK SCHOLAR PROGRAM

## Begin at the Beginning.

The education of every Ashbrook Scholar begins with a set of core principles: that the United States is an exceptional nation worthy of serious study; that good citizenship is necessary in a free society; and that to be a good leader, one must know and understand the principles and history of the country.

This rigorous program aims to cultivate the knowledge, character, and judgment necessary for good leadership in a constitutional republic.

**THE ASHBROOK APPROACH IS  
ALIGNED WITH AMERICA'S MOST  
FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLE THAT  
ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL**

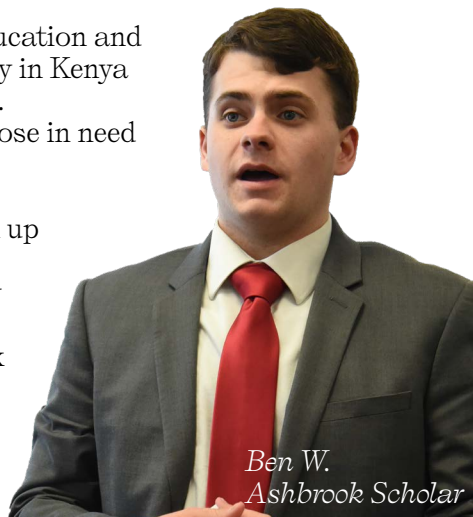
## Scholar Highlight: Ben W.

Ben W. is a junior from Pennsylvania majoring in Political Science and International Political Studies. He chose Ashbrook because, "You get an experience here that you can't get anywhere else."

What's so different? Ben said that "everything is discussion based...Class is not a lecture. Professors treat you as a friend. They don't talk down to you, because they respect your perspective just as much as they would a colleague's." This approach is aligned with America's most foundational principle that all men are created equal.

Last summer, Ben discovered a passion for education and a possible career while working as a missionary in Kenya teaching English, social studies, and life skills. "Education is the most impactful way to lift those in need out of poverty," said Ben.

Ben credits his own education with setting him up to help others, both in his own community of Montoursville, Pennsylvania, and abroad. "My primary takeaway from Ashbrook is a better understanding of human nature...I think that will serve me exponentially in my future endeavors. Understanding why and how people interact the way they do can lead to success in any passion."



*Ben W.  
Ashbrook Scholar*

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR FRIENDS FOR SUPPORTING THESE NAMED SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ASHBROOK SCHOLARS

Bob and Jan Archer • Duane O. and Penelope J. Boyer • Paul and Gwyneth Hoff and Lewis and Margaret Stranahan-Gibson  
James Harold and Mabel Read • Peter W. Schramm • Louise and Edward S. Young • Lt. Colonel Joseph K. Griffith  
Rebecca Humrichouser • Timken Company

# THE JOY OF DISCOVERY

Ashbrook programs are effective because they account for the human inclination for discovery. Rather than telling students what to think, Ashbrook professors invite them to form their own thoughts and come to their own conclusions. As young minds discover their own capabilities, they actively seek an education rather than passively receive it. As one student told us, "Once you have a taste of freedom, you can't let it go."

The result is not just better-informed citizens but citizens who joyfully take up the mantle as curious and devoted Americans.

**ASHBROOK  
120 SCHOLARS  
FROM 13 STATES**



# HILDA E. BRETZLAFF ASHBROOK ACADEMY

## Restoring Proper Pride in America.

The Hilda E. Bretzlaff Ashbrook Academy is a summer program designed for rising high school students who share a deep interest in U.S. history, politics, and economics. Unlike other programs that tend to erode confidence and pride in our country by emphasizing its historical failures, the Academy invites students to consider the American experiment in self-government as a triumph, a victory for the principles of freedom that warrants grateful celebration but also demands serious study.

The Academy began with a single course in 2015 and grew to five courses this summer:

Telling America's Story

Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War

Self-Government and Commerce in the Founding Era

The Supreme Court and the Constitution

World War II

**NEW THIS  
SUMMER!**

“The discussion, the critical thinking, the philosophy...considering questions that we don't always know the answers to. The Academy makes you a better person.”

**SENOU K., PHOENIX, AZ**

## SPECIAL THANKS TO

Hilda E. Bretzlaff Foundation • Dick and Ronda Poorbaugh

## Student Highlight: Senou K.

Senou K. from Phoenix, Arizona, wasn't sure what to expect when he arrived in rural Ohio for the “Supreme Court and the Constitution” session of the Academy.

Senou was pleasantly surprised to find himself quickly drawn into lively debate about Court opinions. The only classes Senou had known before his Ashbrook experience were lecture-style and heavily text-book-based. “Being able to interact with professors directly and have a conversation was a big change for me,” he said.

After getting a taste of what study rooted in primary documents and conversation was like, Senou didn't want to go home. “I need this!” he said. “The discussion, the critical thinking, the philosophy... considering questions that we don't always know the answers to. The Academy makes you a better person.”

# DISCOVERING DEVOTION FOR AMERICA

American patriotism is on the decline, especially among young people. It's no wonder when they are so often told that America is an unjust country and that they should be ashamed, not proud, to be an American.

The truth is that we don't preserve what we don't love. To save America, Americans must learn why their country deserves their love.

Academy students illustrate that this is not just possible but that a great hunger exists for it. After one week with Ashbrook, these 16, 17, and 18-year-olds begin saying things like, “I'm going home more American,” or “This solidified for me that America is truly the best place on Earth.”

These young people were not persuaded to say these things because they were told it was so. They discovered it for themselves.

Riley O. from Utah and Lanie M. from Pennsylvania in the “Telling America's Story” Ashbrook Academy session.

**115 STUDENTS  
FROM 27 STATES**

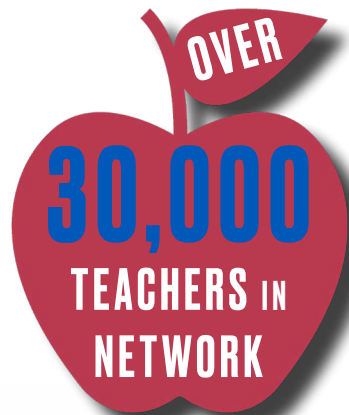


# TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROGRAMS

## Reaching the Young Through Those Who Teach the Young.

Teaching American History programs help teachers deepen their understanding of American history and civics and engage their students in thoughtful conversations about the enduring questions of American history. Students not only learn the subject but also begin making their own judgements about the testimony of the past. In so doing, they learn to think for themselves and develop the habits necessary for self-government.

One teacher can reach up to 5,000 students over the course of their career. Teaching American History programs have a multiplier effect reaching students in classrooms across the country.



## Teacher Spotlight: Brian M.

Brian M., a history and government teacher in Michigan, proudly calls himself a “history nerd.” Part of his mission in teaching, as he sees it, is to inspire similar passion in his students.

It’s often an uphill battle, with “few students entering the classroom caring deeply about U.S. history and government,” according to Brian. More often, students deride social studies in favor of STEM subjects. Brian sees a crisis in this. “If we don’t have a knowledgeable electorate, nothing else really matters.”

Brian is currently earning his Master’s degree from Ashbrook, which has helped him do his part in solving the crisis. He’s learned to approach students with the respect due to American citizens, which they enthusiastically respond to. In class, he models healthy, good-natured disagreement. As his students begin to open up about their own views, he challenges them. “No matter what side of an argument you guys take, I will take the opposite side, even if it’s not my real opinion. Get ready to defend yourselves, to push back against me.”

How will Americans recover the common ground they need to share in self-government? They need the experience of honest and fruitful debate. “It has to come through education,” Milliron says.



## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR FRIENDS FOR SUPPORTING THESE NAMED FELLOWSHIPS

- Allegheny Foundation
- Roger L. Beckett
- Jim and Maureen Buchwald
- Ellen Campbell
- Pearl J. Compaan
- Suzanne Danforth
- Kurt and Lois Freeman
- Herrick Foundation
- Robert A. and Elizabeth B. Hoffman
- Richard and Jacqueline Lombardi
- Philip M. McKenna Foundation
- The McMaster Family Foundation
- Arthur N. Rupe Foundation
- John and Barbara Walter



# CLASSROOM RESOURCES

## America's True Story.

No one can learn what is right and good about America without reference to the best that has been thought and done in America. That's why Ashbrook offers numerous resources to support classroom conversation on the most important documents, issues, events, ideas, and people in American history and civics.

We offer:

- ✈ Core Documents volumes
- ✈ Over 100 archived webinars
- ✈ “We the Teachers” podcast
- ✈ TeachingAmericanHistory.org (TAH.org),

which includes:

- ➔ Online Library of over 2,600 primary source documents
- ➔ Multimedia Exhibits in American History and Government

## “Wading into the Complexities of Human Experience”

Teaching American history, especially teaching sensitive topics like slavery, is a difficult task in today's world. While some people may ignore slavery or minimize its terrible consequences, many others say that our nation was founded on slavery. Most of the ready-made resources teachers use—textbooks and popular lesson plans—present one simplified view or the other.

There is a better way. Using historical documents, teachers can help students see the complex truth that America was founded on principles of equality and freedom and that the history of America is the story of our struggle to live up to those principles. Vince B., a teacher in Indiana, learned this approach studying with Ashbrook and now uses it with his students.

“I try to get them to wade into the complexities of the human experience,” he says. At first glance, students—like textbooks—cannot take figures like Thomas Jefferson seriously. Vince invites students to put aside their preconceived notions and read Jefferson's writings. When they do, students discover that even though Jefferson was a slaveholder, he was tormented by his part in slavery, and even went so far as to denounce the institution in his first draft of the Declaration of Independence. As students wrestle with Jefferson's writings, they start to see that “I'm a flawed individual, just like the person I'm reading about.” Knowing this, most students will realize they can admire Jefferson's accomplishments and abhor slavery at the same time.

“The great value of exposing the whole story, warts and all, is that it gives us a credible account, one we can see ourselves in,” Vince said. “That's how we come to see our own shortcomings and think about how to correct them.”



5

NEW

CORE

DOCUMENTS

VOLUMES

1.8 MILLION  
VISITORS TO  
TAH.ORG



# CITIZEN PROGRAMS

## Events that Educate and Inspire.

Being an American citizen requires vigilance, attention to the issues of the day, and ongoing education in the principles of our nation. For over 35 years, Ashbrook's citizen programs have been an important resource for Americans striving to be better informed. During the past academic year, Ashbrook focused on making these programs accessible to all citizens, wherever they reside.

Through webinars, the Major Issues Lecture Series, and a new podcast called The American Idea, we are pleased to report that citizens from all 50 states participated.



Mollie Hemingway  
participating in  
The American Idea Podcast

## The American Idea Podcast.



Launched in July 2021, The American Idea is a podcast hosted by Executive Director Jeff Sikkenga that explores America's Founding principles and their effect on American history and government. Through lively and thoughtful conversations with

renowned academics and public figures, the podcast examines the history and political thought behind our country's greatest documents and debates, as well as popular culture and political statesmanship.

As of October 2021, over 25,000 individuals had downloaded the podcast and over 1,300 subscribed. Two especially popular episodes were a special conversation with Fox News Contributor Mollie Hemingway and a conversation on Frederick Douglass with Professor Lucas Morel.

# CITIZEN EVENTS

September 17, 2020

## A REPUBLIC, IF WE CAN KEEP IT: A CONSTITUTION DAY CONVERSATION

Congressman Jim Jordan, Ohio's 4th District

October 28, 2020

## THE ELECTIONS OF 2020

Jim Ceaser, Professor of Politics at the University of Virginia

December 2, 2020

## SOLVING OUR CIVICS CRISIS: COMMONSENSE SOLUTIONS THAT CAN SAVE OUR COUNTRY

David Davenport, Senior Fellow at Ashbrook Center;  
Research Fellow at Hoover Institution

December 7, 2020

## DAY OF INFAMY: WHY JAPAN ATTACKED PEARL HARBOR AND WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM IT

John Moser, Professor of History at Ashland University

January 18, 2021

## FREDERICK DOUGLASS'S AMERICAN IDENTITY POLITICS

Peter Myers, Professor of Political Science at University of Wisconsin

January 27, 2021

## VIRGINIA DYNASTY: FOUR PRESIDENTS AND THE CREATION OF THE AMERICAN NATION

Lynne Cheney, best-selling author and former Second Lady

February 15, 2021

## WHAT MADE ABRAHAM LINCOLN A GREAT PRESIDENT?

Lucas Morel, Professor of Politics at Washington and Lee University

March 17, 2021

## IF MEN WERE ANGELS: JAMES MADISON'S DEFENSE OF THE CONSTITUTION

Chris Burkett, Professor of Political Science at Ashland University

April 21, 2021

## TRUMAN AND THE DECISION TO DROP THE ATOMIC BOMB

John Moser, Professor of History at Ashland University

May 5, 2021

## FALSE, SCANDALOUS, AND MALICIOUS: FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS OF THE ALIEN AND SEDITION ACTS

Cara Rogers, Professor of History at Ashland University  
Christopher Riano, Executive Director at the Center for Civic Education

May 12, 2021

## A HOUSE DIVIDED: THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS OF THE CIVIL WAR

Lucas Morel, Professor of Politics at Washington and Lee University  
Jason Stevens, Professor of Political Science and History at Ashland University

May 19, 2021

## TEAR DOWN THIS WALL! REFLECTIONS FROM RONALD REAGAN'S SPEECHWRITER

Peter Robinson, Fellow at Hoover Institution and Author of the  
Speech at the Brandenburg Gate

May 26, 2021

## A SWITCH IN TIME SAVE NINE: FDR, THE SUPREME COURT, AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS OF THE NEW DEAL

Anthony Kreis, Professor of Law at Georgia State University College of Law  
Chris Burkett, Professor of Political Science at Ashland University



# ASHBROOK'S NATIONAL REACH

Ashbrook is the national leader in civic education. The Ashbrook brand continues to expand and is becoming a household name for those who care about education in America's history and Founding principles.



Appeared in **114** publications,  
up **185%** over last 3 years

San Francisco Chronicle

WASHINGTON  
**Examiner**

The Washington Times

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Chicago Tribune

HOUSTON  CHRONICLE

Newsday

## ASHBROOK CONTENT IN:

**44** STATES AND DC

**9** OUT OF **20** LARGEST U.S. NEWSPAPERS

**18** OF THE **25** LARGEST METRO AREAS

Appeared  
in an average of **86**  
newspapers each  
month

## In the Spirit of 76

### Leading a Second American Revolution.

It took a revolution to build this country. It will take nothing short of an educational revolution to keep it.

Since 2020, Ashbrook has been rapidly expanding our teacher programs in an effort to recruit, educate, equip, nurture, and sustain a transforming corps of 45,000 teachers.

Our strategy is to reach the young through those who teach the young. Consider that just one teacher can teach up to 5,000 students over the course of his or her career and you get an idea of the opportunity for exponential growth.

**WATCH FOR INFORMATION IN THE MONTHS AHEAD  
ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP CHANGE THE  
DIRECTION OUR COUNTRY IS HEADING AND  
REIGNITE THE SPIRIT OF '76!**





# FRIENDS OF ASHBROOK

## A Loyal Band of Patriots.

Our Ashbrook family is growing! The last academic year saw a 62% increase in the number of supporters—and supporters from all 50 states!

Thank you!

Just as the American Revolution was won by a loyal and generous band of patriots, so too we will win a second American Revolution in our classrooms.



## Supporter Highlight: Sam and Rita Hathorn

When Sam and Rita Hathorn discovered Ashbrook shortly before the 2012 general election, like many they were very concerned about the future of our country. Growing up in the early years of the Cold War, they never witnessed the sort of disdain for America that was becoming common. Sam and Rita looked at the world their grandchildren were growing up in and wanted to do something about it. So they began supporting Ashbrook. Over the last decade, they have helped thousands of teachers and students to discover why they ought to love their country.

Sam and Rita believe they are simply doing their part in preserving the America that was so good to them. Growing up together in Southern California, they never questioned the promise of freedom and opportunity their country offered. They eventually relocated to Houston, where Sam's homebuilding business took them, and raised their family. Sam retired in 2007. These days they enjoy spending time with grandchildren, and before COVID, traveling the world.

The Hathorns find hope in the knowledge that the principles of our Founding are alive and well in Ashbrook programs across the nation. They are grateful to know that their grandchildren have the opportunity to "learn what is great about America."

# DIRECTORS CLUB

Ashbrook's Director's Club provides our most dedicated supporters with an opportunity to be part of a group of like-minded individuals who share a deep affection for our country while offering them exclusive benefits.

## Director's Club Basic Membership - \$1,000

- ✦ Invitation to the Director's Club Weekend and other special events
- ✦ Director's Club Report
- ✦ A free Core Documents volume with initial membership and annually at renewal

## 1983 Society - \$1,983

*Includes all Basic Membership Benefits, plus*

- ✦ Exclusive Ashbrook insulated travel mug (YETI)

## Citizen Society - \$5,000

*Includes all 1983 Society Benefits, plus*

- ✦ Opportunity to invite a friend or acquaintance to the Director's Club Weekend
- ✦ Books autographed by distinguished authors

## Patriot Society - \$10,000

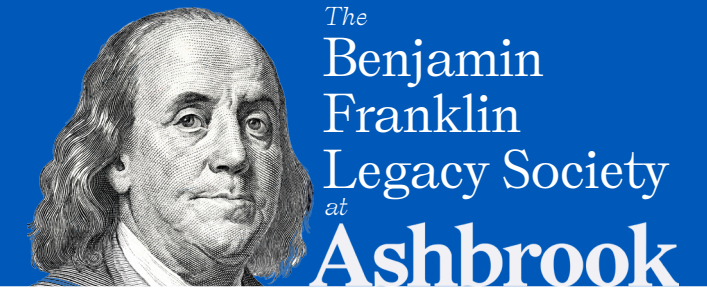
*Includes all Citizen Society Benefits, plus*

- ✦ Complimentary registration to the Director's Club Weekend

## Statesman Society - \$25,000+

*Includes all Patriot Society Benefits, plus*

- ✦ A full set of the published Core Documents volumes
- ✦ Invitations to exclusive events during the Director's Club Weekend
- ✦ Ashbrook Statesman lapel pin



Become a member of the Benjamin Franklin Legacy Society by making a commitment to the Ashbrook Center in your will. You will leave a legacy of freedom that reflects your life, your beliefs, and the things you hold dear. For more information, call (419) 289-5411 or email [info@ashbrook.org](mailto:info@ashbrook.org).



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\$25,000+

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“It’s the best possible feeling in the world to know that someone out there wants me to learn how to think, not what to think.

Someone out there wants me to walk away from this a different person than I was when I walked into it.”

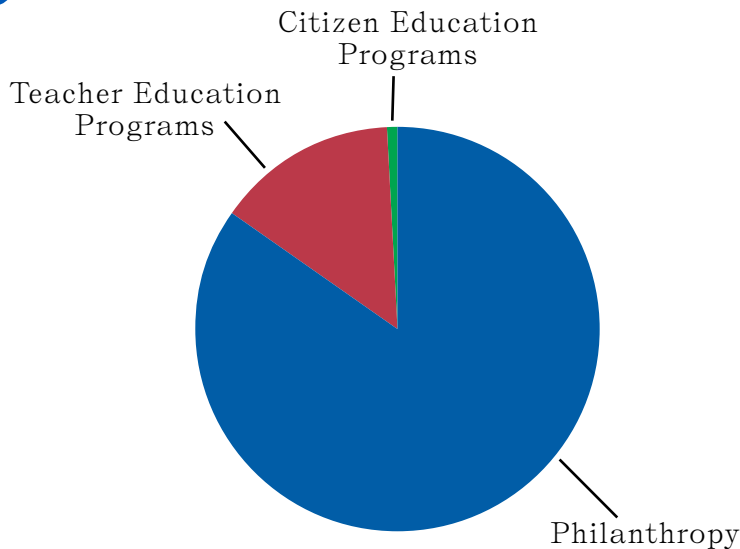
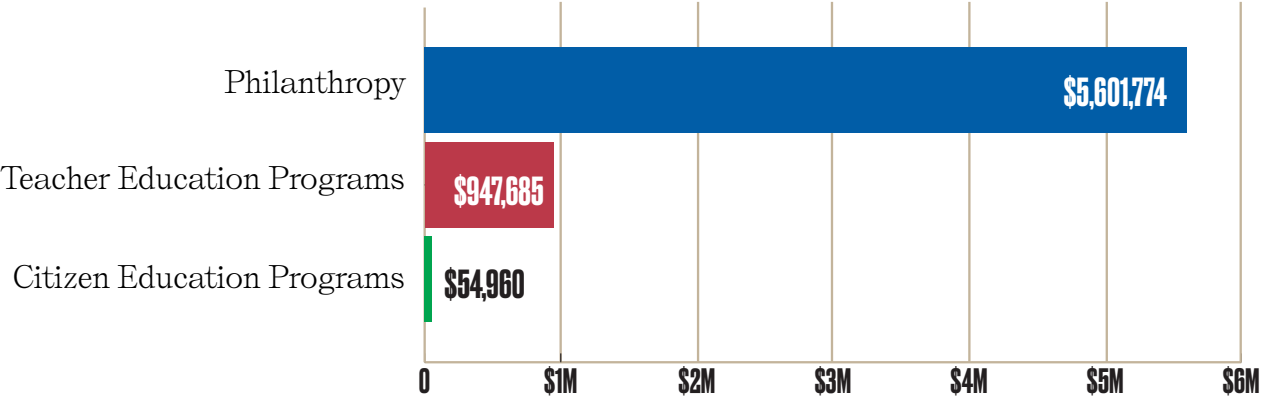
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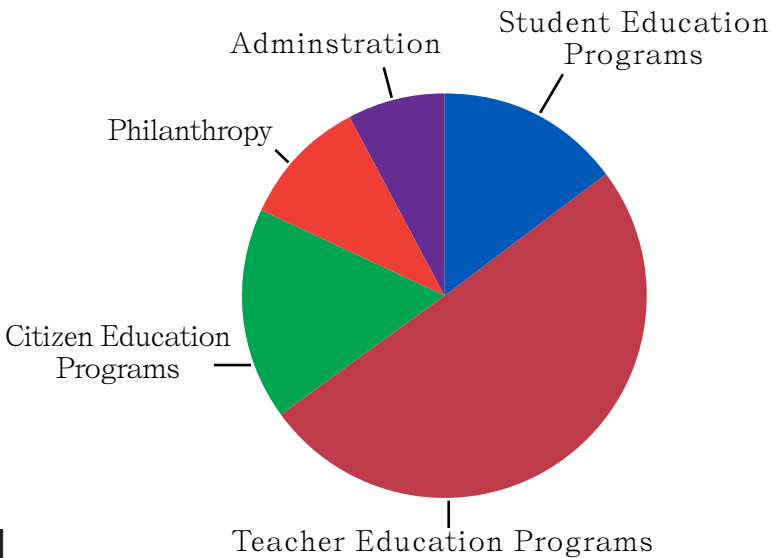
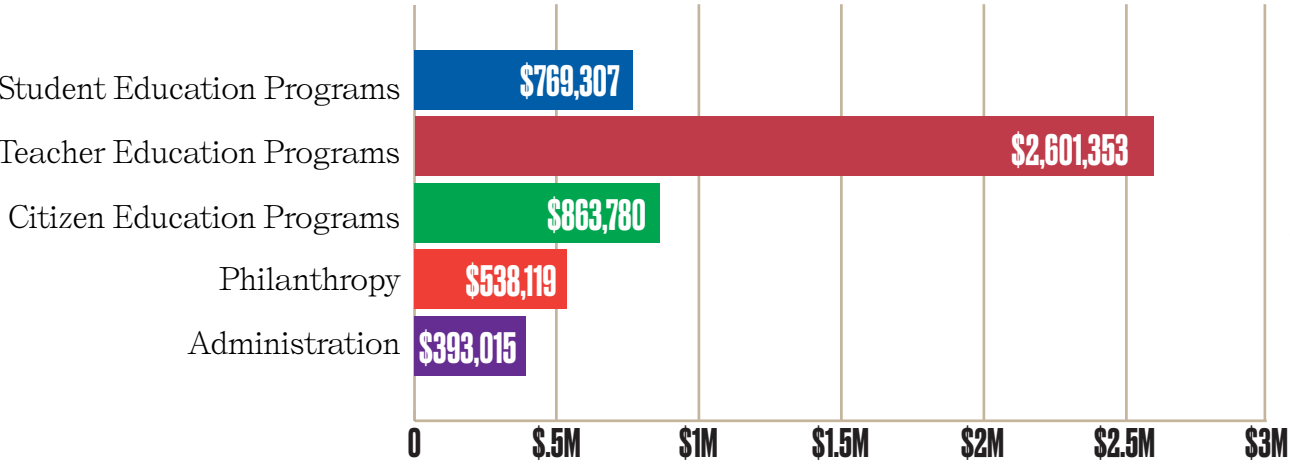


# FINANCIALS

## Revenue



## Expenses



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52 VISITING GRADUATE FACULTY FROM COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE NATION





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