

Dr. Gordon S. Wood  
ACTA's 25<sup>th</sup> *Plus One* Anniversary



ACTA

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF  
TRUSTEES AND ALUMNI

**PHILIP MERRILL AWARD**  
for Outstanding Contributions to  
Liberal Arts Education



ACTA

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF  
TRUSTEES AND ALUMNI

2021  
ANNUAL REPORT



The **American Council of Trustees and Alumni** is an independent, nonprofit organization committed to promoting **academic freedom, excellence, and accountability** at America's colleges and universities. Founded in 1995, ACTA works with alumni, trustees, and education leaders across the country to support liberal arts education, uphold high academic standards, safeguard the free exchange of ideas on campus, and ensure that the next generation receives an intellectually rich, high-quality education at an affordable price.

“The goal from day one was always to achieve a change on the ground. Change that will benefit the students, benefit the faculty, benefit the intellectual life of academe.

—**Jerry L. Martin**, Founding President  
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## IN MEMORIAM

In 2021, we bid farewell to some very  
special supporters and friends.

Donald Kagan

Carl Menges

Albert Oettinger, Jr.

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## ACTA's Three A's

### Academic Freedom

Help institutions preserve and foster a campus culture that champions intellectual diversity, open inquiry, and the free expression of ideas.

### Academic Excellence

Work with colleges and universities to promote high academic standards and rigorous liberal arts curricula that prepare students for the challenges of career and informed citizenship.

### Accountability

Empower trustees and higher education leaders to advance accountability at colleges and universities through increased engagement on issues of quality and cost.



# FROM THE PRESIDENT

“Never give in. Never, never, never, never—in nothing, great or small, large or petty—never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense.” That is the wisdom Winston Churchill delivered in days yet darker than our own. At a time when ignorance or worse has too often replaced the consciousness of what it means to be an American, when too many dismiss the pride we should feel in our nation and its history and its hard-won freedoms, we need that infusion of courage and resolve. This is no time for irresolute college governance. Higher education must—urgently—rise to the challenge.

We see the inevitable damage that an education short on the history of our nation and steeped in identity politics and cancel culture has wrought. The laudable, very American efforts to create a more perfect union and to combat the lingering stains of racism founder when the free exchange of ideas becomes a target of misplaced rage, rather than a forum to solve problems.

The way forward has never been clearer, and I am proud of the role ACTA has played in developing and implementing effective solutions.

“*The laudable, very American efforts to create a more perfect union and to combat the lingering stains of racism founder when the free exchange of ideas becomes a target of misplaced rage, rather than a forum to solve problems.*”

ACTA has not only warned about the rising level of civic ignorance and documented it, but we have worked successfully to reverse it. This past year, we advised the Arizona Board of Regents, which has now established a detailed requirement for all undergraduates at the state’s public universities, ensuring that they will know the documents of the American Founding and their enduring significance. We advised the state legislature of South Carolina in its long work to pass the REACH Act, which now requires a robust course in the fundamentals of America’s history for all students at South Carolina’s public universities. In Florida, we defended the strong civic education requirements at its state universities in a successful court motion. Our hearts soared when we heard Tennessee Governor Bill Lee call for a new Institute of American Civics at the University of Tennessee to advance informed patriotism. There are more challenges ahead in the task to remedy civic ignorance, but I can promise you that ACTA will be there.

And we will be there, resolute, to defend freedom of speech and freedom of thought on campus. This past autumn, we joined in partnership with the new Alumni Free Speech Alliance, a growing consortium of campus alumni groups intent on infusing their love of free speech into their relationship with their alma maters. Some are joining in ACTA’s Donor Revolution, keeping their hearts open but their wallets shut until their beloved colleges return to first principles of intellectual diversity and open discourse. ACTA is proud to be at their side, conducting surveys to alert campus administrations to the discontent in their donor base and student body and using our



Robert Zimmer, Catherine Merrill, Michael Poliakoff, and Gordon Wood celebrate Professor Wood's acceptance of the Philip Merrill Award and ACTA's 25<sup>th</sup> Plus One Anniversary at the Library of Congress.

media reach to inform the public. Our Fund for Academic Renewal, so generously supported by the Diana Davis Spencer Foundation, has now advised on over \$178 million in philanthropy, helping donors to stop writing blank checks that feed the worst in higher education and instead target their gifts to meaningful projects that advance their values and vision.

At the same time that we are working with alumni, trustees, and administrators to protect free speech at colleges and universities, our campus debate program—a partnership with Braver Angels and BridgeUSA—is changing campus culture for the better. We will not rest until students believe with all their hearts that “deplatforming” or “canceling” a speaker is an unthinkable violation of academic ethics. Since its inception in 2018, our program has run over 80 campus and classroom debates engaging more than 3,400 students. We have now worked directly with over 47 institutions. We intend to build this program to be much, much larger.

Civic ignorance and cancel culture are an unholy alliance. Intolerance of viewpoints that diverge from campus orthodoxy flourishes when students are oblivious to the commitment of our nation's own Founders to the widest range of political and religious opinion. Students ignorant of the role that free speech and a free press played in the civil

rights movement readily become part of the woke Twitter mobs that rip at the fabric of the academy and the nation.

We are, therefore, fighting back on every front.

Civic ignorance and cancel culture feed on poor governance and wasteful spending on administrative offices, intrusive campus life offices, and abusive “DEI” (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) programs. So this year, we published another hard-hitting report called *The Cost of Excess*, a massive regression analysis that shows how spending on administration and student services does next to nothing to boost student achievement and inevitably raises the cost of going to college.

The hour is late to repair decades of damage. But ACTA's staff has grown, and its reach and impact have grown. And our gratitude to you, our supporters, grows higher and higher, as we join together to rebuild and restore and ensure that our colleges and universities will be the engine of America's economic and civil progress and its more perfect union.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael B. Poliakoff".

Michael B. Poliakoff  
President



# ACADEMIC FREEDOM

In 2021, ACTA lifted its voice to defend the unencumbered, free exchange of ideas on campus and to inspire students, faculty, and college leaders to speak up against restrictive speech codes and ideological coercion. We have worked hard to bring public attention to threats to academic freedom on campus, and our work is bearing fruit.

## Mobilizing Alumni

ACTA was founded 26 years ago as the National Alumni Forum, whose mission it was to give voice to alumni across the country who were concerned about the future of American higher education. Even as our mission grew to include college trustees, we have consistently called on alumni to advocate for the values that once made American higher education the envy of the world.

In 2021, ACTA joined a movement of alumni who are leveraging their influence and their donations to compel their alma maters to protect free speech, foster the free exchange of ideas, and promote viewpoint diversity. We provided our decades of experience in higher education reform to support the newly formed **Alumni Free Speech Alliance (AFSA)**—founded by **Stuart Taylor, Jr.**, a member of ACTA's Board of Directors, and **Edward Yingling**, former president of the American Bankers Association—which seeks to unite alumni from colleges around the country to advocate for change. The movement has since grown to include 12 alumni groups, and AFSA is working to connect alumni at more than 60 additional colleges and universities.

ACTA has stepped up to empower these alumni groups with the resources and tools they need so that they can put direct pressure on college leaders to take action to protect free speech. In collaboration with AFSA, we developed plans for an annual summit of alumni leaders, and in February 2022, we held the first ever Alumni Summit on Free Expression in Washington, DC. At the conference, over 50 alumni leaders from across the country learned tactics for forming their own groups on campus as well as strategies for making their demands known to college leaders. **Nadine Strossen**, former president of the American Civil Liberties Union, spoke to attendees about why free speech is an indispensable principle for every university. **Samantha Harris**—attorney at Allen Harris Law and former director of policy research at the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education—detailed the extent to which censorship and suppression of heterodox opinions afflict colleges and universities today. And **Jonathan Rauch**, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, spoke to attendees about what it will take to resist the erosion of free speech.

### A Donor Revolution

ACTA is providing individualized assistance to a number of alumni on particular campuses. In November 2021, ACTA

assisted Davidsonians for Freedom of Thought and Discourse by developing a survey of major alumni donors to Davidson College, as well as a survey of current Davidson students. A majority of donors said the campus is ideologically imbalanced, and students reported high levels of self-censorship. Both alumni and students strongly supported the proposal that the school adopt the Chicago Principles on Freedom of Expression. We believe our finding that many Davidson alumni expect their giving to cease or decline if the college does not change course will have a powerful effect on the decisions of the administration, especially as the school searches for a new president. There are hopeful signs: In the fall, President Carol Quillen commissioned a working group of alumni, faculty, and students to draft a statement affirming Davidson's commitment to free speech and open inquiry.

Through our **Fund for Academic Renewal (FAR)**, ACTA is guiding alumni away from writing blank checks and is helping alumni donors make thoughtful, targeted gifts to uphold high academic standards and protect academic freedom. In 2021, FAR advised donors on \$75 million in gifts to colleges and universities, and we have guided a total of \$178 million in gifts to higher education since 2016. FAR encourages donors to look beyond their alma maters to give to institutions that truly support the free exchange of ideas. We have helped alumni across the country include safeguards for free speech in their gift agreements and encourage their alma maters to adopt the Chicago Principles on Freedom of Expression. With FAR's assistance, donors have also used their gifts to establish academic centers that advance free inquiry and introduce students to viewpoints from across the political and ideological spectrum.

## Fighting Cancel Culture

ACTA's work ensures that the pervasiveness of "cancel culture" on college and university campuses can no longer be ignored. ACTA is laboring to make higher education once again a place where students and faculty can discuss and debate even the most controversial issues in a spirit of openness, unafraid of censorship or punishment.

This year, ACTA produced two new publications to help alumni and education stakeholders better understand how to foster a culture of free expression. In January 2021, we published **Resisting Cancel Culture: Promoting Dialogue, Debate, and Free Speech in the College Classroom** by Nadine Strossen. Ms. Strossen explains how important campus values like equality and inclusivity are especially dependent upon robust free speech rights and are particularly endangered by speech restrictions. In September, ACTA published a companion piece, **Building a Culture of Free Expression in the Online Classroom**.



John Tomasi, Heterodox Academy; Ken Wolf and Carl Neuss, Cornell Free Speech Alliance (CFSA); Michael Poliakoff, ACTA; Nadine Strossen; Bob Platt and William Jacobson, CFSA; Tom Rideout, Washington & Lee University; Joanne Florino and Vivek Mathew, CFSA.

## ALUMNI SUMMIT ON FREE EXPRESSION

In partnership with the newly formed Alumni Free Speech Alliance, ACTA held the first ever Alumni Summit on Free Expression in Washington, DC.

**50+**

alumni leaders attended  
from institutions representing

**132,060**  
students.

### Participating institutions included:


Bucknell University  
Cornell University  
Davidson College  
Duke University  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Princeton University  
University of North Carolina  
University of Virginia  
Virginia Military Institute  
Washington & Lee University  
Wofford University  
Yale University



Braver Angels Bridge ACTA


## SHOULD COLLEGE CAMPUSES DISINVITE SPEAKERS WHOSE IDEAS CAN BE CONSTRUED AS "CANCELLABLE"?

A Braver Angels student debate at Duke University  
Sponsored by Polis - Center for Politics



When: Wednesday, April 6 at 6pm Eastern  
Location: Sanford 04

Registration link:  
<https://braver-angels-duke-debate-4-6-22.eventbrite.com>



To sign up for this free debate, use the QR code on this flyer.

Through ACTA's parliamentary-style college debates, in collaboration with Braver Angels and BridgeUSA, students are transforming their campus environments, replacing shoutdowns, disinvitations, and trigger warnings with open inquiry, civil discourse, and partnership across political divides.

## TO DATE, WE HAVE HOSTED

**80+**  
debates with

**3,400**  
student participants from

**47**  
different institutions across  
the country.

Featuring recommendations from eight distinguished scholars, this guide outlines how to preserve the classroom as a haven for rigorous and free academic discourse.

### Hosting College Debates Nationwide

In 2021, ACTA's **College Debates and Discourse Program**, conducted in collaboration with **Braver Angels** and the student group **BridgeUSA**, entered its third year of operation. This program is having an awe-inspiring impact on college campuses across the country, helping to dismantle cancel culture and build a culture of free expression. Through our events, students are transforming their campus environments, replacing shoutdowns, disinvitations, and trigger warnings with open inquiry, civil discourse, and partnership across political divides.

To date, ACTA has conducted debates at 47 different institutions across the country, both in-person and virtually. In these parliamentary-style debates, students examine issues that are typically very divisive, coming away with a greater appreciation for their ideological opponents and even with new friendships. We have conducted 80 debates with 3,400 student participants, and we are working harder than ever to extend this program to every campus in the nation. In the past year, we created a Curricular Toolkit that enables faculty to integrate our debate methodology into their curricula. Many professors have already begun implementing our program in their classrooms.

### Defending Faculty

Cancel culture is not only a threat to students, but also to faculty. ACTA speaks out in the news media and calls on university presidents and trustee boards to protect the free speech rights of professors and all members of the campus community.

In 2021, the Cornell University Faculty Senate at the behest of the university president proposed the creation of mandatory training modules for professors in "structural racism, colonialism, and injustice," with significant sanctions for those who do not participate, including barring faculty from serving on search committees, advising students, or becoming involved in student activities. ACTA immediately began a campaign to reverse this serious violation of the faculty's intellectual freedom. We wrote to the Faculty Senate, the Cornell Board of Trustees, and Cornell University President Martha Pollack, pointing out the proposal's grave flaws and urging the institution to change course. ACTA President Michael Poliakoff published a widely read article on the issue in *Newsweek*, entitled "Campus Ideology's Slippery Slope." We sent copies of the piece to members of Cornell's Board of Trustees

and all of the Cornell alumni in the ACTA database. As a result of our efforts, a plurality of faculty senators rejected the proposal or abstained from the vote, and the radical plans stalled.

Through our **Hero of Intellectual Freedom** award, ACTA honors members of the academic community who speak out against groupthink and defend viewpoint diversity when others remain silent. This year, we gave our prestigious Hero of Intellectual Freedom award to **Jodi Shaw**, a former student support coordinator in the Department of Residence Life at Smith College; she resigned from her position after undertaking exhaustive efforts to stop the school's enforcement of humiliating diversity training and aggressively racialized sensitivity training. We also recognized **Dorian Abbot**, associate professor in the Department of the Geophysical Sciences at the University of Chicago, who was disinvited from giving the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's prestigious John Carlson Lecture because he challenged the academy's privileging of diversity,

instead of individual merit, in faculty hiring and in student admissions decisions.

### Providing Guidance to Lawmakers

ACTA is fighting cancel culture on the state and federal levels, too. We help lawmakers craft policies that encourage viewpoint diversity and protect academic freedom on campus. This summer, ACTA provided our guidance to U.S. Representative Greg Murphy as his office drafted and introduced new legislation, H.R. 4007, the Campus Free Speech Restoration Act. The bill will require public and private universities to report violations of the First Amendment to the Department of Education and share their campus policies on free speech with the public. Failure to do so will result in losing Title IV funding. ACTA also counseled Arkansas State Senator Dan Sullivan on legislation to protect freedom of speech at Arkansas's colleges and universities.

“*Social psychology studies show that we humans are very susceptible to peer pressure, but they also show that even one person daring to voice a different view can have a galvanizing and rippling impact, transmitting to others the courage to do likewise. Which is where all of you brave souls in ACTA and AFSA come in and why your efforts are so essential. To paraphrase our national anthem, we cannot be the land of the free unless we are indeed the home of the brave.*

—**Nadine Strossen**, John Marshall Harlan II Professor of Law Emerita, New York Law School; former president, American Civil Liberties Union, 1991–2008

## ACTA'S 2021 HEROES OF INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM



**Jodi Shaw** resigned from her position in student services at Smith College over her objections to the school's enforcement of humiliating diversity training and racialized sensitivity training.



University of Chicago Professor **Dorian Abbot** was disinvited from giving a prestigious lecture at MIT because he published an op-ed in *Newsweek* challenging hiring and admissions practices based on diversity rather than merit.



UC–Davis Professor **Abigail Thompson** was vilified for publishing an op-ed in the *Wall Street Journal* that exposed her institution's privileging of diversity statements in faculty hiring. She received her award at ACTA's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.



# ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

ACTA's mission to ensure that America's colleges and universities live up to their promise to prepare students for career and citizenship has never been more important. With massive upheavals in the workplace brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and the difficult political and social questions that face our country today, students must be better equipped than ever before for the challenges and innovations that lie ahead.

## Driving Civic Education Reform

The health of our democracy depends on robust civic literacy, but study after study in the past quarter century demonstrate that college graduates have never known less about their country. ACTA believes that our nation's college students must graduate with a foundational understanding of the principles, values, and institutions that shape this country. Only then can we renew a sense of common purpose and heal our deep societal divisions.

ACTA urges lawmakers, college trustees, and university administrators to fulfill this fundamental duty by insisting that intensive, wide-ranging study of American history—including the basic principles of our democracy, the Constitution, and essential Founding documents—is included in the history major and in the core curriculum.

In November, ACTA published an updated version of our 2016 report **No U.S. History? How College History Departments Leave the United States out of the Major**. This groundbreaking research survey documents the alarming decline of the history program at 75 top colleges and universities, going back to 1952. The report received widespread media attention and is raising awareness of what is not being taught in history departments. We found that of the top 25 national universities,

only one, the University of California–Berkeley, requires history majors to complete a wide-ranging course in U.S. history. Just four of the top 25 public universities require a foundational course in U.S. history, and only three of the top 25 liberal arts colleges do so.

## Making Progress in the States

We are energetically helping higher education stakeholders to rebuild strong civic education programs. ACTA's work with state legislatures and university leaders in Arizona, Florida, and South Carolina has helped to ensure that tens of thousands of college students will now be required to take a solid, fundamental course in U.S. history or government.

In February, ACTA helped the **Arizona Board of Regents** pass a revision to its general education policy. The new revision mandates as a condition of graduation from its state universities that students complete a foundational course in U.S. history focused on the principles of American constitutional democracy, Founding documents, landmark Supreme Court cases, and civic responsibility. The policy will affect 105,000 students. ACTA provided the expertise to help craft the language of the revision. We also conducted assessments of each state university's general education program and detailed how the new policy will affect their ratings in ACTA's annual **What Will They Learn?** report.

Also in 2021, the **South Carolina Legislature** approved S. 38, the Reinforcing College Education on America’s Constitutional Heritage (REACH) Act, legislation that ACTA promoted for several years, until it finally passed. The bill instructs all public higher education institutions to require at least three courses in American history or government as a condition of graduation.

In 2020, ACTA successfully petitioned the Administrative Hearings Division to prevent the Florida Department of Education from weakening the state’s mandated civic education requirement. We are proud to announce that in 2021, the **Florida Legislature** passed a law that will require all students in the state’s school system—including both K-12 and higher education—to complete a three-semester-hour course in American government or history and pass an exam testing their knowledge.

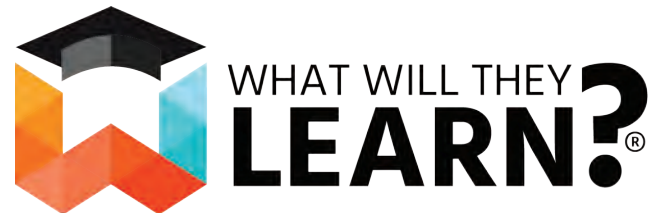
### Promoting Education for Citizenship

Students and parents must know if the schools they are considering prepare their graduates for the twenty-first century workplace, teach American heritage, and educate students for engaged and informed citizenship. For 13 years, ACTA’s **What Will They Learn?**® (WWTL) project has graded over 1,100 schools on an “A” through “F” scale based on how many of the following core subjects they require in their core curricula: Composition, Literature, (intermediate-level) Foreign Language, U.S. Government or History, Economics, Mathematics, and Natural Science. In 2021, ACTA’s work has helped 14 schools add a foundational course in U.S. government or history. Together, these institutions graduate nearly 22,000 students annually.

ACTA’s WWTL project is now a household name in the college selection space. In July, we held a conference in Austin, Texas, that drew high school college admissions counselors, headmasters, enrollment services professionals, and professors. Throughout the year, pandemic notwithstanding, we sponsored or exhibited at 13 more conferences for high school counselors and principals, classical and Christian schools, and homeschool families. We introduced attendees to the WWTL project and demonstrated how to access and use our college search website, **WhatWillTheyLearn.com**, to find out what colleges are actually teaching, in addition to other major performance indicators, including graduation rates, cost of attendance, and free speech policies.

### Depoliticizing the Classroom

The ongoing politicization of the classroom has contributed to the decline of academic quality and the coarsening of our broader public dialogue. Shared understanding—especially historical understand-



## BY THE NUMBERS

**101**

schools, representing **707,177** undergraduates, contacted ACTA about What Will They Learn?® (WWTL).

**38**

institutions improved their grade by adding a WWTL-recommended core course to their requirements.

**23,000**

trustees received customized charts comparing their institution’s core requirements with those of peer institutions.

**51,000**

high school counselors received information about WhatWillTheyLearn.com to share with their advisees.

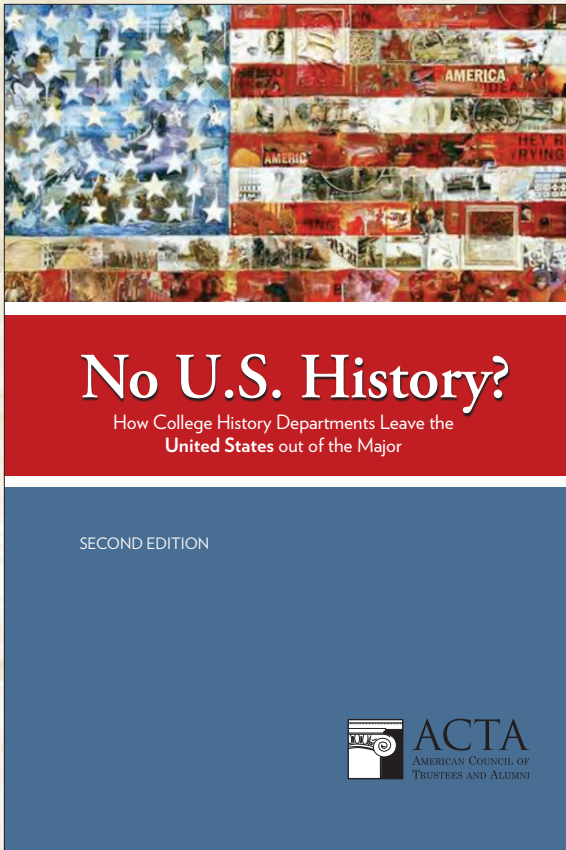
**1,976**

radio stations aired interviews with ACTA about WWTL to a listener audience of **12 million**.

**2.4 million**

user views of What Will They Learn?® drove a **91%** increase in social media traffic.

ACTA helped the **Arizona** Board of Regents, the **South Carolina** Legislature, and the **Florida** Legislature take steps to strengthen civic education.



This groundbreaking research survey documents the alarming decline of the history program at 75 top colleges and universities, going back to 1952. We found that of the top 25 national universities, **only one**, the University of California–Berkeley, requires history majors to complete a wide-ranging course in U.S. history.

“*Our failure to educate future citizens for informed participation compromises the country. Institutions need to take this new ACTA report to heart and, starting with their requirements for the history major, embrace their obligation to address the crisis, robustly in civic education.*

—David Bruce Smith, Founder, Grateful American® Foundation; Co-Founder, Grateful American® Book Prize

ing—should provide a factual basis for public debate, a common foundation around which the country can unite. In 2021, societal attitudes on race dominated the public discussion, owing in large part to the **New York Times’** controversial **1619 Project**. The project’s false claim, that Americans fought for independence from Britain to preserve the institution of slavery, ignited a debate about the founding purposes and goodness of the country. Eminent historian and ACTA’s 2021 Philip Merrill Award winner Gordon Wood signed a letter to the **New York Times** highlighting factual inaccuracies in the 1619 Project and suggesting “a displacement of historical understanding by ideology” on the part of the project’s authors.

Widespread enthusiasm for the 1619 Project on college and university campuses, in spite of historical inaccuracies, spotlights the failure of higher education to provide an environment for nuanced and fact-based discussion of important social issues—including racial inequality. 2021 was also the year that critical race theory (CRT), a disputed academic theory that emerged from law schools in the 1970s, became a household name. Its central tenant, that American institutions are “fundamentally racist,” set off debates in legislatures, board rooms, and school board meetings across the country.

At its extreme, CRT advocates (and the closely related anti-racist activists) call for radical measures including the rejection of the Western canon and the notion of objective truth, the segregation of students based on race (to teach white students to recognize their privilege and minority students about structural racism), the ostracization or cancelation of those who venture opinions out of line with the new orthodoxy, and the replacement of historical literacy as an educational objective with action civics (which prioritizes social justice advocacy). Columbia University professor and **Woke Racism** author John McWhorter likens this contemporary iteration of CRT to a religion that treats dissent as heresy—a notion that runs counter to the free exchange of ideas that is the lifeblood of a liberal education.

ACTA is pushing back against these destructive trends. In 2021, we commissioned a public opinion survey in response to an alarming proposal by the Illinois Department of Education to introduce new teaching standards that mandate a narrow political ideology in K-12 teacher licensure programs and encourage teachers to promote political activism. Our survey of Illinois residents found that central tenets of critical race theory are deeply unpopular. For example, 62% of respondents thought that “K-12 teachers should work to expose students to a variety of perspectives about the country’s founding and history, and to equip them to think critically about its successes and failures.” In contrast, just 23% thought that “K-12 teachers should embrace progressive view-

points and perspectives on U.S. history, to encourage students to advocate for social justice causes.” ACTA called on the Illinois Department of Education to withdraw its controversial proposal and keep politics out of the classroom. Numerous media outlets covered our efforts, including *Politico*, the *Washington Free Beacon*, *American Greatness*, *RealClearEducation*, *RealClearPolicy*, the *Washington Examiner*, and many Illinois-based publications.

### Providing Resources

In 2021, we started work on two exciting, new book projects: *What Every College Student Needs to Know About United States History* and *1776 or 1619: The Challenge of the American Founding*. Eminent historians including Gordon Wood, Wilfred McClay, William Allen, Colleen Sheehan, and Robert Paquette, as well as other distinguished scholars, have agreed to contribute essays to the project.

This year, we honored historian **Gordon Wood** with our 2021 Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education. The speech he delivered at ACTA’s 25<sup>th</sup> Plus One Anniversary Celebration critiques the politically motivated agenda of those who seek to diminish the importance of the American Revolution and, in his words, “the principles that it articulated—liberty, equality, and the well-being of ordinary people.”

Dr. Wood’s extraordinary remarks garnered national attention and were featured in the *Washington Post* by columnist **George Will** and in the *Wall Street Journal*. We have published the speech, entitled “1776: Out of Many, One”, and will distribute 30,000 copies to higher education leaders, policymakers, and members of the media so that all Americans can access this vibrant and accurate perspective on our nation’s past.

“*To save higher education, we have to help the college-going marketplace and policy-makers understand what schools are actually teaching (or, too often, failing to). What Will They Learn? is the only college ratings system pulling against destructive campus trends, especially the erosion of curricular standards.*

—**Murray Bessette**, Vice President of Education, Common Sense Society

## OASES OF EXCELLENCE

ACTA’s Oases of Excellence network has grown to over 70 academic centers at institutions across the country. Oases centers are dedicated to educating students for informed citizenship in a free society by teaching American heritage, introducing students to the best of the foundational arts and sciences, and ensuring free inquiry into a range of intellectual viewpoints.

At our 2021 Oases of Excellence Faculty Conference, hosted by ACTA’s Fund for Academic Renewal, Oases faculty directors participated in a series of enriching workshops that focused on how to expand opportunities for students to study the liberal arts.



Steven Frankel, Professor of Philosophy at Xavier University; Emily Jae, director of ACTA’s Fund for Academic Renewal; and Elizabeth Busch, co-director of the Center for American Studies at Christopher Newport University, present at ACTA’s annual Oases of Excellence Faculty Conference.



# ACCOUNTABILITY

ACTA has long sounded the alarm about unsustainable administrative spending, inefficient management, and exorbitant tuition costs. Students and their parents should not have to make crippling personal and financial sacrifices to afford a college education. To recover from decreasing revenues and plummeting enrollment rates in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, college trustees cannot sit on the sidelines. They must intervene, and ACTA is providing them with practical solutions.

## Taking on College Spending

ACTA's **How Colleges Spend Money** initiative aims to empower trustees with the guidance they need to rein in rising costs while prioritizing the core academic mission.

In August, ACTA released ***The Cost of Excess: Why Colleges and Universities Must Control Runaway Spending***. Experts in our Trustee & Government Affairs Department performed an extensive regression analysis of data from over 1,500 four-year institutions in the period from 2010 to 2018, revealing that colleges have continued to spend extravagantly since the Great Recession, to the detriment of affordability while doing little to benefit students. Rather than cut expenditures to make up for the decrease in revenue in the years immediately following the Recession, colleges and universities chose to charge students more, raising the price of tuition. Yet, ACTA found that extreme price hikes have not corresponded to significant improvements in graduation rates, and student debt for the average borrower has reached a jaw-dropping \$39,351.

ACTA's analysis of the correlation of spending and increases in tuition is a clarion call to trustees to apply a high level of

scrutiny to proposals for spending on administration, flashy amenities, and trendy programs. The report includes a set of recommendations for how colleges can cut spending in tandem with tuition reductions or freezes so that the "windfall" created by cuts makes its way to students, not administrative offices.

To help higher education leaders understand the implications of our research, ACTA hosted a webinar entitled "**Spending for Student Success: Effective Strategies for College Governing Boards to Control Costs**." The event featured a panel of higher education experts, including **Tom Davis**, former congressman and former rector of George Mason University; **Amy Jones**, director for education and human services policy for the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Education and the Workforce; **James Toscano**, president of Partners for College Affordability and Public Trust; **David Walsh**, former trustee of the University of Central Florida; and ACTA's own Vice President of Trustee & Government Affairs, Armand Alacbay.

### **HowCollegesSpendMoney.com**

ACTA's guidance is being used by college leaders and state and federal policymakers to bring higher education's cost

down and its quality up. To date, **93** institutions have investigated their spending practices using ACTA's HowCollegesSpendMoney.com website, which allows trustees and policymakers to access all our research on college spending. Visitors can use interactive tools to evaluate how much colleges spend on administrative and student services costs versus instructional costs, and also compare spending trends at their institutions with other schools.

## Providing Policy Solutions

In 2021, Illinois Representative Mike Murphy introduced data on graduation rates from HowCollegesSpendMoney.com in committee meetings and on the House floor. ACTA also briefed lawmakers on the How Colleges Spend Money initiative at the American Legislative Exchange Council annual meeting in 2021.

In July, ACTA President Michael Poliakoff was invited to give testimony at a hearing before the Higher Education and Workforce Investment Subcommittee in the U.S. House of Representatives. At the hearing, titled "Keeping the Pell Grant Promise: Increasing Enrollment, Supporting Success," he called on lawmakers to consider more rigorous accountability measures in the Pell Grant program and recommended that institutions that fail to graduate their Pell Grant students on time be required to pay back to the Pell program a portion of the funds they received.

Dr. Poliakoff also advocated for using proven, value-added assessments to ensure that institutions do not inflate graduation rates and performance metrics in order to receive more federal funds. He pointed to institutions like Purdue University and Arizona State University which have implemented the types of strategies ACTA recommends, using taxpayer money responsibly by decreasing administrative costs while improving the quality of instruction.

## Ranking State Performance

ACTA believes that members of the public must have access to detailed information about the way state institutions spend taxpayer money. To this end, in 2021, we launched our updated State Rankings Project. On GoACTA.org, students, parents, trustees, and lawmakers can navigate an interactive map comparing the performance of their state's public universities on five measures of cost-effectiveness and five measures of academic quality. These include such important metrics as administrative spending per student, student-to-administrator ratio, tuition as a percentage of median household income, and four-year graduation rates.



## The COST of EXCESS

Why Colleges and Universities Must Control Runaway Spending



The release of *The Cost of Excess* was covered by over 40 outlets across the country.

“*The spending habits of higher education have gotten us very poor results. We are taking a system of higher education that has been called ‘the envy of the world’ into a situation in which it seems to be engineering its own meltdown.*”

—ACTA President **Michael Poliakoff** in an interview with **Yahoo Finance Live**

**370+**

Number of colleges and universities ACTA has counseled on matters of cost effectiveness, financial governance, and institutional spending.



**ACTA**  
AMERICAN COUNCIL OF  
TRUSTEES AND ALUMNI

**Missouri**

**Your impact on higher education can be measured.**

Does your state provide an intellectually rich, high-quality college education at an affordable price? See how your state is doing compared to others.

<p><b>Core Curriculum</b></p> <p>Are your schools preparing graduates for career and community? For more information, visit <a href="http://WhatWillTheyLearn.com">WhatWillTheyLearn.com</a>.</p> <p><b>15<sup>th</sup></b> / 50 states</p>	<p><b>Speech Code Policies</b></p> <p>At your state institutions, is there freedom of inquiry and freedom to debate and challenge? Visit <a href="http://TheFIRE.org/resources/spotlight">TheFIRE.org/resources/spotlight</a> to learn more.</p> <p><b>35<sup>th</sup></b> / 50 states</p>
<p><b>Administrative Spending</b></p> <p>at University of Missouri-Columbia</p> <p>Does your state flagship do a good job in controlling administrative bloat? For more information, visit <a href="http://HowCollegesSpendMoney.com">HowCollegesSpendMoney.com</a>.</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup></b> / 50 states</p> <p><b>\$1,882</b> per student</p>	<p><b>4-Year Graduation Rate</b></p> <p>Are college students graduating in four years? When students enter college but do not graduate, there are serious consequences for the student and taxpayers.</p> <p><b>33<sup>rd</sup></b> / 50 states</p> <p><b>33%</b> graduate on time</p>

Make quality education a reality.  
[GoACTA.org/Policymakers](http://GoACTA.org/Policymakers)

Flip over for more information

## STATE RANKINGS PROJECT

ACTA has updated and expanded its survey of state institutions. Policymakers can now see how each state's public institutions rank on **10 key measures of academic quality and cost effectiveness**—all available online on an interactive map that shows each state in comparison to its neighbors. Since launching this webpage in October 2021, ACTA has discussed the data with legislators in several states.

**1,300**

Number of policymakers across the country who have received our state ranking reports.

Users can also see how each state compares in regard to the strength of core curriculum, speech code policies, and student-to-faculty ratio.

## Promoting Smarter Governance

Through our **Institute for Effective Governance**<sup>®</sup>, ACTA equips trustees with the targeted guidance and data-driven resources they need to control costs, promote academic excellence, and protect free expression on campus. We believe trustees must actively exercise their fiduciary authority to keep higher education accountable to the public and to students. We regularly communicate with our network of 23,000 trustees across the country, providing them with best practices and individualized consultation.

## Inside the Boardroom

In 2021, ACTA provided University of Sioux Falls trustees with best practices for protecting free speech as the board crafted the school's strategic plan. We assisted University of Colorado Regent Heidi Ganahl in developing a successful resolution calling for greater oversight of foreign funding and a ban on affiliation with Confucius Institutes, which the U.S. Senate has warned may be vehicles for espionage. We also worked with Regent Ganahl on a resolution to increase regents' access to the institutional information they need to promote transparency. We guided a University of Minnesota regent on matters of executive compensation and ensuring that boards are upholding their fiduciary responsibilities. We spoke with a board member at The Citadel on matters of financial oversight and excessive spending. In addition, we counseled governing board members at Ohio State University and the South Dakota Board of Regents on ways to protect academic freedom as their institutions design programs to combat racism.

## Innovative Resources

ACTA has launched a new series of online webinars to reach more trustees with our unique resources. In April, we hosted a webinar for governing board leaders entitled "**The Pandemic and Campus Substance Use: What Colleges Need to Know NOW.**" The event was attended by trustees from over 20 different institutions and focused on implementing evidence-based solutions to promote, notwithstanding the stresses of COVID-19 restrictions, a substance-free culture on campus, a culture that denormalizes drug use and celebrates academic achievement. Our panel of experts included

**Ellen Rome**, M.D., M.P.H., head of the Center for Adolescent Medicine at Cleveland Clinic Children's; **Robert DuPont**, M.D., founder and president of the Institute for Behavior and Health; **Amelia Arria**, Ph.D., director of the Center on Young

Adult Health and Development at the University of Maryland School of Public Health; and **Caleb Boswell**, L.L.P.C., N.C.C., co-facilitator of the Collegiate Recovery Program at Washtenaw Community College.



*The cost of higher education has been rising at an unsustainable rate for more than two decades. These exorbitant costs often prevent students, once they graduate, from being able to climb out of debt. Most troubling is the fact that these rising and unnecessary costs are increasingly associated with administrative bloat, rather than investing in the classroom and curriculum. Student debt is higher than mortgage debt or credit card debt and the causes of this need to be immediately remedied. With our nation facing over \$28 trillion dollars of debt, this preventable crisis should not be adding to the other problems crippling our future. ACTA's reporting and fact-finding have been critical in congressional attempts to rein in spending and keep dollars invested where they truly matter—students and the classroom.*

—**Greg Murphy, M.D.**, U.S. Representative (N.C.-03)



Left to Right: Armand Alacbay, David Walsh, James Toscano, and Amy Jones discuss how trustees can control spending at their institutions.

## WEBINAR SERIES

In 2021, ACTA launched a new webinar series to reach more trustees with our unique resources.

Topics have included:

- Spending for Student Success: Effective Strategies for College Governing Boards to Control Costs
- The Pandemic and Campus Substance Use: What Colleges Need to Know NOW
- Name, Image, and Likeness (“NIL”): What It Means for College Governing Boards (early 2022)



# NATIONAL REACH

ACTA's message of comprehensive, commonsense reform is in high demand as college leaders, lawmakers, alumni, and students and parents seek out our advice on the persistent problems facing institutions of higher education. National, regional, and local media outlets consistently call ACTA to get our take on how to solve these challenges and ensure that our colleges and universities remain havens for robust, free discourse and engines of opportunity for students.

## ACTA in the News

In 2021, ACTA appeared over 560 times in over 359 print, broadcast, and online media outlets in 46 states across the country, reaching over 14 million people. ACTA's work was featured in numerous major publications, including the *Associated Press*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, *Yahoo! Finance*, *Newsweek*, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Ed*, *POLITICO*, *The Hill*, the *National Review*, the *Washington Examiner*, *RealClearEducation*, and many others.

ACTA President Michael Poliakoff has written a total of 22 hard-hitting articles as a contributor to *Forbes*, with a combined readership of over 195,000 in 2021. His column brought public attention to President Joe Biden's plans to overturn protections of due process in Title IX cases and called upon college trustees, policymakers, and taxpayers to hold higher education institutions accountable for how they spend public funds. Dr. Poliakoff also used his platform to spotlight institutions and states that are taking the lead on renewing civic education by mandating coursework in American government and history, including Purdue University, the Arizona Board of Regents, and the state of South Carolina.

## Higher Ed Now Podcast

Our Higher Ed Now podcast is rising in popularity and reach, featuring a diverse range of topics and a roster of prominent guests in 2021. Total unique downloads of **Higher Ed Now** surpassed 43,000 this year, an 80% increase since 2019. Prominent episodes included "Standing Against Regressive Orthodoxy at Smith College" with Jodi Shaw, former student support coordinator at Smith College; "Unpacking the 'Constitution of Knowledge,'" a discussion with journalist and author Jonathan Rauch on his newest book; "Ensuring That Students Get What They Paid For" with Wade Eyerly, CEO of Degree Insurance, whose company guarantees students' earnings in the five years after they receive their degree; "Shakespeare, Ever Present" with author Robert McCrum, a discussion on how to fight literary censorship; and "Pioneering the Alumni Free Speech Alliance," featuring Alumni Free Speech Alliance co-founder Edward Yingling.

## Social Media

Following a complete redesign of GoACTA.org in 2020, the website has received 113,492 new users. Our social media platforms exploded in 2021, with large gains in our number of



followers on Twitter and a total Facebook reach of 481,659 people. Our What Will They Learn?<sup>®</sup> Instagram account profiles ACTA “A” schools, publicizes our college search resources, and educates users about the Great Books and pivotal events in American history. In less than a year, it has grown to 7,500 followers. Individual posts receive thousands of “likes,” and the account has reached over 2.4 million users.

We made a special distribution of our *What Will They Learn?* report to 3,200 high school principals and counselors. ACTA also did 23 radio interviews that aired on 1,976 stations with a listener audience of 12 million. The launch of the 2021–2022 edition of WWTL was covered by over 120 news outlets, including the **Associated Press**.

### Reaching the Higher Education Community

**Trustees.** Our growing network includes trustees from nearly every four-year institution across the country that offers a liberal arts degree. We continue to provide guidance and support, and we reach over 23,000 trustees at nearly 1,300 institutions.

**Alumni.** Our quarterly newsletter **Inside Academe** reaches more than 13,000 alumni from a wide range of colleges and universities. And over 3,000 alumni receive our monthly eNewsletters as well as email updates about our latest initiatives, events, and achievements.

**Governors and Policymakers.** ACTA reaches out to governors and their education policy staffs, in addition to state policymakers and legislators. ACTA regularly testifies before state legislatures across the country on bills of interest, and our **Higher Ed at a Glance** quarterly eNewsletter reaches over 1,100 lawmakers nationwide.

### Celebrating Our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

After the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions delayed the celebration of ACTA’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020, hundreds of college trustees, ACTA supporters, and former staff finally joined together on November 11 and 12 at the Metropolitan Club and the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, for what was truly our most uplifting and momentous annual conference to date.

On November 11, guests gathered to honor Karrin Taylor Robson, recipient of our **Jerry L. Martin Prize for Excellence in College Trusteeship**. Before announcing her run for governor of Arizona in 2022, Ms. Taylor Robson served on the Arizona Board of Regents, where she created and launched the Regents’ Cup debate. This annual competition between Arizona’s three public universities teaches students norms of democratic engagement, promotes the free

## GETTING THE WORD OUT

**113,492**

Number of new users on ACTA’s website, **GoACTA.org**.

**2.9 million**

Reach of ACTA’s Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram platforms.

**195,000**

Combined readership for ACTA President Michael Poliakoff’s **22** hard-hitting articles in **Forbes** this year.

**560**

Number of times ACTA appeared in over **359** print, broadcast, and online media outlets in **46** states, reaching over **14 million** people.

**80%**

Increase in unique downloads of ACTA’s **Higher Ed Now** podcast, surpassing **43,000**.

**3,000+**

Number of ACTA resources requested or downloaded in 2021.



## STUDENTS DISCUSS CANCEL CULTURE ON CAMPUS

As part of our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary event, ACTA hosted a student conference entitled, **Confronting Cancel Culture: How Student Leaders Can Foster Free Expression on Campus**. Students participated in interactive sessions and enjoyed a panel discussion, “Leading by Example,” featuring members from BridgeUSA, Braver Angels, and Students for Free Expression. The event concluded with remarks from Abigail Thompson, an ACTA Hero of Intellectual Freedom (see page 7).

“ACTA brings together young minds curious about their own times and looking for insights from all times. In the “Leading By Example” panel, a few of us searchers-after-wisdom had the wonderful opportunity to share our own questions and journeys with young folks from across the country coming up after us.

—**Luke Nathan Phillips**, panelist, Publius Fellow for Public Discourse, Braver Angels

exchange of ideas, and fosters civil discourse. Guests greatly enjoyed Ms. Taylor Robson’s rousing acceptance remarks, entitled “**Education and Freedom: Hope for a Self-Governing Society**,” which ACTA has recently published.

At the Metropolitan Club on November 12, we held a presidential colloquy entitled “**A Challenging Landscape: Presidents on the Future of Higher Education**,” featuring **Mitch Daniels**, president of Purdue University; **Robert Zimmer**, chancellor of the University of Chicago; **Stephen Joel Trachtenberg**, president emeritus of George Washington University; **Linda Livingstone**, president of Baylor University; and **Clara Lovett**, president emerita of Northern Arizona University.

Guests also heard an inspiring speech from **Abigail Thompson**, professor of mathematics at the University of California–Davis, to whom ACTA presented its **Hero of Intellectual Freedom** award. In her position as chair of the mathematics department, Dr. Thompson took a brave stand against the administration’s decision to pre-screen hundreds of candidates for job openings solely based on their diversity statements, without considering their academic qualifications.

In the culmination of our 25<sup>th</sup> Plus One Anniversary Celebration, we joined together at the storied Library of Congress to present Dr. Gordon S. Wood with the Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education. As the country’s leading historian of the American Revolution, Professor Wood has advanced the nation’s knowledge of the early colonial period. We are indebted to him for his principled dedication to historical accuracy and for his scrupulous work to understand the extraordinary contributions of the Founders who laid the foundation for the freedoms we enjoy today.

We thank everyone who attended this special event. The friendship and generosity of our supporters motivates us each day to continue the fight to ensure that the spirit of open inquiry, robust discourse, and academic excellence lives on at our nation’s colleges and universities.

“This is a special year for ACTA, 25 plus one. I realize that decades ago I participated in ACTA affairs before the organization became famous. I only later became aware that I had been present at the creation of something very important.

—**Dr. Gordon S. Wood**, Alva O. Way University Professor and Professor of History Emeritus at Brown University



ACTA President Michael Poliakkoff moderates a discussion on the future of higher education with Purdue University President Mitch Daniels, Baylor University President Linda Livingstone, Northern Arizona University President Emerita Clara Lovett, George Washington University President Emeritus Stephen Joel Trachtenberg, and University of Chicago Chancellor Robert Zimmer.



Gordon Wood delivers his remarks at the Library of Congress.



Louise Mirrer



David Rubenstein



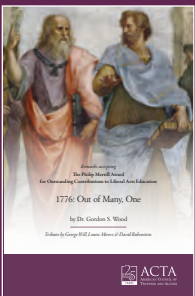
ACTA Board Chair John Altman



George Will



Karrin Taylor Robson accepts the Jerry L. Martin Prize for Excellence in College Trusteeship.



## 1776: OUT OF MANY, ONE

George Will wrote in the *Washington Post* about Professor Wood's remarks: "The 1619 Project aims to erase (in Wood's words) 'the Revolution and the principles that it articulated—liberty, equality and the well-being of ordinary people.' These ideas are, as Wood says, the adhesives that bind our exceptional nation whose people have shared principles, not a shared ancestry."



# ABOUT US

## Our Staff



Michael Poliakoff  
President



Lauri Kempson  
Senior Vice President



Armand Alacbay  
Vice President, Trustee &  
Government Affairs



Michael Deshaies  
Vice President, Development



Jonathan Pidluzny  
Vice President,  
Academic Affairs



Leslie Paige  
Vice President,  
Communications



Emily Koons Jae  
Director, Fund for  
Academic Renewal



Douglas Sprei  
Director, Multimedia &  
Campus Partnerships



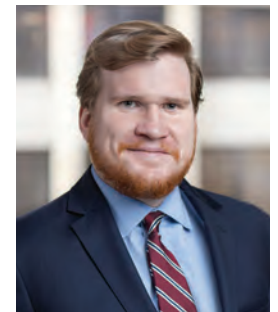
Greta Wagley  
Senior Researcher/Editor



Kyle Beltrami  
Policy Research Fellow



Veronica Mayer  
Senior Program Officer,  
Curricular Improvement



Jordan Thomas  
Operations Manager



Zachary Rogers  
Program Manager,  
Educator Outreach



Rebecca Richards  
Program Manager, Fund for  
Academic Renewal



Gabrielle Anglin  
Program Manager,  
Communications



Tracy Pang  
Program Manager, Fund for  
Academic Renewal



**Nicholas Down**  
Program Officer, Trustee &  
Government Affairs



**Anna Sillers**  
Data Analyst Fellow, Trustee &  
Government Affairs



**David Doerr**  
Program Coordinator,  
Database Operations



**Emily Rees**  
Program Associate, Fund for  
Academic Renewal



**Austin Calvo**  
Program Associate,  
Development



**Agatha Grossman**  
Program Associate, Trustee &  
Government Affairs



**Gabriella Hsu**  
Program Associate, Curricular  
Improvement



**Hanna McCune**  
Executive Administrative  
Assistant

## Interns & Fellows

ACTA's internship program offers a unique educational experience to talented college students and recent graduates. Our spring and summer interns perform critical work on research and writing assignments, including the What Will They Learn?<sup>®</sup> project and ACTA's high school counselor database. The Robert Lewit Fellowship in Education Policy offers select students the opportunity to engage in special assignments. Interns and fellows

benefit from a summer speaker series, in which eminent scholars discuss important topics in higher education.

## Senior Fellow

ACTA continues to benefit from the expertise of our senior fellow, **Anne D. Neal**. Ms. Neal is a cofounder of ACTA and served as our president from 2003 to 2016. She is currently president and CEO of the National Association for Olmsted Parks.

## SUMMER INTERN PROGRAM 2021

Ten interns joined the ACTA team. They conducted hundreds of reviews to assess the quality of curricula at 1,100+ colleges and universities for the What Will They Learn?<sup>®</sup> project. They also provided development support and contributed to a variety of research projects. Interns have the opportunity to participate in reading groups on the Great Books.



Pictured at Right: Interns Dana Ross, Conner Paszko, Austin Calvo, Max Prowant, and Megan Ober.



# 2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

as of December 31, 2021

### Assets

Cash/Cash Equivalents (unrestricted)	\$4,540,722
Cash/Cash Equivalents (restricted)	1,412,148
Marketable Securities	574,077
Prepayments/Other Assets	102,478
Property/Equipment (Net)	<u>461,708</u>

**Total Assets** **7,091,133**

### Liabilities & Net Assets

Accounts Payable	140,573
Deferred Rent	<u>187,646</u>

**Total Liabilities** **328,219**

Unrestricted Net Assets	5,362,766
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	<u>1,400,148</u>

**Total Net Assets** **6,762,914**

**Total Liabilities & Net Assets** **\$7,091,133**

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

as of December 31, 2021

### Revenue & Support

Contributions/Grants (unrestricted)	\$2,997,553
Contributions/Grants (restricted)	319,864
Interest/Dividends	940
Miscellaneous Income	292
Realized/Unrealized Gains	<u>557,594</u>

**Total Revenue & Support** **3,876,243**

### Expenses

Programs	3,791,612
Fundraising	21,345
Management/General	<u>299,206</u>

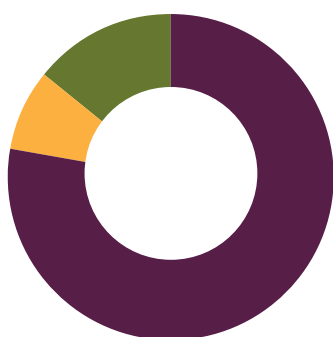
**Total Expenses** **4,112,163**

**Change in Net Assets** **(235,920)**

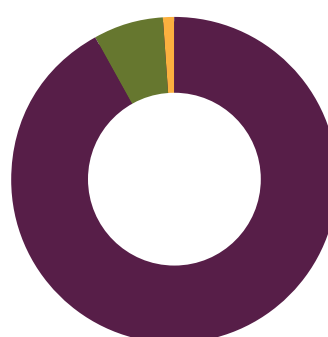
**Net Assets, beginning of year** **6,998,834**

**Net Assets, end of year** **\$6,762,914**

## 2021 OPERATING REVENUES



## 2021 OPERATING EXPENSES



## Our Partners

ACTA is grateful to our supporters, whose loyalty and dedication make our important work possible. We rely upon them not just for funding, but for inspiration, collaboration, and assistance in our common goal to ensure that all college students receive an intellectually rich liberal arts education at an affordable price. And because we do not receive government funding, our donors enable us to maintain our independence in forming policies and taking action.

Members of ACTA's Donor Societies are invited to exclusive events throughout the year, where they meet important and influential scholars and leaders of higher education reform. We appreciate these opportunities to engage with our Donor Society members and hear their ideas about the future of higher education.

### ACTA 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Sponsors

Sponsors of ACTA's annual gala support our celebration of the liberal arts and the presentation of the Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education.

#### George Washington Society (\$50,000)

William Dembski, *Texas*  
Karen & Paul Levy, *New York*

#### Thomas Jefferson Society (\$25,000)

John W. Altman Family Foundation, *Nevada*  
Merrill Family Foundation, *Maryland*  
Kathe & Edwin Williamson, *District of Columbia*

#### Abigail Adams Society (\$10,000)

Margaret & Jay Costan, *District of Columbia*  
George Lucas, *Maryland*  
Karen & Mark Ridenour, *Illinois*  
David Bruce Smith, *District of Columbia*  
Stuart Taylor, Jr., *District of Columbia*  
University of Chicago, *Illinois*  
Alice & Bruce Whelihan, *District of Columbia*

#### Alexander Hamilton Society (\$5,000)

Beazley Foundation, *Virginia*  
Jan Buck, *New Jersey*  
Heidi Ganahl, *Colorado*  
Anne Neal, *District of Columbia*  
Anne & Michael Poliakoff, *Virginia*  
Stanley Stillman, *Virginia*  
Woodford Foundation for Limited Government, *Colorado*

#### Dolley Madison Society (\$2,500)

John Craig, *South Carolina*  
John Hillen, *Virginia*  
Martha Lewis, *Maryland*  
Jane & Robert Lewit, *Massachusetts*  
Triad Foundation, *New York*

#### James Madison Society (\$1,000)

Lawrence Berlin, *Illinois*  
Bobby Burchfield, *Virginia*  
Ellen Byrd, *Texas*  
Blouke Carus, *Illinois*  
James Thomas Chirurg, *California*  
Edward Hochman, *New York*  
Kathleen Justice-Moore, *California*  
Jeff Kaplan, *Ohio*  
Joshua Katz, *New Jersey*  
Michael Maibach, *Virginia*  
Judith Messina, *New York*  
Susan & Malcolm Sherman, *New York*  
Francine & Stephen Joel Trachtenberg, *Minnesota*  
John Whitecar, Jr., *Mississippi*  
Edwin Whitman, *Pennsylvania*  
Joseph Wysocki, *North Carolina*

#### Benjamin Franklin Society (\$500)

John Alcorn, *Connecticut*  
Ashbrook Center at Ashland University, *Ohio*  
Jay Bergman, *Connecticut*  
Peter Burnham, *Virginia*  
Danita & Gordon Bye, *North Dakota*  
Karen & Carlos Campo, *Ohio*

David Doughty, *Virginia*  
 Wade Eyerly, *Utah*  
 Ann Fitzgerald, *Virginia*  
 Arthur Hellman, *Pennsylvania*  
 Elizabeth & Joseph Kaming, *South Carolina*  
 Katie & Eneas Kane, *Arizona*  
 Lauri Kempson, *Virginia*  
 Mack Lindsey, *Texas*  
 Clara Lovett, *Maryland*  
 The Drinko Academy of Marshall University,  
*West Virginia*  
 The Jack Miller Center for Teaching  
 America's Founding Principles and History,  
*Pennsylvania*  
 Maja Nowakowski, *New York*  
 Helen & Ryan Pemberton, *Virginia*  
 Marlee & Michael Promisel, *South Carolina*  
 Shelly & Bruce Ross-Larson, *District of Columbia*  
 Whitney Stewart, *District of Columbia*  
 Larry Stimpert, *Virginia*  
 Erin & Jeremy Tate, *Maryland*  
 David Trebing, *District of Columbia*  
 Fran & George White, *Virginia*

**Legacy Society**

The Thomas Jefferson Legacy Society honors donors who make planned gifts to ACTA. Their generosity drives ACTA's work, creating a real legacy by protecting rich liberal arts education for future generations.

Anonymous  
 John W. Altman, *Nevada*  
 M. Blouke Carus, *Illinois*  
 Victor Cassidy, *Indiana*  
 Richard Coyle, *Arizona*  
 Jeanne & Gordon Evans, *California*  
 Clifford P. Hackett, *District of Columbia*  
 Edna Haskell, *South Carolina*  
 Arthur D. Hellman, *Pennsylvania*  
 Jane Johnson, *California*  
 Virginia & Sandy MacNeil, *North Carolina*

Michael Maibach, *Virginia*  
 Margaret F. Miller, *Indiana*  
 Philbrook Revocable Trust, *California*  
 Anne & Michael Poliakoff, *Virginia*  
 Elaine Sommers Rich, *Indiana*  
 The Estate of John R. Wilson, *Georgia*

**Leadership Society**

The Leadership Society consists of grant-making foundations whose generous gifts make ACTA's endeavors possible.

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