

AEI Enterprise Report

Restoring Liberty, Opportunity, and Enterprise in America



Reaching the Next Generation

By Robert Doar

One of the great pleasures of summer at AEI is the influx of young college students learning and working at the Institute. This year, almost 400 students came to the Daniel A. D’Aniello Building as interns or participants in our Summer Honors Program.

For these summer weeks, our staff and scholars enjoy (and grumble about) longer lunch lines and an exceptionally crowded first floor, but we all benefit from the intellectual vitality, hard work, and hope for the future these students bring. I want to take a moment to share some details about these student programs and explain why AEI invests so much in them.

The Summer Honors Program is the largest effort put on by our Academic Programs team, led by **Jeff Pickering**, every year. Built on AEI’s reputation for intellectual integrity and diversity, the program attracted 293 students from 147 different campuses this year. These students are interested in public policy and excelling in their studies, and many will be the leaders of tomorrow. They come to AEI to learn from our scholars

Top: Radosław Sikorski, Polish minister of foreign affairs; Richard Burkhauser; Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC) and Max Eden; Christine Rosen

Bottom: Summer Honors Program participants; Jeff Pickering; Summer Honors Program participants



AEI President Robert Doar

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AEI's work and the wider world of public policy.”

and encounter perspectives that often have little presence on American campuses today. For many, this is their first introduction to AEI and their first exposure to an institution explicitly dedicated to America's founding principles.

Beyond our scholars, students hear guest lectures from outside experts and public figures, including the *New York Times*' David French, the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression's Greg Lukianoff, and Yeshiva University's Rabbi Meir Soloveichik. We've uploaded to our website a video of one of these sessions, featuring Baylor University's David Corey and AEI's **Benjamin Storey** on civic education; I encourage you to watch not just for the conversation but also to see the students' impressive and insightful questions. (To watch, visit www.aei.org/civiceducation.)

I speak to the students every year, and I take heart that despite the turmoil on college campuses this year, our program is full of bright and thoughtful undergraduates from across the political spectrum who are deeply committed to America's values and the free exchange of ideas.

It's a testament to Summer Honors' success that so many participants stay involved with AEI and come back as interns in subsequent years. Our internship program is highly selective; this summer, we chose 62 interns from an applicant pool of 3,300. So many students want to spend their summers at AEI because our internships are more than just another summer job; they are designed to introduce participants to the full breadth of AEI's work and the wider world of public policy through weekly sessions with scholars from every department and ample professional development opportunities. I can say from personal experience that our interns get a genuine opportunity to be partners and collaborators with our staff and scholars. The skills they gain and the relationships they build leave them well prepared for a career in public policy, and it's always gratifying to see how many of them come back to AEI after graduation to work here full-time.

While our building is much emptier now with the onset of fall, the conclusion of Summer Honors and summer internships is only the beginning of these students' relationship with the Institute. They become part of the AEI community. Our Collegiate Network keeps the students in touch with other like-minded undergraduates and faculty and sends AEI scholars to campuses across the country. And our Academic Programs team brings this community together throughout the year at conferences and summits on higher education and other policy issues. I was excited to see many familiar faces from this summer back at AEI for the Collegiate Network's Fall Summit, "Politics: Policy or Theater?" You can read more about that event on page 5. All of this requires a tremendous amount of work from our staff and scholars, but it's essential to our broader efforts to revitalize higher education.

Successful scholarship is more than just research and writing; it requires outreach and community building to develop an audience of patriots hungry for positive change in our country. And that's what I see when I meet Summer Honors students and AEI interns; this generation has a real desire for genuinely liberal education. By investing in and working with them, we can make that desire a reality.

AEI Hosts Major Events on the Supreme Court and the Constitution

In the past three months, AEI has hosted major events bringing together scholars, policymakers, and public figures to focus on the past and present state of our constitutional order, especially in light of landmark Supreme Court decisions this year.

One of the Supreme Court's most impactful decisions this year was *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*, which ended *Chevron* deference. In response, AEI collaborated with the Brookings Institution for a July conference examining the decision's effects on the balance of power among the branches of government. Former Sen. Patrick Toomey (R-PA) provided the keynote in a conversation with **Yuval Levin**, and AEI scholars **Kevin R. Kosar**, **M. Anthony Mills**, **Philip Wallach**, and new Laurence H. Silberman Chair in Constitutional Governance **Adam J. White** explored the issue with outside experts in administrative law and American politics. Visit www.aei.org/events/life-after-chevron to watch the event.

Later that month, to mark the 50th anniversary of the House Judiciary Committee's vote recommending Richard Nixon's impeachment, AEI hosted scholars and former congressional staff and members involved in the 1974 inquiry for a conversation on the past and present of impeachment, especially after the Supreme Court's decision on presidential immunity in *Trump v. United States*. Former Secretary of Defense, US Senator, and House Judiciary Committee Member William S. Cohen; former Chief of Staff Francis O'Brien; and Judge Robert Sack, former senior associate special counsel on the inquiry staff, joined Columbia University historian and former Richard Nixon Presidential Library Director Timothy Naftali, University of Texas at Austin's Jeffrey K. Tulis, Yale University's Keith E. Whittington, and AEI scholars **Jack Landman Goldsmith**,

Gary J. Schmitt, and Wallach.

Visit www.aei.org/events/the-impeachment-of-richard-nixon to watch the event.

On September 17, Levin will deliver the 2024 Walter Berns Constitution Day Lecture: "How to Take the Constitution Seriously." In his 1987 book, *Taking the Constitution Seriously*, AEI scholar **Walter Berns** critiqued attempts by judges and other legal experts to weaken Americans' association between constitutionality and wisdom. In his lecture, Levin will take up this theme by arguing that understanding the Constitution as more than just a legal framework can help us appreciate the charter that binds us together as a nation.

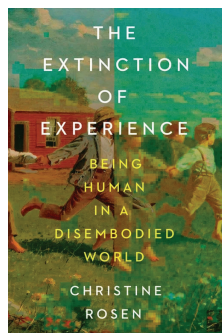
On September 18, Levin and White are hosting the next symposium in AEI's "We Hold These Truths: America at 250" project, dedicated to commemorating the 250th anniversary of American independence and sparking a new interest in the American Revolution and the founding as part of AEI's wider American Dream Initiative. In this, the third of eight planned conferences, scholars of American history, law, and theology will consider how religion shaped the American Revolution. And on October 1, AEI Press will publish contributions to the first symposium, which focused on democracy and the American Revolution, as the first in an eight-volume series.

Visit www.aei.org/legal-constitutional to learn more about AEI legal and constitutional studies scholars.



Top to bottom, left to right: former Sen. Patrick Toomey (R-PA) and Yuval Levin; Timothy Naftali and former Sen. William Cohen (R-ME); Robert Doar; Gary J. Schmitt, Robert Doar, Keith Whittington, Philip Wallach, and Jeffrey K. Tulis; Keith Whittington and Jeffrey K. Tulis; Jack Landman Goldsmith; Kathryn Dunn Tenpas; Adam J. White; Philip Wallach and Kevin R. Kosar

Christine Rosen Publishes a New Book on Technology and the Human Experience



On September 10, W. W. Norton & Company published **Christine Rosen's** new book, *The Extinction of Experience: Being Human in a Disembodied World*, a reflective, original invitation to recover and cultivate the human experiences that have atrophied in our virtual world.

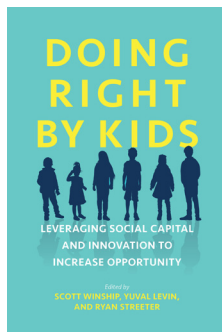
Americans have embraced the mediated life, from Facetune and Venmo to meme culture and the metaverse, because these technologies offer novelty and convenience. But they also transform our sense of self and warp the boundaries between virtual and real.

In *The Extinction of Experience*, Rosen investigates the cultural and emotional shifts that accompany our embrace of technology. She exposes an unprecedented shift in the human condition that habituates us to alienation and control. To recover our humanity and come back to the real world, we must reclaim serendipity, community, patience, and risk.

Rosen launched the book at an AEI event on September 11 with **M. Anthony Mills** that explored how we can become more critical and mindful users of technology and more discerning of how it uses us.

Visit www.aei.org/book/extinction-of-experience to learn more about the book, and listen to Rosen's podcast episode with AEI President Robert Doar here: www.aei.org/extinction-of-experience.

Scott Winship and Yuval Levin Release a New Book on Expanding Opportunity for Children



On September 17, AEI Press will publish *Doing Right by Kids: Leveraging Social Capital and Innovation to Increase Opportunity*, edited by **Scott Winship, Yuval Levin**, and Ryan Streeter.

Material hardship among American children has never been lower. This seeming victory in the War on Poverty, however, has failed to loosen the connection between family origins and where kids end up.

This volume provides a set of ideas to do just that.

Featuring contributions from AEI scholars **Beth Akers, Preston Cooper, Michael Q. McShane, Angela Rachidi, Matt Weidinger**, and **Brad Wilcox**, these proposals are grounded in the insight that greater opportunity requires shoring up the relationships of children and adolescents and the strength of the institutions to which they are connected—in short, rebuilding social capital.

Contributors promoted the book at an AEI event on September 11 that brought in outside experts for a broader conversation on place-based policies and safe communities, family policy and the safety net, and education.

Visit www.aei.org/doing-right-by-kids to learn more about the book.

AEI Defense Futures Simulator



AEI's Foreign and Defense Policy team is releasing an updated version of the Defense Futures Simulator (DFS)

that will better enable users to create and test various defense strategies and their impact on the Department of Defense budget. First developed in 2021 in partnership with the Center for Strategic and International Studies and War on the Rocks, DFS is a publicly accessible online tool that integrates detailed budget data, decades of subject matter expertise, and sophisticated data science to help users understand how much the United States is spending to achieve strategic objectives.

Spearheaded by **Todd Harrison**, who joined AEI's Foreign and Defense Policy team in November 2023, the newly enhanced version of DFS will include:

- Updated data based on the fiscal year 2025 defense budget;
- Private accounts for saving, revisiting, and sharing simulations;
- An expanded database capable of holding multiple datasets, including foreign military data;
- Features for analyzing alternative defense strategies for allies, partners, and adversaries and conducting competitive budget simulations across nations;
- A revamped AI-assisted mode that guides users in budget decisions based on their strategic preferences; and
- A faster-running algorithm, personalized results, and the ability to learn from users over time.

Since the tool was launched in 2021, DFS analysis has been used in a number of media and academic reports.

Visit the Defense Futures Simulator here: www.defensefutures.net.

AEI Hosts College Students for a Fall Summit

On September 12–13, AEI hosted 125 students from our Collegiate Network for the network's annual Fall Summit. This year's theme was "Politics: Policy or Theater?" At a time when cynicism, mudslinging, and partisan bickering pervade discussions about public policy, participants explored substantive alternatives. In sessions with **Karlyn Bowman**, **Yuval Levin**, and other AEI scholars, students learned how the divide between political performance and genuine policymaking affects every aspect of American political life—from the Constitution and Congress to climate change. Beyond keynotes and panels with AEI scholars, the summit included student program training and professional development sessions.

AEI Events Analyze the 2024 Elections

On September 4, AEI scholars **John C. Fortier** and **Chris Stirewalt** brought respected political analysts and public opinion experts to the building for the latest edition of AEI's Election Watch program. Joined by Public Opinion Strategies' Bill McInturff, Analyst Institute's Michael Podhorzer, and Cook Political Report's Amy Walter, Fortier and Stirewalt assessed Kamala Harris's candidacy and the Democratic National Convention and previewed the final months of the presidential campaign. The Election Watch team will reconvene for two more events on October 30 and November 6 to evaluate the final state of play and react to the results.

AEI Election Watch was established in 1982 and is the longest-running political analysis program of its kind.



Irving Kristol Award & Annual Dinner

AEI to Honor Minority Leader Mitch McConnell with the Irving Kristol Award

On November 12, 2024, AEI will present Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) with the Irving Kristol Award at the AEI Annual Dinner, held at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC. Please contact **Sean McGilley** (sean.mcgilley@aei.org; 202.862.5949) for information about sponsorship opportunities.

The Irving Kristol Award is the highest honor conferred by AEI. AEI annually recognizes an individual who has made exceptional intellectual and practical contributions to improve government policy, social welfare, or political understanding.

Visit www.aei.org/irving-kristol-award to learn more about past recipients.

New Scholars Join AEI's Education Policy Team



This summer, **Mark Schneider** joined AEI as a nonresident senior fellow. His work focuses on education research and develop-

ment and higher education administration. Before joining AEI, Schneider was the director of the Institute of Education Sciences, a vice president and fellow at the American Institutes for Research, and the commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics. He has been published widely in scholarly outlets and has written and edited a number of books on topics including school choice, college completion, charter schools, and accountability in higher education.

Follow Schneider's work here:

www.aei.org/schneider.



Preston Cooper joined AEI as a senior fellow. His work focuses on higher education return on investment, student loans, and

higher education reform. Before joining AEI in his current role, Cooper was a senior fellow in higher education policy at the Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity, a research analyst at the American Enterprise Institute, and a policy analyst at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research. His work has appeared in the popular press, including in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *RealClearPolicy*, and *National Review*. Cooper has a PhD in economics from George Mason University and a bachelor's degree from Swarthmore College.

Follow Cooper's work here:

www.aei.org/pcooper.

Q&A with Jesús Fernández-Villaverde



Jesús Fernández-Villaverde is the John H. Makin Visiting Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. He is also the Howard Marks Presidential Professor of Economics at the University of Pennsylvania. His broad areas of research include macroeconomics, econometrics, and economic history.

At the University of Pennsylvania, you teach courses on macroeconomics, economic history, and the foundations of the market economy. How do you approach teaching at a time when undergraduates seem less receptive than ever to classically liberal ideas?

At Penn, many undergraduates are interested in exploring ideas that diverge from the prevailing orthodoxy, where “orthodoxy” implies skepticism toward free markets and limited government.

I believe my relative success in engaging students might be rooted in two factors: first, my commitment to presenting ideas in an engaging manner, and second, my commitment to treating both sides of the argument with fairness. This fairness is crucial when much of modern education has shifted toward indoctrination. The remedy to one-sided indoctrination is not counter-indoctrination from the other side but open discussion of ideas.

Why do you think it’s important to combine your role as an academic economist with a position at a think tank?

First, I became an economist to understand the world better and contribute

to human flourishing. Writing academic papers solely for the sake of publication has never been my goal. I want to translate research into meaningful political action for the common good. Second, engaging with concrete economic policy challenges sharpens my analytical skills. For instance, when I interact with friends of the Institute from the business world or politics, they provide invaluable insights into what really matters in the economy and the corridors of power in DC. This inside baseball is far more valuable data for my thinking than all the statistics in the world.

The US is approaching a presidential election, but neither campaign has offered much detail on economic policy. What should the next administration focus on to strengthen economic stability and growth?

Increase fertility! This is the first and foremost problem of our time. Don’t get me wrong: We still need to balance the budget, improve our infrastructure, fix education, and return to merit as the basic criterion for selection into competitive positions. But raising fertility from the current rate of 1.6 births per woman to around 1.8 or 1.9 (still below the replacement level, but not so far below it) is, by far, priority number one.

If I had 30 minutes to talk with the new president, I would talk only about fertility.

At AEI, you’ve produced scholarship on the macroeconomic implications of aging populations in advanced economies. What are this trend’s most important effects, and what should policymakers do now to prepare?

First, expect a substantial drop in average output growth. An economy’s growth rate equals the growth rate of labor productivity plus the growth rate of the number of workers. Take, for the sake of the argument, the first term—the growth rate of

labor productivity—as fixed. Then, as the population ages and the share of workers drops relative to the total population, the economy’s growth rate falls. Furthermore, economies with older populations will likely experience lower growth rates of labor productivity: Innovation is done by younger people!

What should policymakers do? Back to my answer above, they should work toward increasing fertility. Also, they should understand the tight fiscal limits we face in the middle run and spend accordingly.

One of your conclusions from this research is that the United States’ long-term growth outlook remains stronger than that of comparable countries, especially China. Why?

I suggest two reasons. First, demographics: Yes, the US faces bad demographics, but China faces atrocious demographics! China’s population will collapse dramatically over the next few decades unless birth rates increase by more than 50 percent, which, while not impossible, is hard for me to see happening.

Second, the US still has much better institutions. Getting from 5 percent of the US income per capita to 30 percent, as China did from 1979 to 2023, is relatively easy: Let markets work a bit, and don’t do anything too dumb in economic policy. But the historical evidence shows that once you get to between 50 percent and 70 percent of the US income per capita, the easy part is done, and you need to improve your institutions a lot. Most countries have failed at this step step—including those in Western Europe! I do not see China succeeding where Germany and France have failed—particularly given the Xi regime’s authoritarian turn in the past 10 years.

Visit www.aei.org/profile/jesus-fernandez-villaverde to follow Fernández-Villaverde’s work.

A Major Gift Establishes the James Q. Wilson Program in K-12 Education Studies



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In establishing the James Q. Wilson Program in K-12 Education Studies, we wanted to draw on what Jim knew to be true: that the bedrock of our social fabric lies in the character and knowledge of our citizens. Good schools providing an excellent education and the capacity for lifelong learning are vital to our nation's future.”

—Ed and Sally Rust

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We are pleased to commemorate the remarkable life and work of James Q. Wilson with the naming of this program—and we are deeply grateful for the support, vision, and generosity shown by Ed and Sally Rust.”

—Robert Doar

AEI is pleased to announce the establishment of the James Q. Wilson Program in K-12 Education Studies, made possible by a \$5 million gift from Ed and Sally Rust.

The James Q. Wilson Program in K-12 Education Studies will unite the efforts of AEI K-12 education policy scholars **Frederick M. Hess**, **Nat Malkus**, **Robert Pondiscio**, and **Max Eden**. These scholars, among the foremost thought leaders in K-12 education policy today, exemplify **James Q. Wilson's** commitment to strong communities, moral character, empirical research, and creative, actionable public policy. The Rusts' significant contribution toward these scholars' work will allow them to further their reach and impact on the most critical education issues for years to come.



Frederick M. Hess and Max Eden with Education Leadership Academy participants

New Conservative Education Reform Network Gathering Convenes State Leaders

This spring and summer, AEI's Conservative Education Reform Network (CERN), led by **Max Eden**, hosted the inaugural cohort of the Education Leadership Academy (ELA) for two gatherings in April and June. ELA is a new program designed to provide education leaders with practical advice on how to navigate the state education leadership landscape.

The 2024 ELA cohort included six participants, eight session leaders, and two former state superintendents in residence. AEI scholars and outside experts discussed topics including curriculum reform, the role of teachers unions in K-12 education, and school finance policy. Session leaders included **Robert Pondiscio**, Penny Schwinn (University of Florida), Michael Hartney (Boston College), and Marguerite Roza (Georgetown University).

CERN will host another ELA cohort in spring and summer 2025 and will continue to supply members of the 2024 cohort with policy solutions they can use to pursue education reforms in their states.

Follow all of CERN's work here: www.aei.org/conservative-education-reform-network.

AEI Scholars in Your City

SEPTEMBER

- 16 Birmingham, Alabama, Reception | **Zack Cooper**
- 17 Tampa, Florida, Reception | **Matthew Continetti**
- 17 Miami, Florida, Dinner | **Ian Rowe**
- 18 Los Angeles, California, Dinner | **Christine Rosen**
- 19 Santa Barbara, California, Dinner | **Christine Rosen**
- 24 Chicago, Illinois, Lunch | **Kori Schake**

OCTOBER

- 9 Charleston, South Carolina, Dinner | **Ramesh Ponnuru**
- 21 Dallas, Texas, Reception | **Timothy P. Carney** and **Marc A. Thiessen**
- 29 Nashville, Tennessee, Dinner | **Brian J. Miller**

NOVEMBER

- 19 Washington, DC, Lunch | **Matthew Continetti** and **Jonah Goldberg**
- 19 Tampa, Florida, Reception | **Christine Rosen**

AEI Awards Kim Dennis the Harlan Crow Community Builder Award



“As a generous donor and an intellectual guide, Kim Dennis has been a constant champion of the competition of ideas, rigorous scholarship, individual freedom, and economic liberty.”

—Robert Doar

In August, AEI awarded the Harlan Crow Community Builder Award to longtime community leader and Searle Freedom Trust President and CEO **Kim Dennis**. The award recognized Dennis's many contributions to the AEI community since the 1980s, including as an officer at the John M. Olin Foundation, director of AEI's National Research Initiative from 2002 to 2006, a member of our board of trustees, and leader of the Searle Freedom Trust. Dennis is also a leader in American philanthropy through her work as the Philanthropy Roundtable's first executive director. Under Dennis's leadership, the Searle Freedom Trust has supported many AEI scholars and initiatives focused on economics, regulation, and free enterprise.

The Community Builder Award was created to honor longtime AEI trustee **Harlan Crow**. It is granted to leaders who exemplify Crow's incredible record of community building in and around AEI. Award recipients have made significant contributions to AEI's growth and flourishing by bringing people together and attracting new members to our community who share our mission and ideals.

Make Free Enterprise Your Legacy

For more than 80 years, AEI scholars have been tackling our nation's greatest challenges by producing work that bolsters free enterprise and innovation, strengthens our communities, defends our nation's founding values, and revitalizes America's leadership in the world. One of the best ways you can ensure that AEI can carry out this mission far into the future is by including AEI in your life and estate plans. Planned gifts provide AEI with long-term financial stability, guaranteeing that the Institute has the means to continue our important work for years to come. If you would like to learn about making a planned gift, including will or trust provisions, charitable remainder trusts, and charitable lead trusts, please visit www.aei.org/donate-about/planned-giving or contact **Jason Bertsch** (jbertsch@aei.org; 202.862.5873).



American Enterprise Institute
1789 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036
202.862.5800 | www.aei.org