



FIRE at 25: Seizing the Moment

2023-2024 Annual Report



Table of Contents

- 2** From the President
- 3** Principled Expertise
- 4** Principled Advocacy
- 5** Defending Every Voice
- 7** Leveraging Data
- 8** Reforming Policies
- 9** Cultivating the Grassroots
- 11** Back to Basics
- 12** Building a Free Speech Movement
- 13** Going to Court
- 15** Campus Rights on Trial
- 16** Scaling Our Legal Influence
- 17** Cheers to 25 Years
- 19** Key Financials
- 21** Ember Club and Eternal Flame Society
- 26** Leadership

From the President

This year, FIRE marks our 25th anniversary, a milestone accomplishment for an organization that has grown from a scrappy group focused on campus rights to a nationally recognized advocate of free speech for all. That growth would not have been possible without the dedication of my FIRE colleagues — and the incredible generosity of our supporters. From new allies to longtime supporters, we are honored to have such wonderful donors in our corner as we fight for free speech.

And it *is* a fight. Whether it's continued censorship by government officials, debates over expression in the online sphere, culture war clashes over speech-related cancellations, or election-year controversies, our country is grappling with many challenges to expressive rights.

Of course, the foremost challenge of the past year has been the unrest resulting from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which brought protests and debates over the boundaries of free speech to city streets — and especially the campus quad. We've long been concerned that campus free speech problems would spill over into broader American society. Unfortunately, in light of the events of the past year, it's clear we were right to worry.

As disheartening as all of this was, it presented FIRE with an opportunity. Free speech was thrust into the national spotlight, and we seized the moment to show what a principled defense of it really looks like. As always, we defended individuals of every ideological persuasion, and our success proves once again that the only way to truly defend free speech is to defend it for all — our North Star since 1999.

We carried that principle into our broader work as well, coordinating a multi-front strategy to tackle restrictive policies, promote speech-friendly legislation, produce cutting-edge research, generate awareness, educate constituents, and mobilize liberty lovers to stand up for our fundamental expressive rights.

Read on to learn more about everything we achieved together with our supporters during the 2023-24 fiscal year. You'll see how FIRE brought principle to everything we did — and how that character continues to enable our remarkable impact.



Greg Lukianoff
President and CEO



Principled Expertise

After the October 7 attack on Israel and the outbreak of war in Gaza, seething disagreements about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict erupted across the country, especially on college campuses. With it came widespread violations of free speech rights and renewed national debate about the bounds of permissible expression.

What is discriminatory harassment? When does speech become incitement? Is shutting down a speaker a form of protected expression? Are there limits to where, or when, a protest can take place?

As the American public searched for answers to these questions, FIRE became their go-to source for principled expertise. Thanks to our decades of experience and national reputation, we were cited by journalists, sought out by policymakers, and looked to for leadership by everyday Americans.

From major national media to local news, from the nation's most popular podcasts to the halls of Congress, FIRE was front and center in the national conversation.



FIRE Vice President of Campus Advocacy Alex Morey on CNN's "The Lead with Jake Tapper"



FIRE President Greg Lukianoff and CEO on the CBS Sunday morning news show "Face the Nation"

Virtually every major national outlet featured our perspective, including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, FOX News, CNN, The Atlantic, The Los Angeles Times, and the New York Post.



1,166

We were mentioned in 1,166 articles about the congressional hearing on anti-Semitism last December.



538

FIRE appeared in 538 articles about the spring encampments and other protests.

Principled Advocacy

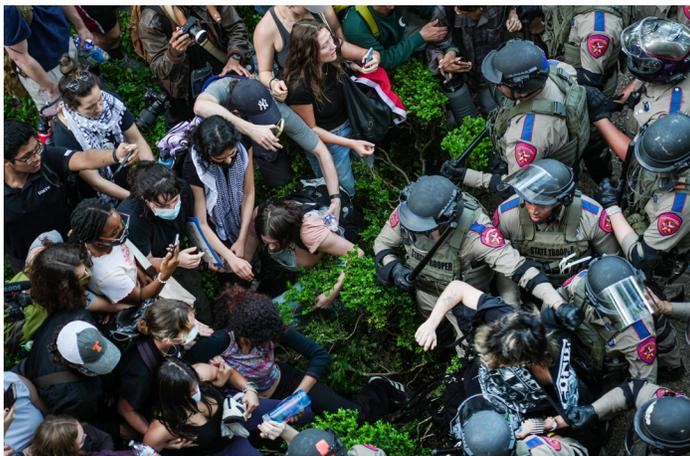
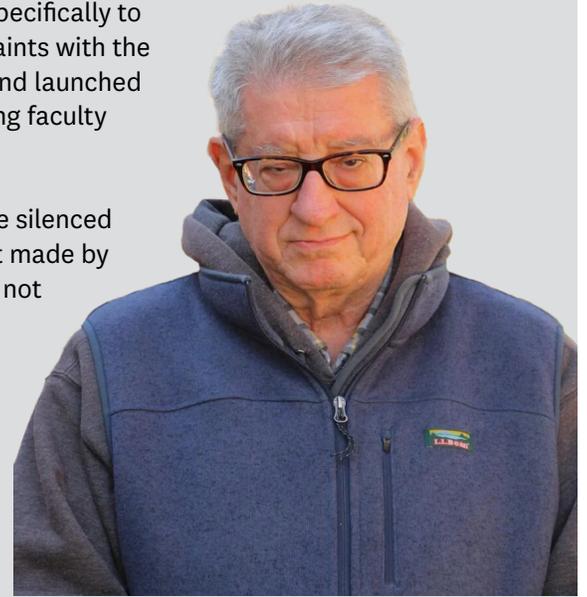
We didn't just *talk* about the unfolding chaos. We took direct action to defend individuals whose expressive rights were violated.

Individuals like University of Southern California professor John Strauss. Pro-Palestinian protesters circulated a video of Strauss edited to make it look like he said all Palestinians should be killed, when he was actually referring specifically to Hamas terrorists. More than a dozen students and faculty filed complaints with the university against Strauss, and USC relegated him to online teaching and launched an investigation. FIRE wrote to USC to remind it of its policies protecting faculty speech like professor Strauss's.

We also defended several residents of Teaneck, New Jersey. They were silenced during a school board meeting when they tried to criticize a statement made by the district's superintendent because they believed the statement did not condemn Hamas' attack strongly enough. FIRE organized an effort to compel Teaneck to back down from its unconstitutional censorship of citizen opinion.

These are just two of more than 60 cases our team tackled this year related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Right: University of Southern California professor John Strauss



This year, FIRE stuck to our nonpartisan fundamentals, defending people on each side of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including:

- Pro-Palestinian protesters at the University of Texas at Austin, where Gov. Greg Abbott ordered state troopers to intervene, leading to the arrest of dozens of students.
- The Columbia Law Students Against Antisemitism who were denied formal group recognition by Columbia Law's student senate.
- A pro-Palestinian artist whose art exhibit was canceled by Indiana University.

Image credits: (top left) lev radin / Shutterstock.com, (bottom left) Ricardo B. Braziell/American-Statesman / USA TODAY NETWORK

Defending Every Voice

Together, our Campus Rights Advocacy and Public Advocacy teams defended voices from across the ideological spectrum and the country, standing up for everyone from college professors in Colorado to vendors at a community festival in Ohio.

The Fight Against Compelled Speech

In September 2023, FIRE wrote to the University of Colorado, Boulder, after learning that the school was requiring applicants for certain faculty positions to submit statements describing how their scholarship “advance[s] diversity, equity, and inclusion.” Worse still, the university was requiring applicants to advocate for *particular* forms of DEI. This type of compelled speech flies in the face of free inquiry. Fortunately, after our letter, the university backed down.

Mandatory DEI statements aren’t the only form of compelled speech. FIRE also took on a case of forced patriotism in Maryland this year, when our Public Advocacy team reminded an elementary school in Mount Airy that it cannot compel students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance — a matter settled by the Supreme Court in 1943.

As usual, FIRE’s campus cases this year covered a wide range of issues. We:

- Helped reverse a blanket ban on Greek life at the University of Maryland.
- Defended Spectrum WT, an LGBTQ student group whose charity drag shows were unilaterally banned by the president of West Texas A&M University.
- Convinced administrators at the University of Texas at Dallas to rescind charges against a student who told campus parking officers to “get a real job.”

This year, FIRE’s intrepid Campus Rights Advocacy team:



Fielded more than 1,500 case inquiries.



Wrote 161 letters.



Secured 74 victories.



Managed a caseload of more than 100 simultaneous cases.



When Administrators Can’t Take a Joke

Professor David Richardson at Madera Community College was suspended for handing out these candy bars (the HeHim bars contained nuts, and the SheHer bars did not). After FIRE intervened, the college reversed his suspension.

Image credit: @JeremyDBoreing / X.com



Censorship Comes to Apple Butter Day

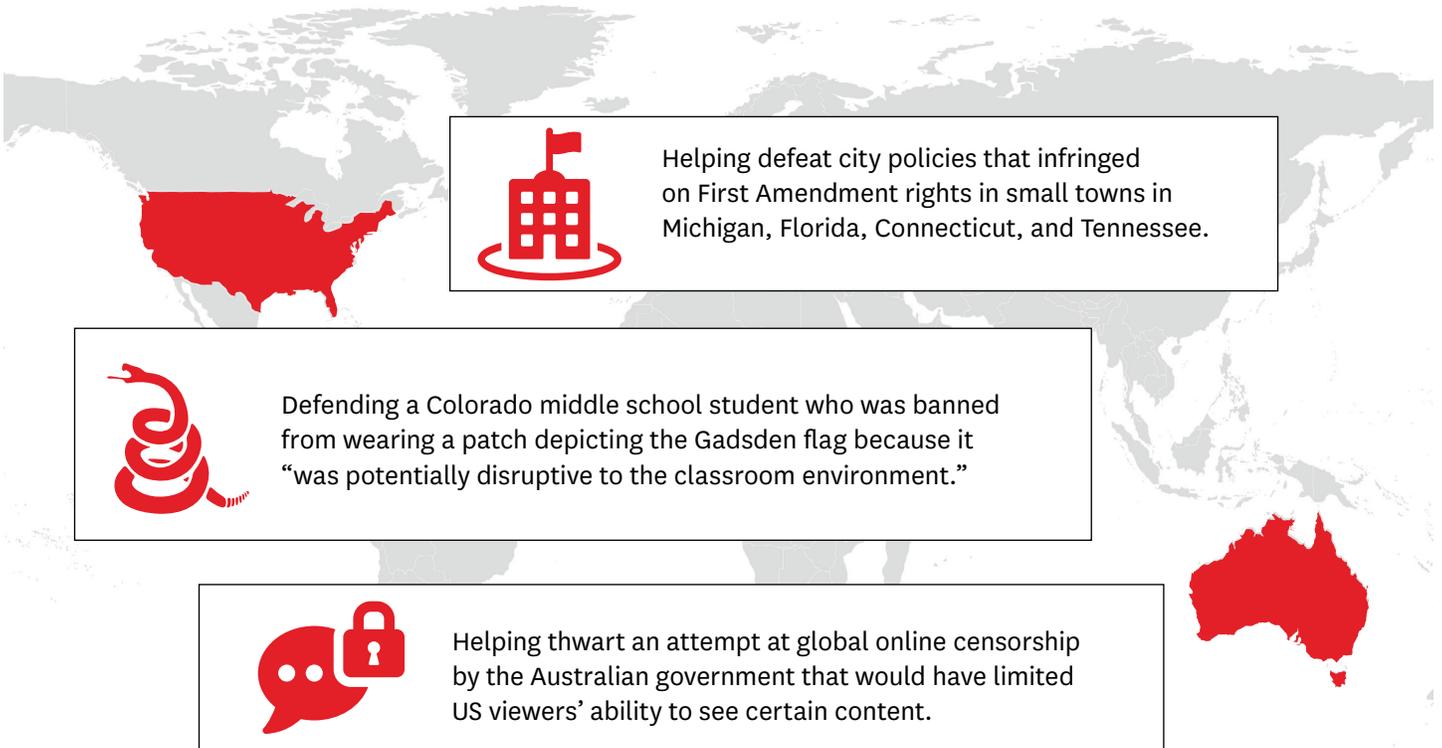
Every October, the city of Groveport, Ohio, comes alive with its Apple Butter Day festival — a celebration of the region’s heritage featuring music, food, and arts and crafts. For years, Jake and Jan Seabaugh participated as a vendor, selling wood carvings and stained glass art featuring faith-based imagery like crosses, the Star of David, and signs with sayings like, “Peace, Believe, Love.”

However, this year their participation was effectively outlawed after the City of Groveport imposed a ban on selling “faith-based items.” Officials argued that items like those the Seabaughs were selling would suggest the city was endorsing religious beliefs.

That’s not right. A vendor doesn’t speak for the city, and banning the sale of items expressing religious belief violates their First Amendment rights. Fortunately, after FIRE intervened with a letter to Groveport officials, the city lifted its ban.

Left: Jake and Jan Seabaugh of Canal Winchester, Ohio. Photo courtesy of Jan Seabaugh.

FIRE’s Public Advocacy team secured 12 victories, including:



Helping defeat city policies that infringed on First Amendment rights in small towns in Michigan, Florida, Connecticut, and Tennessee.



Defending a Colorado middle school student who was banned from wearing a patch depicting the Gadsden flag because it “was potentially disruptive to the classroom environment.”



Helping thwart an attempt at global online censorship by the Australian government that would have limited US viewers’ ability to see certain content.

Leveraging Data

This year, FIRE produced groundbreaking research that documented incidents of campus censorship, demonstrated the dangerous effects of a campus climate hostile to free expression, and tracked public opinion about free speech.

FIRE's College Free Speech Rankings

Based on a survey of more than 55,000 students and a rigorous analysis of administrative practices, FIRE's 2024 College Free Speech Rankings assess how friendly 248 campuses are for free speech. More than any other source, the rankings provide extensive data that explain why schools like Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania, and Columbia University — all of which came in near the bottom — utterly failed to uphold the principles of free expression this year.

That's why the Rankings received more attention than ever before. They generated more than 2,000 media mentions, earned shout-outs from Elon Musk and Bill Maher, and were endorsed by renowned statistician Nate Silver. They were even cited in December's high-profile congressional hearing on campus anti-Semitism.

And the Rankings led to concrete results. Schools like Clemson University, University of South Carolina, and Georgia Institute of Technology reformed their policies to improve their rank. What's more, trustees are bringing the data to board meetings, powerful alumni are leveraging it with their alma maters, and prospective students are using it to pick a college.



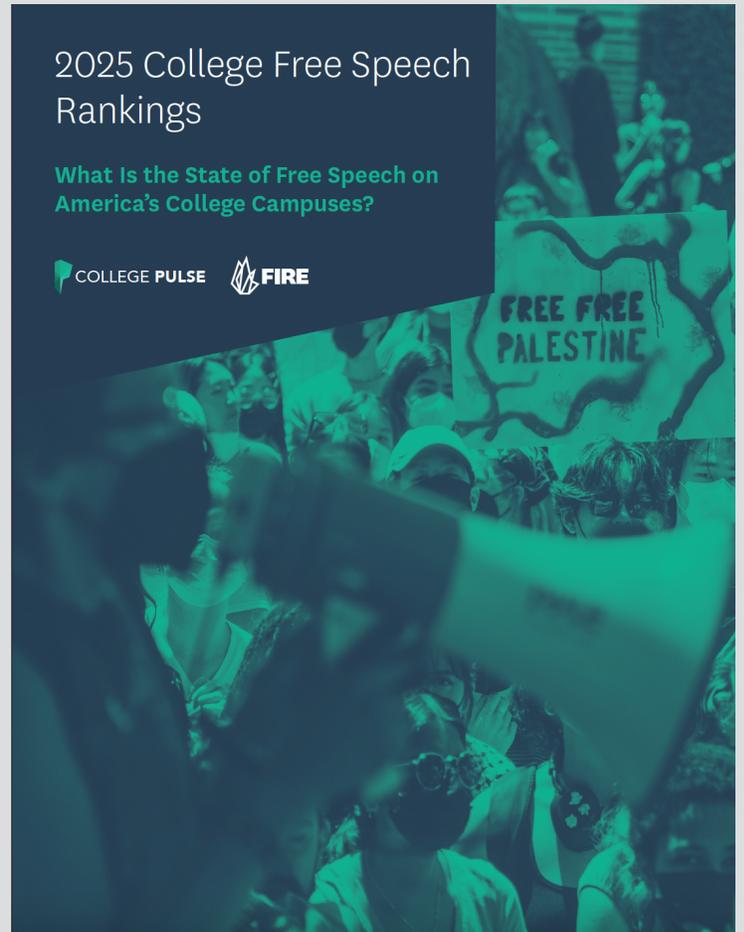
Bill Maher cites FIRE's College Free Speech Rankings to explain the post-October 7 meltdown at Harvard and other elite schools.

BREAKING: FIRE's 2025 College Free Speech Rankings were released on September 5, 2024

2025 College Free Speech Rankings

What Is the State of Free Speech on America's College Campuses?

COLLEGE PULSE 



The 2025 Rankings are based on data compiled from January to June 2024. Here's a preview of what they reveal about America's campus free speech crisis:



Seven out of ten students think it's acceptable on some occasions to shout down a speaker.

An all-time high of one in three students believes it's acceptable on some occasions to use violence to stop a speech on campus.



55% of students find it difficult to discuss the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on campus, the highest FIRE has ever recorded on any issue.

Reforming Policies

More than 85% of the 489 schools included in FIRE's Spotlight database, which tracks campus speech codes across the country, have policies that can be used to restrict constitutionally protected speech.

That number is disturbing, but thankfully FIRE's Policy Reform team applies pressure to administrators and offers solutions to restore First Amendment rights on campus. This year, the Policy Reform team welcomed eight new campuses to FIRE's ranks of "green light" schools that maintain no policies that seriously imperil speech. Those eight schools boast an enrollment of more than 120,000 students, all of whom can now feel much more confident that they can speak their minds without facing punishment.

48



FIRE reformed 48 individual policies on 19 campuses across the country.

51



28



39



Our Policy Reform team took 51 meetings with administrators at 28 schools, and sent out 39 policy memos urging reform.



We launched six email- and letter-writing campaigns to pressure campus officials across the country to make their policies speech-friendly.



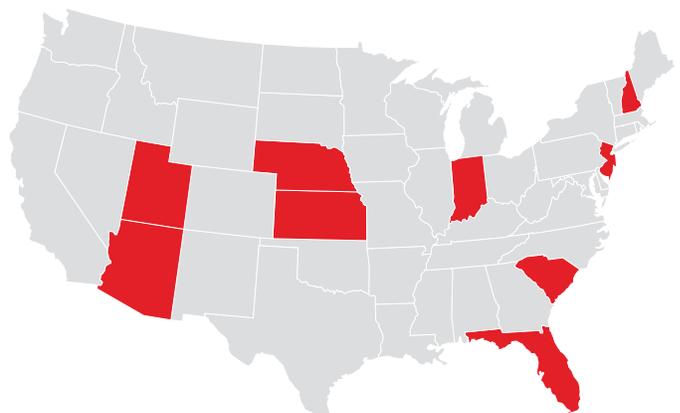
Over the past 10+ years FIRE staff have helped us transform nearly ten 'red light' and 'yellow light' speech policies into 'green light' ones at both the campus and UW system level. FIRE staff have been instrumental in the proper enforcement of policies too. Thanks FIRE!

– Tim Shiell, University of Wisconsin - Stout, head of the University of Wisconsin's Institute for Citizenship and Civil Dialogue

Legislating Liberty

FIRE has another means to ensure speech-protective rules win the day: legislation. For example, Kansas passed a law based on FIRE's model Intellectual Freedom Protection Act, which prohibits the use of mandatory diversity, equity, and inclusion statements — and all other political litmus tests — in faculty applications and promotion reviews at public colleges. Meanwhile, Utah passed a law, based on FIRE's model campus due process bill, that provides robust due process protections for students involved in campus disciplinary proceedings.

Those are just two of FIRE's legislative wins this year. We also worked with legislators to pass a comprehensive campus free speech bill in New Hampshire while helping to defeat eight bills that threatened individual rights in Florida, Arizona, South Carolina, Indiana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and Nebraska.



Cultivating the Grassroots

The events of this year demonstrated the profound need to transform the culture more broadly. In particular, we need to build a new campus culture from the grassroots up.

That's why FIRE's Student Outreach programs train America's future leaders to become effective advocates for free speech. Initiatives like our summer internship and Campus Scholars program empower students to advocate for expressive rights and launch pro-free speech projects that make a lasting impact. This year, participants in FIRE's student programs launched student newspapers, convinced their schools to adopt speech-friendly policies, spoke to trustees, and much more.



“The Campus Scholar program allowed me to establish the first fully student-run newspaper at Mercyhurst University. My project allowed me to engage in discussions with students, professors, and administrators about how to make our university more protective of students’ free speech rights.”

– Vydalia Weatherly, Mercyhurst University, 2023 Campus Scholar



Every summer, FIRE hosts a cohort of interns in our Philadelphia headquarters. The interns gain the hands-on training necessary to become ambassadors for liberty and individual rights on campus.

“FIRE taught me how to turn my First Amendment beliefs into tangible action, something this past year highlighted as imminently necessary.”

– Melissa Shane, 2024 FIRE Intern, Emory University



FIRE is building a network of thousands of pro-free speech students nationwide.



FIRE's Student Network email list has more than 16,000 subscribers.



We received 448 applications for our 2024 Summer Internship Program.

FIRE's Free Speech Leadership Summit

In June, FIRE hosted its first-ever Free Speech Leadership Summit, which brought nearly 200 high school students from across the country to Philadelphia for a week of learning about free speech. Students heard from activists, scholars, and FIRE staff; dug into hands-on projects related to journalism, social media, and the arts; and learned how to effectively advocate for free speech.

“I left feeling as if free speech work might be my calling!”

– Free Speech Leadership Summit attendee



Faculty Take a Stand

FIRE didn't only mobilize students this year. Our Faculty Network connected scholars nationwide with the resources they need to stand up for academic freedom. For example, FIRE's 2023 Faculty Conference brought together nearly 50 scholars who are passionate about defending free speech — scholars like Mark Berkson, a professor of religion at Hamline University.

Last year, Berkson's colleague Erika López Prater lost her job after showing images of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad in her art history class. While many accused López Prater of Islamophobia and called on Hamline to fire her, Berkson publicly defended her, enduring similar hostility and accusations of bigotry. For Berkson's brave defense of academic freedom, FIRE presented him with our first-ever “Berkson Courageous Colleague Award” at the Faculty Network Conference.

Professor Mark Berkson poses with his colleague Erika López Prater after receiving FIRE's “Berkson Courageous Colleague Award”

Back to Basics

This year’s free speech challenges are a symptom of a wider problem: a culture that struggles to understand and respect freedom of expression. That’s why we need to explain to the American public why free speech is so fundamental for keeping societies free, democratic, and prosperous. And this year, we took to America’s airwaves, social media feeds, and mailboxes to reach millions of everyday Americans with the basic messages that explain why free speech makes free people.

FIRE’s message is resonating. We reached larger audiences than ever this year:

 **22 M**

We produced more than 300 videos for YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and X, which collectively received nearly 22 million views.

 **1.8 M**

Our Newsdesk, which offers breaking free speech news and analysis, received nearly 1.8 million views.

 **190,546**  **US: Politics**

FIRE’s “So to Speak” podcast notched 190,546 listens this year, and an additional 74,787 people watched our episodes on YouTube. “So to Speak” achieved notable rankings on podcast charts, including #2 in “US: Politics.”



FIRE ran an ad featuring Daryl Davis, an African American blues musician, who has convinced members of the Ku Klux Klan to renounce their deep-seated bigotry — and he has the hoods to prove it.



FIRE filmed and publicized a conversation between FIRE President and CEO Greg Lukianoff and legendary comedian and “Monty Python” actor John Cleese about how free expression allows comedy to push boundaries.

The Canceling of the American Mind

Last October, FIRE President and CEO Greg Lukianoff released his latest book, “The Canceling of the American Mind,” co-authored with Gen Z journalist and fierce free speech advocate Rikki Schlott. The book makes the definitive case that cancel culture is real and lays out how we can refocus on arguing toward truth. It was selected as one of The Wall Street Journal’s “Best Books of 2023” and as one of the New York Post’s “30 must-read titles” of 2023.



Building a Free Speech Movement

As important as it is to reach new audiences, truly winning in the court of public opinion requires building a free speech movement, a base of constituents who will speak out on behalf of expressive rights and counter censorship. And this year, FIRE’s efforts to build our public profile and acquire new followers continued to pay off — big time.

We also mobilized thousands of our followers through 35 take-action campaigns. These efforts included:



Rallying the residents of Suffield, Connecticut, and other advocates to defeat a proposed policy that would stifle free expression on the town’s 350-year-old Town Green.

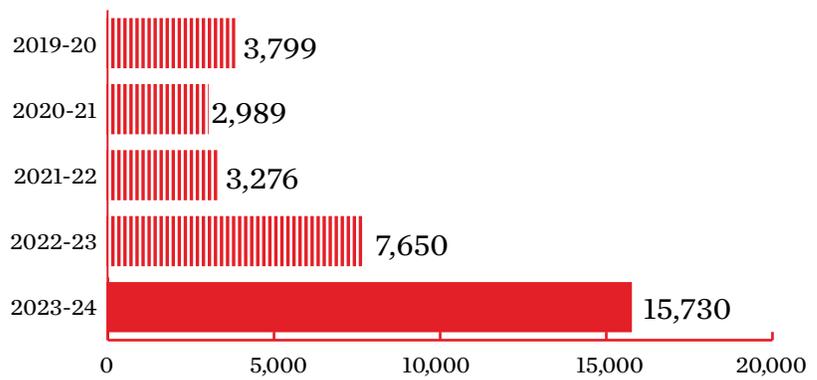


An open letter pressuring colleges nationwide to adopt institutional neutrality.

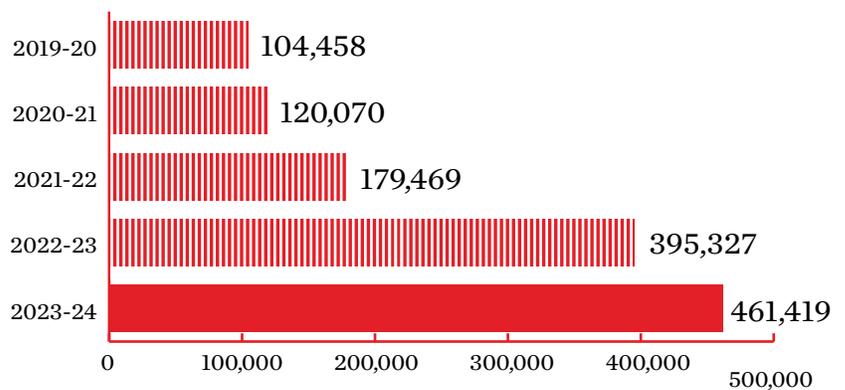


A campaign demanding that the Vermont State Police develop and implement policies and training programs to ensure officers understand their duty to respect our right to free speech.

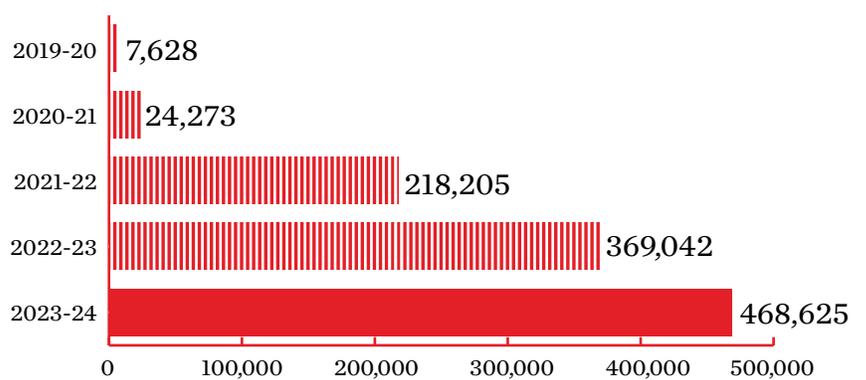
Media mentions of FIRE by fiscal year in print, on television, on the radio, and on podcasts:



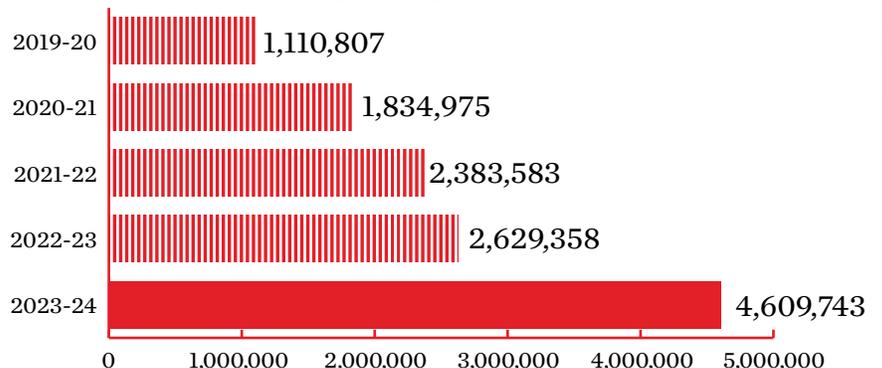
FIRE social media followers by fiscal year:



FIRE email subscribers by fiscal year:



Visitors to FIRE’s website by fiscal year:



Going to Court

Of course, we couldn't claim the mantle of America's premier free speech organization without defending First Amendment rights in court.

FIRE's Litigation team is America's top legal shop defending free expression, composed of the nation's finest First Amendment attorneys; when censors won't back down, we have the resources and expertise to hold them accountable. In courtrooms across the country, FIRE defends our fundamental right to speak free of government interference — in city halls, town squares, high schools, public parks, and more.

Suing a Censorial Mayor

Mary Hall-Rayford, a long-time resident of Eastpointe, Michigan, was disappointed by the behavior of her mayor, Monique Owens, and she wanted to share her concerns during the public comment period of Eastpointe's city council meeting. Unfortunately, Mayor Owens couldn't take the heat, and she repeatedly shouted over Mary, drowning her out.

If the First Amendment protects anything at all, it protects our right to criticize government officials. So Mary teamed up with FIRE and three other Eastpointers who were similarly silenced to sue Mayor Owens and the City of Eastpointe. And together we won, securing a settlement in which the city repealed its policy against "directing" comments at public officials and paid each plaintiff \$17,910 — a nod to the year 1791, when the First Amendment was ratified — plus attorneys' fees. The city also issued a rare formal apology to FIRE's clients and established September 6 as its annual First Amendment Day.

"I am pleased with FIRE's diligence and ability to keep moving forward. I hope the city will do the same, now that everyone is aware of the consequences for violating the First Amendment."

- Mary Hall-Rayford, FIRE plaintiff



Plaintiffs Mary Hall-Rayford, Cindy Federle, and Karen Mouradjian with FIRE attorney Conor Fitzpatrick

This year, FIRE's Litigation team and caseload continued to grow:

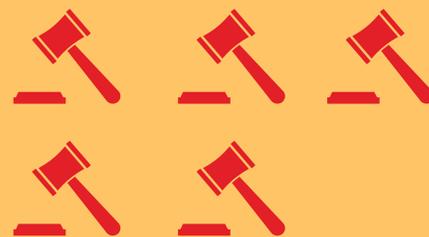
We hired 5 new attorneys.



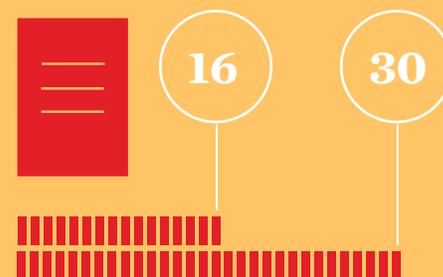
We launched 10 litigation cases this year.



We secured victories in 5 cases.



Our docket of cases grew from 16 last year to 30 this year.





“With this settlement, I hope the Vermont State Police will train its troopers to avoid silencing criticism or making baseless car stops. And at least now I can pay my criminal attorney for defending me from the bogus charges and take my 88-year-old mother out for a nice dinner.”

– Greg Bombard, FIRE plaintiff

Yes, You Have the Right to Flip Off the Cops

It was just another day for Greg Bombard, who was out driving in his hometown of St. Albans, Vermont. Suddenly, he saw flashing lights — a state trooper was pulling him over. Trooper Jay Riggen thought Greg had given him the middle finger, but he hadn’t. The trooper then berated and interrogated Greg for several minutes. But Greg knew his rights. “If someone flipped you off, what is the citation? What’s the crime?” he asked Riggen, later adding, “That would be considered freedom of expression.”

When Riggen abruptly walked away, Greg this time did display the one-finger salute and uttered a few choice words to express his frustration. Of course, the trooper did not like this one bit. He immediately pulled Greg over again, threatened him with force, handcuffed him, and locked him in a cell. As the cherry on top, the trooper ensured Greg would be charged with “disorderly conduct.”

The bogus charges were eventually dropped, but not before Greg had accumulated a year’s worth of legal fees. He teamed up with FIRE and the ACLU of Vermont to sue the state, and he eventually secured a \$175,000 settlement.

Our lawsuits on behalf of Mary and Greg are just a sample of FIRE’s litigation work this year. We also:

- Petitioned the Supreme Court to hear our case on behalf of Priscilla Villarreal, a citizen-journalist in Laredo, Texas, who was arrested for merely asking a police officer to confirm information she received from another source.
- Successfully defended librarians in Orem, Utah, who were stripped of important professional benefits because they criticized government officials for banning Pride displays in public libraries. In response to our demand letter, the City of Orem also adopted a new social media policy that ensures that public employees can criticize city officials.
- Advocated for animal rights activists Faraz Harsini and Daraius Dubash, who were arrested for peacefully demonstrating in a public park in downtown Houston.
- Sued to challenge Utah’s attempt to “child-proof” social media. Utah unilaterally mandated that everyone under 18 only be allowed to access a restricted version of social media that reduces it to the functional equivalent of a group text.

Campus Rights on Trial

FIRE has a long tradition of securing campus rights by reaching out to administrators and applying public pressure to schools. We prefer this as a first line of attack, but sometimes campus administrators won't back down. When this happens, FIRE is ready to throw the might of our Litigation team behind First Amendment rights on campus.

“What’s the ‘anti-racist’ perspective on the atomic mass of boron?”

That’s what chemistry professor Bill Blanken wondered as he tried to figure out how to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion concepts into his classroom instruction after the state of California mandated that professors do so.

The mandate, passed last year by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors, forces all of its professors and administrators to incorporate the state’s views on DEI into nearly every facet of academic life. Faculty performance and tenure are now also evaluated based on professors’ commitment to and promotion of these “anti-racist” viewpoints. In other words, professors must adopt the state’s views in their classrooms — or else.

These DEI requirements are compelled speech and are a blatant violation of the First Amendment and academic freedom. Thankfully for Bill and his fellow professors, FIRE has their back: We filed a lawsuit to halt the mandate.



FIRE plaintiffs Bill Blanken and Linda de Morales



FIRE plaintiff Kimberly Diei and her attorneys

FIRE litigated eight campus cases this year, which included:

- Defending Stuart Reges, a University of Washington professor punished for challenging the university’s position on Native American land acknowledgment statements.
- Going to court on behalf of Kimberly Diei, who was twice investigated and threatened with expulsion by officials at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center College of Pharmacy because of allegations that her personal social media activity was too “crude,” “vulgar,” and “sexual.”
- Securing a \$330,000 settlement for Clovis Community College students after administrators took down a conservative student group’s anti-communist flyers and rejected its pro-life flyers. The court also banned Clovis from enforcing any policy that discriminates against student groups based on their viewpoint.

Scaling Our Legal Influence

While FIRE’s capacity to defend First Amendment rights has grown exponentially in recent years, we can’t respond to every single threat. But we can leverage our world-class legal talent to influence cases we don’t directly litigate. By submitting *amicus curiae* — “friend of the court” — briefs, we offer incisive analysis on the most significant free speech cases of the day and help persuade the nation’s highest courts to set lasting First Amendment legal protections.

Our *amicus* program was especially important this year, as we witnessed the most consequential Supreme Court term for free expression in decades. The Court heard eight First Amendment-related cases, and FIRE submitted *amicus* briefs in all of them. By and large, the Court agreed with FIRE’s briefs and got the most important issues right, protecting the content moderation rights of private online platforms and ensuring the government can’t pressure private companies to sever business relationships with entities that hold disfavored views.



FIRE Chief Counsel Bob Corn-Revere at the Supreme Court discussing this year’s most significant First Amendment cases

This year, FIRE filed more than 30 *amicus* briefs. Highlights of that work include:



Defending the right of a middle schooler to wear a shirt saying, “There are only two genders.”



Challenging a vague mandate in Iowa to remove books depicting a “sex act” from public school libraries.



Defending the right of citizens to peacefully protest on public property in Texas.

Training America’s Future Free Speech Lawyers

We also scale our influence by investing in the next generation of legal talent. Thanks to a generous gift from Arthur D. Hellman, a legal scholar at the University of Pittsburgh, each summer FIRE welcomes a cohort of legal fellows who work with us to gain front-line experience in First Amendment litigation.



FIRE’s 2024 Hellman Fellows hailed from Stanford Law School, the University of Tennessee College of Law, George Washington University Law School, and American University Washington College of Law.

Cheers to 25 Years

FIRE is celebrating our 25th anniversary this year, and a lot has changed since our founding in 1999. We've broadened our mission from college campuses to America at large, our staff has grown to 114 full-time employees, and we recently moved into brand new expanded offices in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

Even so, FIRE staffers remain as playful, gritty, and principled as they've always been. And we never lose sight of our core mission: defending and sustaining the individual rights to free speech and free thought. Protecting the most essential qualities of liberty is our duty, and we're propelled, each and every day, by our principled and generous supporters.

Thank you for making our fight possible.



A large group of about 50 people posing for a group photo on a grassy area with many trees in the background. Most of the people are wearing white t-shirts with a logo that says 'FIRE' and '25'. Some are wearing hats and sunglasses. A red banner in the top left corner of the photo contains the year '2024' in white text.



FIRE employs 114 full-time staffers, up from 107 last year.



We reach an audience of more than 900,000 email subscribers and social media followers, up from 750,000 last year.



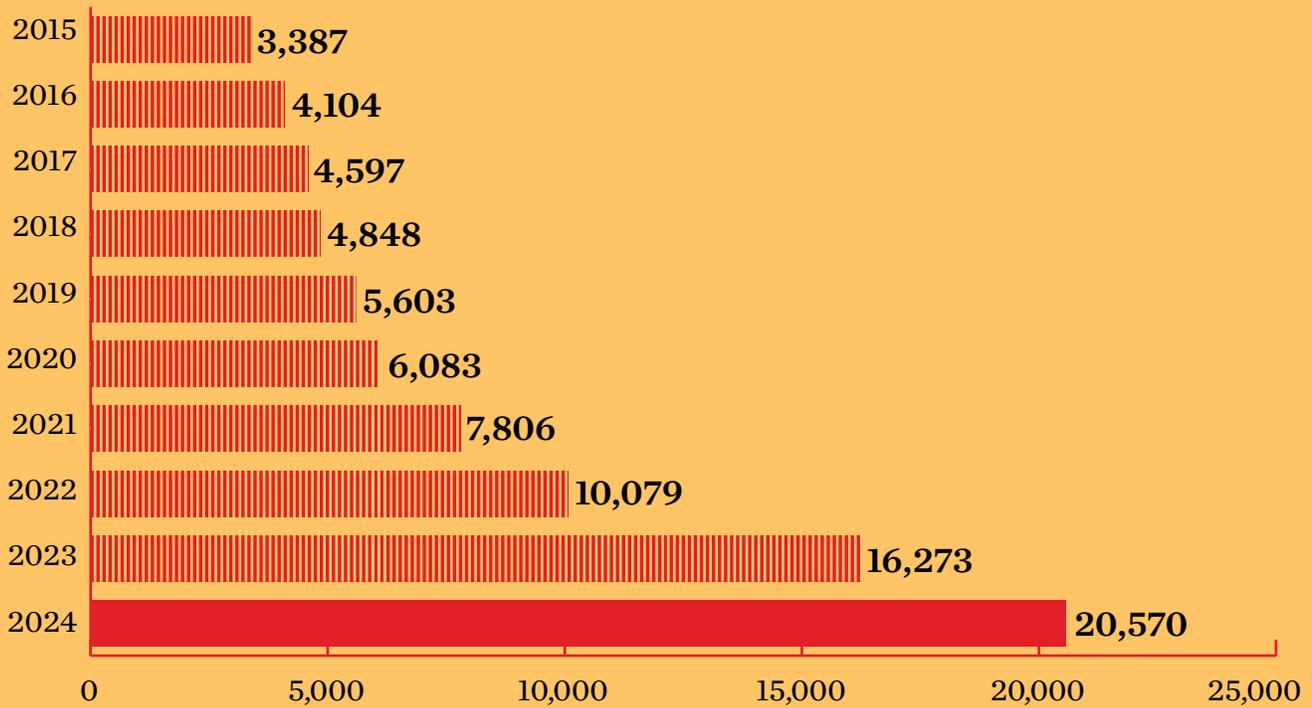
The media mentioned FIRE more than 15,000 times this year, up from 7,650 last year.



Key Financials from our 2023-2024 Fiscal Year

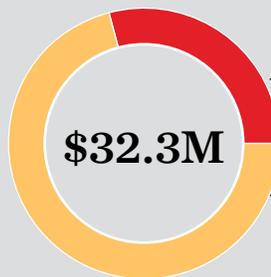
Support & Revenue	
Contributions and Grants	\$32,251,288
Realized Investment Income	\$947,274
Unrealized Investment Income	\$2,473,108
Gain on Disposal of Lease Related Assets	\$170,998
Other Income	\$123,616
TOTAL	\$35,966,284
Expenses	
Programs	
Campus Rights Advocacy	\$2,058,034
Communications	\$6,843,886
Engagement & Mobilization	\$1,040,704
Faculty Outreach	\$313,406
FIRE Litigation	\$3,575,716
FIRE Student Network	\$1,026,201
Legislative and Policy	\$897,157
Policy Reform	\$550,266
Public Advocacy	\$821,017
Research	\$3,711,758
Strategic Partnerships	\$1,250,390
Management and General	\$2,107,905
Development	\$3,692,542
TOTAL	\$27,888,982
Assets and Liabilities	
Cash and Equivalents	\$5,987,170
Investments	\$41,246,148
Pledges Receivable	\$4,421,543
Property and Equipment	\$5,215,493
Right-of-Use Assets	\$5,649,675
Other Assets	\$745,126
Liabilities	(\$10,036,913)
NET ASSETS	\$53,228,242

Total donations to FIRE by fiscal year



4,284

4,284 individuals or organizations donated to FIRE for the first time this year.



Foundation Grants

Individual Donors

\$32.3M

This fiscal year, we raised \$32.3 million: 71% from individual donors and 29% from foundation grants.

FIRE's Membership Program

FIRE's membership program consists of those who donate \$25 or more annually, helping us maintain a consistent base of support. We now have 11,240 members, up from 9,294 last year.



11,240



I have confidence that FIRE will continue to punch above its weight and that my legacy gift will make a meaningful contribution to defending free speech for generations to come.



Nadine Strossen, Eternal Flame Society member

Leadership

PRESIDENT AND CEO

Greg Lukianoff

LEGAL DIRECTOR

Will Creeley

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Alisha Glennon

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Nico Perrino

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Keith Whittington

FIRE's mission is to defend and sustain the individual rights of all Americans to free speech and free thought — the most essential qualities of liberty. FIRE educates Americans about the importance of these inalienable rights, promotes a culture of respect for these rights, and provides the means to preserve them.

FIRE recognizes that colleges and universities play a vital role in preserving free thought within a free society. To this end, we place a special emphasis on defending the individual rights of students and faculty members on our nation's campuses, including freedom of speech, freedom of association, due process, legal equality, religious liberty, and sanctity of conscience.

Feeling “FIRE’d” up? There are lots of ways to get involved.



Subscribe to FIRE updates on our website to get the latest free speech news in your inbox! Those updates will include opportunities to take direct action on behalf of freedom of expression. To learn about other ways to get involved, visit thefire.org/action or email volunteer@thefire.org.

FIRE is proud to be a home for those who defend free speech, and we are working every day to create a million-person movement. By making a tax-deductible donation to FIRE, you'll automatically join that movement as a FIRE member.

FIRE MEMBER *Starting at \$25*

- Receive your annual FIRE membership card and invitations to FIRE events in your area.
- Enjoy a one-year subscription to our FIRE Quarterly magazine.

FIRE FAHRENHEIT MEMBER *Starting at \$1,000*

- Receive your annual FIRE Fahrenheit membership card.
- Enjoy opportunities to attend private events and meet with our attorneys and staff.
- Open invitation to tour FIRE's headquarters in Philadelphia or DC.

EMBER CLUB *Starting at \$2,500*

- Join a tight circle of our most generous supporters.
- Receive invitations to exclusive events.
- Enjoy more access to FIRE's programs and leadership.

Membership benefits accumulate →



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