



# BRADLEY IMPACT BRIEF

FALL 2020 ISSUE



## BY THE NUMBERS

# 123

The number of people who safely attended the 10th Annual Bradley Impact Conference in person last month.

## FROM THE DESK OF GABE CONGER

Dear Friends,

As a nation, 2020 is a year none of us will soon forget. An unpredictable pandemic, economic shutdown, social unrest, and a highly polarized election. However, last month members of our donor community and conservative leaders from around the country came together at the 10th Annual Bradley Impact Conference to discuss the future of our communities and nation. One thing was abundantly clear at the Conference: this is a community of dedicated American patriots who will not quit on this country.

### We have much to be grateful for:

- **OUR FOUNDING FATHERS**, whose genius birthed what is now the longest-standing democratic republic in the world. Thanks to their wisdom and foresight, America can neither be preserved nor lost in one election.
- **OUR IMPACT CONFERENCE PANELISTS AND SPEAKERS**. Every single individual rose to the challenge of identifying opportunities for donors to have an impact with their giving amidst the pandemic. They came well prepared to share insights and opportunities on how philanthropy can advance policy solutions. You will find many of those opportunities detailed in this *Brief*.
- **OUR DONOR COMMUNITY**. It was Thomas Jefferson who said, “We in America do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate.” He was speaking of us, of our community. Every one of our donors has the courage to stand up for his or her convictions. We may have individual priorities in choosing what we support, but we are united in our commitment and dedication to preserve America for future generations.

For my family personally, this has been a momentous year with the birth of our son Jack. The importance of educating our youngest citizens was a frequent theme at the year’s Conference. As our panelists advised, we would do well to ensure they learn this history of our nation and come of age as proud Americans. The stakes are too high.

As you read this issue and reflect on the Conference insights, please reach out to us with your questions, thoughts, and ideas.

Onward,

Gabe Conger  
President, Bradley Impact Fund

*"Boldness and courage have been replaced by apathy, and it is destroying our nation. We need action to preserve what has made America exceptional."*

— **MATT BEVIN**  
ENTREPRENEUR & 62ND GOVERNOR OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY



## 10TH ANNUAL BRADLEY IMPACT CONFERENCE 2020 VISION: PHILANTHROPY IN FOCUS

*"We need to change the conversation about school systems and buildings to funding for students. It's about individual kids, not buildings, and connecting funding directly to students. If we think in these terms, we start to get different answers."*

— **BETSY DeVOS**  
U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION



Last month members of the Bradley Impact Fund community came together at the 10th Annual Bradley Impact Conference to address a critical question: What can we do for our families, our communities, and the future of our nation? The answer for committed Americans is to focus philanthropy through a shared vision for supporting organizations that restore, strengthen, and protect America's founding principles and institutions.

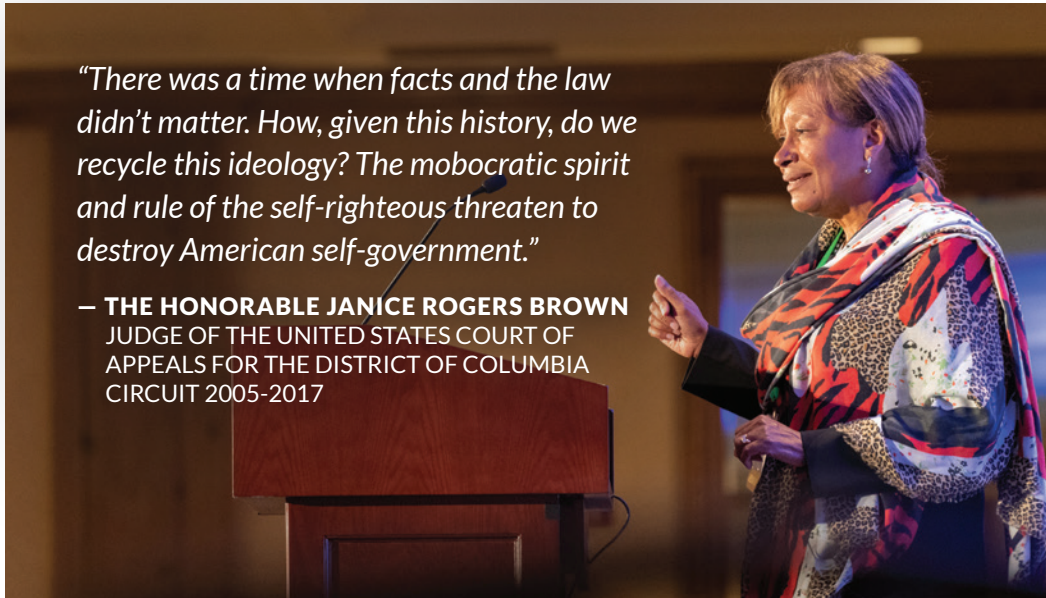
With the theme *2020 Vision: Philanthropy in Focus* as our guide, we discussed opportunities for thoughtful, well-informed philanthropy with conservative thought leaders, public intellectuals and leaders in the community. We worked tirelessly to put safety protocols in place to keep our in-person guests safe, and leveraged technology to ensure our virtual attendees were equally engaged in these important conversations. Thank you to all who participated for your time, effort, and commitment. Together, let's find hope and peace of mind in knowing that our support for principled nonprofit organizations, and the innovative, compassionate people who lead them, will make our nation a stronger, more vibrant beacon of freedom and opportunity for all people.





*"Our political leaders have embraced the mantra 'stay safe'. How about stay learned, stay curious, stay enthralled by beauty? If staying safe was the human motto, there would have been no founding of America."*

— **HEATHER MAC DONALD**  
THOMAS W. SMITH FELLOW AT THE  
MANHATTAN INSTITUTE, a  
contributing editor of City Journal, and  
a New York Times bestselling author



*"There was a time when facts and the law didn't matter. How, given this history, do we recycle this ideology? The mobocratic spirit and rule of the self-righteous threaten to destroy American self-government."*

— **THE HONORABLE JANICE ROGERS BROWN**  
JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF  
APPEALS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
CIRCUIT 2005-2017

## PANELIST ORGANIZATIONS at the 2020 Bradley Impact Conference

Alma Center  
Badger Institute  
Ballotpedia  
Bridge Builders  
Center for Urban Teaching  
Commonwealth Foundation  
Ethics and Public Policy Center  
Foundation for Individual Rights  
in Education  
Hispanics for School Choice  
MacIver Institute  
National Association of Scholars  
Public Interest Legal  
Foundation  
Reason Foundation  
Save Our States  
Serenity Inns  
Texas Public Policy Foundation  
University of Notre Dame  
Wisconsin Institute for Law  
& Liberty  
Wisconsin Manufacturers  
& Commerce



## SAVE THE DATE

**11th Annual  
Bradley Impact Conference**  
September 30 & October 1, 2021  
Grand Geneva Resort  
Lake Geneva, WI

# CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER

## PRESERVING FREEDOM BY PROTECTING AMERICA'S DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM

**T**he focus of this giving area is preserving fidelity to the Constitution, giving Impact Fund donors opportunities to support organizations that champion federalism, uphold the rule of law, promote respect for America's democratic system, and protect the basic liberties outlined in the Bill of Rights.



The electoral process as defined by our Constitution was front and center in two Impact Conference panels in this election year, one with a focus on election integrity and the other taking a deep dive into key election indicators and pivotal trends.

**2020—Who Decides?** helped create a clearer understanding of the American electorate. Panelists included representatives from:

- **BALLOTPEDIA**, the online encyclopedia of American politics and elections, which continues to help citizens expand their knowledge of politics by providing objective information on local, state, and federal candidates, politics, and policies. Nearly 25% of American voters will use Ballotpedia's information in this election season.
- **ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY CENTER (EPPC)** is dedicated to applying the Judeo-Christian moral tradition to critical issues of public policy. Henry Olson, an EPPC senior fellow known for his electoral analysis, concluded during the panel, "...the deep difference on how to live one's life is dividing the country. Faith, race, these won't go away. Regardless of who wins, expect turmoil to continue."

In **Never Let a Crisis Go to Waste**, grant recipient organization panelists from the groups below described state and national solutions for preserving election integrity, including informing citizens how to protect the right to vote and the Electoral College system:

- **PUBLIC INTEREST LEGAL FOUNDATION (PILF)** takes a data-driven approach to uncovering voter fraud. PILF's Critical Condition report details the extent to which state voter rolls contain errors, duplicate registrations, and the names of deceased voters.
- **SAVE OUR STATES** defends the Electoral College and opposes the National Popular Vote campaign, which would nullify the Electoral College without a constitutional amendment.
- **TEXAS PUBLIC POLICY FOUNDATION (TPPF)**'s mission is to promote and defend liberty, personal responsibility, and free enterprise in Texas and the nation. Through education and outreach, TPPF is working to end voter fraud in Texas.

Through their vital work, each of these organizations is protecting and promoting the unique and extraordinary political system envisioned by America's Founders. You can view these panel discussions in their entirety at [bradleyimpactfund.org/bic2020](https://bradleyimpactfund.org/bic2020). For access enter the password BIC2020.





## FREE MARKETS

### IMPROVING OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL CITIZENS BY PROMOTING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Within this giving area, Impact Fund donors can fund grant recipients that champion economic freedom and the free markets that allow for private enterprise, entrepreneurship, and voluntary exchange within the rule of law. Our community supports organizations and projects that conduct research and educate the public and policymakers about the conditions necessary for economic growth and prosperity. Leaders from three of those organizations were back by popular demand at this year's Impact Conference: Badger Institute, MacIver Institute and Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty (WILL). They were joined by the president of Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce. The **Focus Wisconsin** panel illuminated the impact of pandemic crisis response policies on the state, its citizens and businesses in the short term, and longer-term threats to Constitutional order. As WILL President and General Counsel Rick Esenberg noted about the increase in government overreach, "...it's easy to make bad law in this environment...There's no COVID pandemic in the Constitution, so we can't say we will work on Constitutional order later on."



As highlighted in their panel discussion, these organizations are doing important work to maintain our free enterprise system to foster economic health in Wisconsin amid the pandemic:

- **BADGER INSTITUTE** continues to research and publish information about the impact of pandemic policy on lives and livelihoods across the state.
- **MACIVER INSTITUTE** is pushing past media hype to validate data about the pandemic and the models being used as the basis for policy. MacIver has successfully pointed out fallacies in government and policy-maker claims of potential impact based on this data.
- **WISCONSIN INSTITUTE FOR LAW & LIBERTY** is engaging in public discourse, fighting bad policy, and bringing litigation against state emergency orders that challenge the rule of law and separation of powers in Wisconsin.
- **WISCONSIN MANUFACTURERS & COMMERCE** continues to encourage state officials to develop strong, smart strategies for keeping the economy open and provides feedback on the impact of crisis response policies on businesses.

In many cases, these organizations are collaborating on the policy issues surrounding the pandemic. You can view the entire Focus Wisconsin: The Disaster of Safer at Home and the Way Forward panel discussion at [bradleyimpactfund.org/bic2020](https://bradleyimpactfund.org/bic2020). For access enter the password BIC2020.

## INFORMED CITIZENS

### SUPPORTING EDUCATION THAT PREPARES CITIZENS TO ENGAGE IN A FREE SOCIETY

In this giving area, Bradley Impact Fund donors can support educational efforts to help citizens understand the character, habits, and knowledge needed to succeed in a free society. At the Impact Conference, panelists for **Parents, Pipeline, Policy, and Physical Space—COVID-19 and Parental Choice in K-12 Education** spoke about advancing K-12 school choice, from ideas to implementation. They agreed with guest speaker U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos that funding should follow the student. If there could be a silver lining to the pandemic, it is the vital opportunity to reenergize the school choice movement. These organizations were represented on the panels:



- **CENTER FOR URBAN TEACHING**, a vital link in Milwaukee’s school choice ecosystem, has an innovative early recruitment and training model that is preparing teachers for careers in urban schools and has a national footprint with alumni in cities across the country.
- **COMMONWEALTH FOUNDATION**, Pennsylvania’s free-market think tank, is propelling education reform strategies and models first developed in Wisconsin forward, and getting policy change wins through legislation.
- **HISPANICS FOR SCHOOL CHOICE** helps Wisconsin parents access school choice for their children and become advocates for more educational choice.
- **REASON FOUNDATION**, a public policy research organization, continues to provide path-breaking research to the national school choice conversation, proving that funding students directly will create more equity in education.

During **Pandemic Consequences—Opportunities in Higher Education**, panelists discussed new opportunities to change direction on campus. The financial crisis posed by COVID-19 may increase the accountability of college administrations. The switch to online classes could release the stranglehold of universities on intellectual freedom. Dr. Vincent Phillip Muñoz, University of Notre Dame, observed, “We shouldn’t give up on universities. What we need for the health of America... is to get kids hungry to learn, to be with good books and good teachers—that is how we will save this country and the next generation.” The audience heard from the following:

- **FOUNDATION FOR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS IN EDUCATION** defends and sustains the individual rights of students and faculty members at America’s colleges and universities.
- **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOLARS** upholds the standards of a liberal arts education that fosters intellectual freedom, searches for the truth, and promotes virtuous citizenship.
- **UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME** offers an undergraduate minor through its Constitutional Studies Program that seeks to cultivate thoughtful and educated citizens that possess certain virtues; they must understand and be able to implement, defend, and, if need be, reform constitutional institutions.

You can view these panels at [bradleyimpactfund.org/bic2020](https://bradleyimpactfund.org/bic2020). For access enter the password BIC2020.



## CIVIL SOCIETY

### REINVENTING CIVIL SOCIETY BY CULTIVATING COMMUNITY, RESPONSIBILITY, AND CITIZENSHIP

**B**radley Impact Fund donors who value civil society support community institutions and organizations that guide behaviors, transform lives, and encourage genuine citizenship and self-governance. At this year's Impact Conference, we were joined by nonprofit leaders who effectively help people to help themselves by becoming strong, contributing members of American society. Though they work in different areas, these leaders have a common approach of convening people from different backgrounds. Could this model save our nation? These organizations are successfully repairing community relationships while helping to preserve human dignity and freedom of choice for people in challenging life situations:



- **ALMA CENTER** works with men who have been incarcerated or involved with the criminal justice system for domestic violence. The Center's community-based programs help men with violent histories become caring fathers, partners, husbands, and community advocates. In Alma's healing circles, men recently released from prison talk with police officers and people in the community about how violence has impacted their life. Stories are shared, and participants build close relationships and friendships across divides.
- **BRIDGE BUILDERS** is dedicated to changing minds and inspiring inner city residents to connect with their neighbors in ways that transform their neighborhoods. Currently working in the area centered around 40th Street and Hampton Avenue in Milwaukee, Bridge Builders aims to be the catalyst for revitalizing 140 blocks.
- **SERENITY INNS** provides a residential treatment program for men working to recover from addiction. Serenity helps men learn to communicate, form relationships in the community, and develop their own narrative about themselves. Serenity's nightly Dinner Fellowship program enables volunteers to prepare a meal and then sit down and share it with men in treatment. It breaks stereotypes about addiction and opens the door to lasting relationships.

During this panel discussion, Bridge Builders founder Kurt Owens noted, "One of the worst things we can do is make broad strokes. It's better to identify with individuals and meet them where they are at. Multiethnic relationships are the answer to impacting lives."

You can view the entire panel discussion, *Gratitude not Guilt—Building Community During Crisis*, at [bradleyimpactfund.org/bic2020](https://bradleyimpactfund.org/bic2020). For access enter the password BIC2020.



## Insights from the Impact Fund

**“A donation is an expression of trust between a donor and recipient.”** This is one of the five guiding principles of the Bradley Impact Fund, and we take the responsibility for safeguarding that trust very seriously. This year we have heard from donors just how important this commitment is. And how to do this well is the question we are now helping our donors answer.

Strong personal conviction reflected in a clear donor intent is one of the uniting aspects of our growing Impact Fund donor community. Our members are passionate about a wide range of ideas and issues. Some give today and some are leaving a legacy. While there are individual differences, we are united in a common purpose, working in concert to advance American exceptionalism for future generations. That is the power of the Bradley Impact Fund donor community.

Over this past year, we have also heard many members echo the sentiments of Bradley Impact Fund member Tony Maresca, “With the Bradley Impact Fund, I have confidence that our hard-earned money is going to be allocated particularly to organizations that will

**“MY ADVICE TO DONORS IS TO ACT ON YOUR CONVICTIONS. SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT YOUR BELIEFS, AND NEVER TAKE FOR GRANTED THAT THE FREEDOMS WE ENJOY TODAY WILL BE THERE ALWAYS.”**

**— MARY READ**  
IMPACT FUND MEMBER

perpetuate what Judy and I believe, and what we believe is a direct result of what our parents instilled in us growing up.”

**We are grateful for your confidence as we seek to uphold your donor intent. As the end of 2020 approaches, we can share the planning, tools, and support you need to give thoughtfully, strategically, and with ease. We welcome a conversation with you soon—please take advantage of all we have to offer you.**

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