

# INSIDE NEWS

from the President

November 2024

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## Liz Wheeler, Brett Cooper, Allie Beth Stuckey, KT McFarland, & Others Inspire 100+ Participants at Nashville Summit



"It was the best experience of my life." That's what **Catherine**, a senior at **Belmont Abbey College**, said about the Luce Center's **Nashville Student Summit**, November 8-9.

More than **100** participants from **16** states and **24** schools gathered to hear from powerful speakers and build camaraderie aimed at helping them become confident, courageous conservatives.



(Left) Liz Wheeler accepts the 2024 Woman of the Year Award. (Right) Brett Cooper, host of the Comments Section, meets with other summitt attendees.



(Left) Sisters Fiona and Meg Williamson meet Luce Center alumna Mary Margaret Olohan. (Middle) Riley Swedberg, a 2024 summer intern, meets Brett Cooper. (Right) Nica Marin meets Luce Center alumna Alyssa Cordova.

Special guests included **Brett Cooper**, host of The Daily Wire’s *The Comments Section*; **Carol Swain**, prominent political science scholar and former **Vanderbilt University** professor; Luce Center Board of Directors members **Linda Teetz** and **Clare Luce Abbey**, granddaughter of Clare Boothe Luce; and Luce Center alumnae **Alyssa Cordova**, vice president of public relations at The Daily Wire, and **Mary Margaret Olohan**, senior reporter at The Daily Wire and Luce Center Board of Advisors member.



(Left to right) Linda Teetz, 2024 summer intern Isela Becerra, Kimberly Begg, and Carol Swain spend time together at the Woman of the Year award banquet.

The summit began with a banquet honoring **Liz Wheeler** as our 2024 Woman of The Year. Liz is the host of the popular *Liz Wheeler Show*. She has 1 million followers on X.

**Kimberly Begg**, president of the Luce Center, welcomed guests and Clare Luce Abbey presented the Woman of the Year award. Upon accepting the award, Liz shared her remarkable journey as a voracious reader whose thoughtfulness on matters of faith, culture, and public policy prepared her to embrace her “womanly vocation.” Liz was 26 years old when she gained national prominence as host of the primetime TV show *Tipping Point with Liz Wheeler*. “I’m not a person who’s good at her job who happens to be a woman; I am a woman, wife and mother who happens to have an extraordinary job,” she said. She spent time with each student, chatting and signing copies of her book, *Hide Your Children: Exposing the Marxists Behind the Attack on America’s Kids*.



Liz Wheeler meets young women from across the country while personally inscribing copies of her powerful book, *Hide Your Children: Exposing the Marxists Behind the Attack on America’s Kids*.



*(Left) Digital Media Coordinator Bridget O’Neal and Homeschool Outreach Coordinator Leah Mergener meet KT McFarland. (Right) A room full of young women listen attentively to a conservative speaker.*

**KT McFarland**, deputy national security advisor for the first Trump Administration, presented “Around the World with KT McFarland: Crises and Opportunities,” thanks to the generosity of our good friend, Keith Work. Stressing the importance of a common sense energy policy, she said: “We have enough energy to power the entire world for 200 years, cheaper, safer, more abundantly, fewer strings attached, than the Iranians have, the Saudis have, than anybody has. So we will not just be energy independent. We will be energy dominant. That means we will dominate the global energy industry.”



*Our stellar Nashville Speaker lineup included Paula Scanlan, fairness in women’s sports advocate; Amanda Collins Johnson, Second Amendment advocate; and Allie Beth Stuckey, host of Relatable, among other conservative leaders.*

**Paula Scanlan**, former NCAA swimmer and advocate for fairness in women’s sports, shared her experience competing alongside Lia (formerly “Will”) Thomas on the women’s swim team at the University of Pennsylvania.

She encouraged attendees to be courageous advocates for truth, fairness, and women’s protection: “I really encourage you to speak out when you see something wrong, to not be afraid to be the one person that says something because you don’t know who you might empower, you don’t know who might help. There really is strength in numbers, but somebody has to be first, and do not be afraid to be the person who speaks the truth.”



*Union University students Anna and Brooklyn chat in between programming sessions*



Lauren Husmann speaks about “the good life.”

**Lauren Husmann**, program director at the Luce Center, spoke on “the good life” that feminists try to sell to women. Addressing the themes of marriage and relationships, she warned that the feminist movement’s anti-man, anti-marriage, anti-motherhood ideology sabotages healthy relationships between men and women. She encouraged young women to follow their natural inclination towards marriage and motherhood, explaining: “It’s not something we should run from, it’s something that we should lean into. You do not have to follow the feminist instruction manual that’s handed out to you by your peers or teachers or maybe even your family. The real good life is a completely different story and it includes marriage and motherhood for a lot of women.”

**Amanda Collins Johnson**, shared her powerful story about becoming a Second Amendment advocate, speaking and testifying at state legislative hearings across the country after being raped at gun point on her “gun-free” college campus. Encouraging women to embrace their constitutional right to protect themselves, she said: “Men are hardwired to be the defenders and protectors of families. While that should be encouraged and fostered, we can’t ignore that often times women are alone with their children...and serve as first in line to ensuring their well-being...as image bearers of the Creator, we always have the right to stand up and say that our dignity, our lives, and our bodies are worth protecting, my children and my home are worth protecting.”



A young woman meets Amanda Collins Johnson after hearing her inspiring remarks.



(Left) Allie Beth Stuckey personally inscribes a copy of her New York Times bestselling book, *Toxic Empathy*, for all student attendees. (Middle) Khue from the University of Houston meets Allie Beth Stuckey while getting her book signed. (Right) Ella from Liberty University presents with her newly signed copy of *Toxic Empathy*.

The summit concluded with remarks from **Allie Beth Stuckey**, host of the wildly popular podcast *Relatable*, who shared insights from her recent *New York Times* bestselling book, *Toxic Empathy: How Progressives Exploit Christian Compassion*. She explained: “I wrote this book specifically for women. Really, for Christian, conservative women. I wanted to equip them with the tools, with the words, with the arguments that they needed to talk to their friends... to explain to them how progressive policies and ideas, while they are sold to you as compassionate, are actually very harmful. The premise of the book is that progressives, especially in the media, use your empathy to emotionally manipulate you into being on their side.” Allie Beth signed a copy of her book for all students attendees, taking the time to meet and chat with each of them.



*(Left) Lucy from Belmont Abbey College takes a selfie with Liz Wheeler. (Middle) Shelby from Grand Canyon University meets other young conservative women at a book signing. (Right) Katherine and Abigail from Grand Canyon University gather at a student reception in Nashville.*



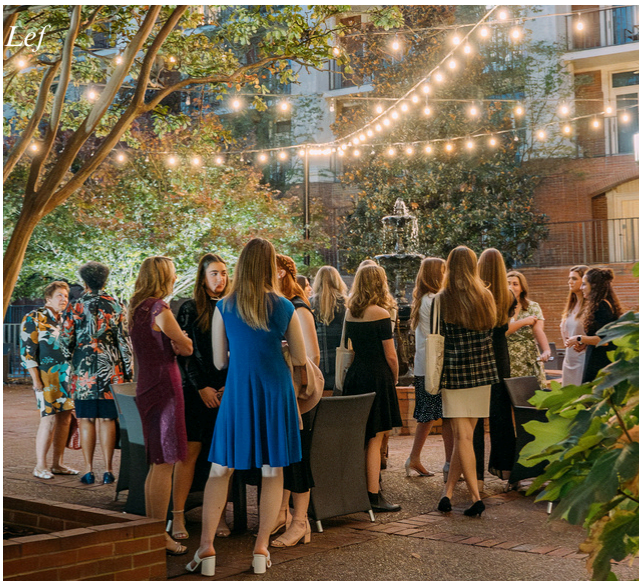
*Lauren Husmann welcomes Isela Becerra and Leah Mergener to the Luce Honor Society.*

One of the highlights of the summit was the induction of two stellar students, Isela Becerra and Leah Mergener, into the **Luce Honor Society**.

Isela is a junior political science major at **Biola University**. She was a 2024 summer intern. She hosted a campus lecture with Lisa Daftari last spring and will host Elisha Krauss on her campus this spring.

Leah is a junior political science major at **Christendom College**. She was a 2024 summer intern. Since August, she has served as our Homeschool Outreach Coordinator, becoming a valuable member of our team.

The weekend concluded with an unforgettable evening aboard the **General Jackson Showboat** for the **Music City Nights Cruise**. Attendees enjoyed a live performance showcasing the timeless music of country legends **Johnny Cash, Reba McEntire, Carrie Underwood**, and others. The excursion provided a happy and fun environment for participants to connect with new friends and create lifelong memories.



*Young women enjoy the company, conversation, and camaraderie of like-minded friends from across the country.*



Students enjoy a cruise aboard the General Jackson Showboat with stunning views of the Nashville Skyline.

A remarkable 77% of student attendees rated the event a perfect 10/10. Here are some reasons why:



A young woman enjoys the summit's concluding event: a country music themed dinner cruise.

- **Khue** from the **University of Houston** said, “I learned so much from the speakers and was truly inspired by their perspectives and opinions on different topics.”
- **Cailey** from **Grand Canyon University** said, “The speaker selection was incredibly impactful and very clearly chosen for a great purpose!”
- **Elizabeth** from **Liberty University** said, “I not only had the time of my life this past weekend, but my perspective on so many subjects was forever changed.”
- **Anne** from **Christendom College** said, “It was a wonderful experience to engage and connect with like-minded women. I absolutely loved hearing all the speakers, and their fire and conviction for the Conservative Movement is truly inspiring.”
- **Jillian** from **Hillsdale College** said, “I had an amazing time. I feel like I have grown as a woman.”



Young women across the country build friendships rooted in truth, goodness, and an appreciation for traditional American values.

# Katie Gorka Hosts a Patriotic “Circle of Friends”



Katie Gorka (left) introduces friends to the Center’s work providing conservative education, mentorship, and camaraderie to young women.

**Katie Gorka**, a senior official in the first Trump administration who served in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), hosted a patriotic “Circle of Friends” brunch at the Luce Center on November 6, introducing like-minded friends to the Center’s outreach, educational, and mentoring efforts.

Katie is a longtime friend of the Luce Center. She has spoken to our audiences on several occasions, most recently on the topic of her latest book, *NextGen Marxism: What It Is and How to Combat It*. She and her husband, Sebastian, are generous financial supporters and ambassadors of our work.

Special guests included **Mariam Bell** and **Wendy Borcherdt**, conservative activists who served in the Reagan administration; **Rosie Oakley**, a leader of the Fairfax County GOP; **Martha Ann Alito**, conservative ally and wife of U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Samuel Alito**; and conservative attorney **Cathy Ruse** and Soviet communist propaganda expert **Stella Morabito**, both of whom have spoken to Luce Center audiences.

**Kimberly Begg**, president, welcomed Katie’s group and led introductions revealing the women’s shared interest in helping young women embrace naturally conservative

instincts that lead to personal and national flourishing. Stella affirmed the importance of spending time in the company of conservative peers and role models, noting insights from her powerful book, *The Weaponization of Loneliness: How Tyrants Stoke Our Fears of Isolation to Silence, Divide, and Conquer*.

In between brunch, mimosas, and casual conversation, Katie gave brief remarks encouraging her friends to become involved with the Center. She also shared insights about conservatives’ youth outreach efforts in Virginia and across the country.

Noting the problem of leftist indoctrination in K-12 schools, she stressed the need for reforms that empower parents to choose an education for their children that aligns with their values. She told a compelling story about what she observed when she spoke at a Virginia high school recently. “The only thing the girls wanted to talk about was abortion and the boys didn’t want to talk at all,” she said.

If you are interested in hosting a “Circle of Friends” event near you, please contact **Cindy Rushing**, vice president, at [crushing@cblwomen.org](mailto:crushing@cblwomen.org). We would be delighted to help you organize a gathering to introduce like-minded friends to our work.



(Left) Kimberly Begg welcomes like-minded women—including Katie Gorka, Martha Ann Alito, and Mariam Bell, pictured here—to the Center. (Right) Sandy Bushue and Catherine Trauernicht engage in conversation on their first visit to the Luce Center.

# MEDIA SPOTLIGHT:

## Luce Center Reaches Record-Breaking 104,400 Online Views

In November, the Luce Center's livestream video and social media posts attracted an all-time high of **104,400** views, illustrating the power of online platforms to engage new audiences, including 90% of women aged 18–29 who use social media regularly.

Standout posts include:

- Our post on X sharing a beautiful photo and quote from Paula Scanlan's Nashville Student Summit remarks.
- Liz Wheeler (1 million followers) on X sharing reflections from our 2024 Woman of the Year Award banquet. "Woman is not something I was assigned at birth, nor something I merely identify with... woman is who I am," she shared, emphasizing the dignity and purpose of womanhood.
- Riley Swedberg, a Grand Canyon University student and Luce Center intern, sharing her gratitude on LinkedIn for the opportunity to introduce KT McFarland at the summit.

This record-breaking milestone demonstrates the Luce Center's ability to inspire, educate, and connect with young women by combining meaningful in-person events with the far-reaching power of digital engagement.

Thank you for your support of the Clare Boothe Luce Center for Conservative Women. We appreciate all you do to empower young women to live happier, more meaningful lives and contribute to a stronger, freer America.

In Friendship and Freedom,



Kimberly Begg, President  
kimberly@cblwomen.org

