



NEW HEIGHTS EDUCATIONAL GROUP



# EDGuide



ISSUE 1-2

Welcome  
TO  
2026



2026

JANUARY - FEBRUARY

# NHEG EDGUIDE

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## Thought for the Month



**Happy New Year!**  
We wish everyone a safe, fulfilling,  
and joyful year ahead.

Pamela Clark  
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The New Heights Educational  
Group, Inc.  
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# Merry Christmas from Hillsdale College

**Larry P. Arnn**

**Dear Mrs. Clark,**

**On behalf of the students, faculty, and staff of Hillsdale College,  
I wish you and yours a happy and blessed Christmas and a healthy and prosperous new year.**

**With warmest regards,**

**Larry P. Arnn**

**President, Hillsdale College**

**Pursuing Truth and Defending Liberty Since 1844**

**Candid.**

**Happy  
Holidays**

**Thank you for making a significant impact on the communities you serve.**

Candid remains dedicated to ensuring you have the best resources and information available for your fundraising needs. We have an exciting new search launching in 2025, complete with AI capabilities to help you find your most likely funders. Stay tuned for more updates!

We celebrate your work, and we look forward to our ongoing partnership in 2025. Have a wonderful holiday season!

Thank you,

**Ann Mei Chang**  
Candid CEO



# COMMON GROUND



Happy Holidays  
From Metroparks Toledo



**This holiday season brings a moment to acknowledge those who have walked beside us in our work with families across the nation.**

**Whether you nurture children and families every day as an educator or practitioner, serve as a partner in our family learning efforts, are a member of an NCFL Family Learning Community®, or support our work through your generous donations—we appreciate you.**

**All of us at NCFL wish you peace, joy, and community throughout the holidays and in the coming year.**



***"Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!"***

***2 Corinthians 9:15***

**In the hustle and bustle of the season, we pray that you will be renewed in faith, encouraged by hope, and filled with the love of God.**

**This season, let the music lift your spirits. We invite you to join us for a special virtual Christmas concert**  
**- Home for the Holidays featuring three-time Grammy® Nominee artist, Danny Gokey.**

**Gather your loved ones, warm up some cocoa, and sing along to your favorite Christmas classics. Let laughter echo, memories be made, and the joy of the season fill your home.**



*Wishing You a Very  
MERRY CHRISTMAS from the United Way*

**Away in a manger...**

**As the light of Christmas shines once more,  
may your heart be filled with peace, hope, and quiet joy.  
May this season remind you of the sacred gifts that matter most—  
love, grace and the promise that light is never overcome by darkness.**

**May you find moments of stillness amid the noise,**

**comfort in the presence of those you love,  
and renewed strength for the days ahead.**

**As we celebrate the miracle of Christmas,  
may your home be blessed with warmth,  
your spirit lifted with faith,**

**and your path is guided by compassion and purpose.**

**Wishing you a holy and joyful Christmas  
and a New Year filled with peace and promise.**

**With heartfelt blessings,**

**Lora Ashley Lyons**



*December 18, 2025 | Volume 32, No. 50 | Published Weekly Since 1994*

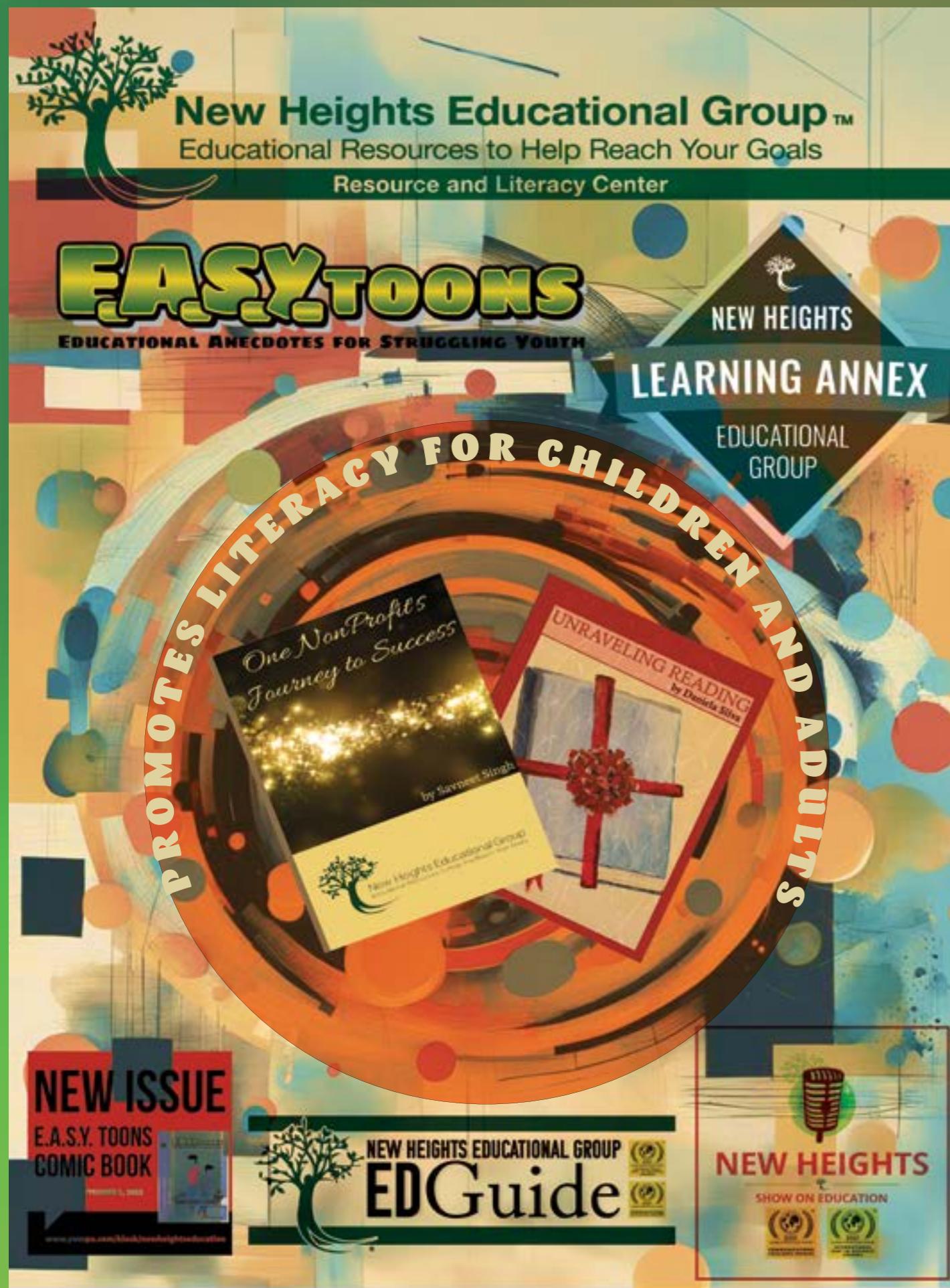
## ***It's Never Too Late to Change the Future***

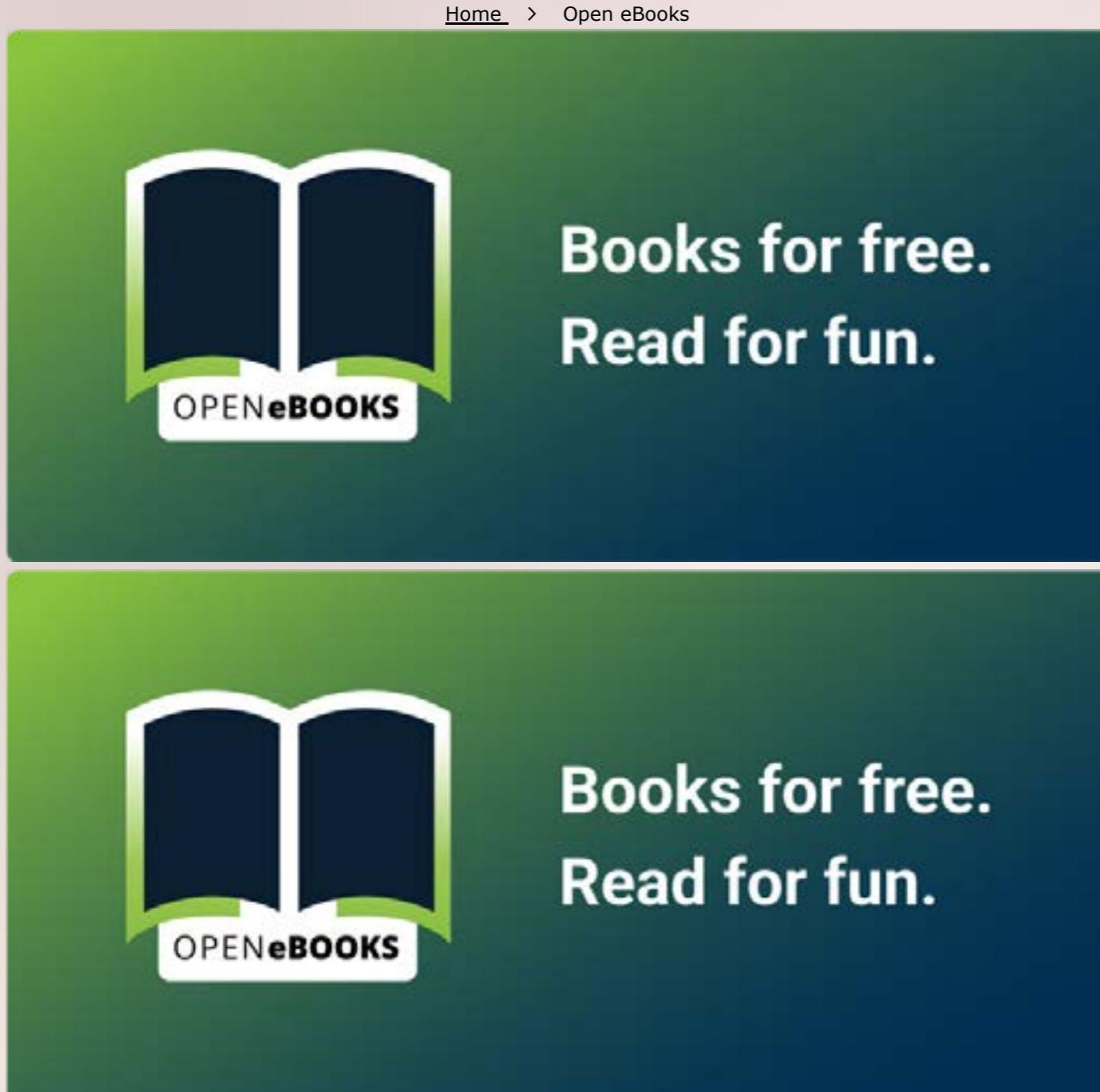
**"One of the curses of history is that we cannot go back and change the course leading to disasters, no matter how much we might wish to. The past has its own terrible inevitability.**

**But it is never too late to change the future."** - Professor Heather Cox Richardson

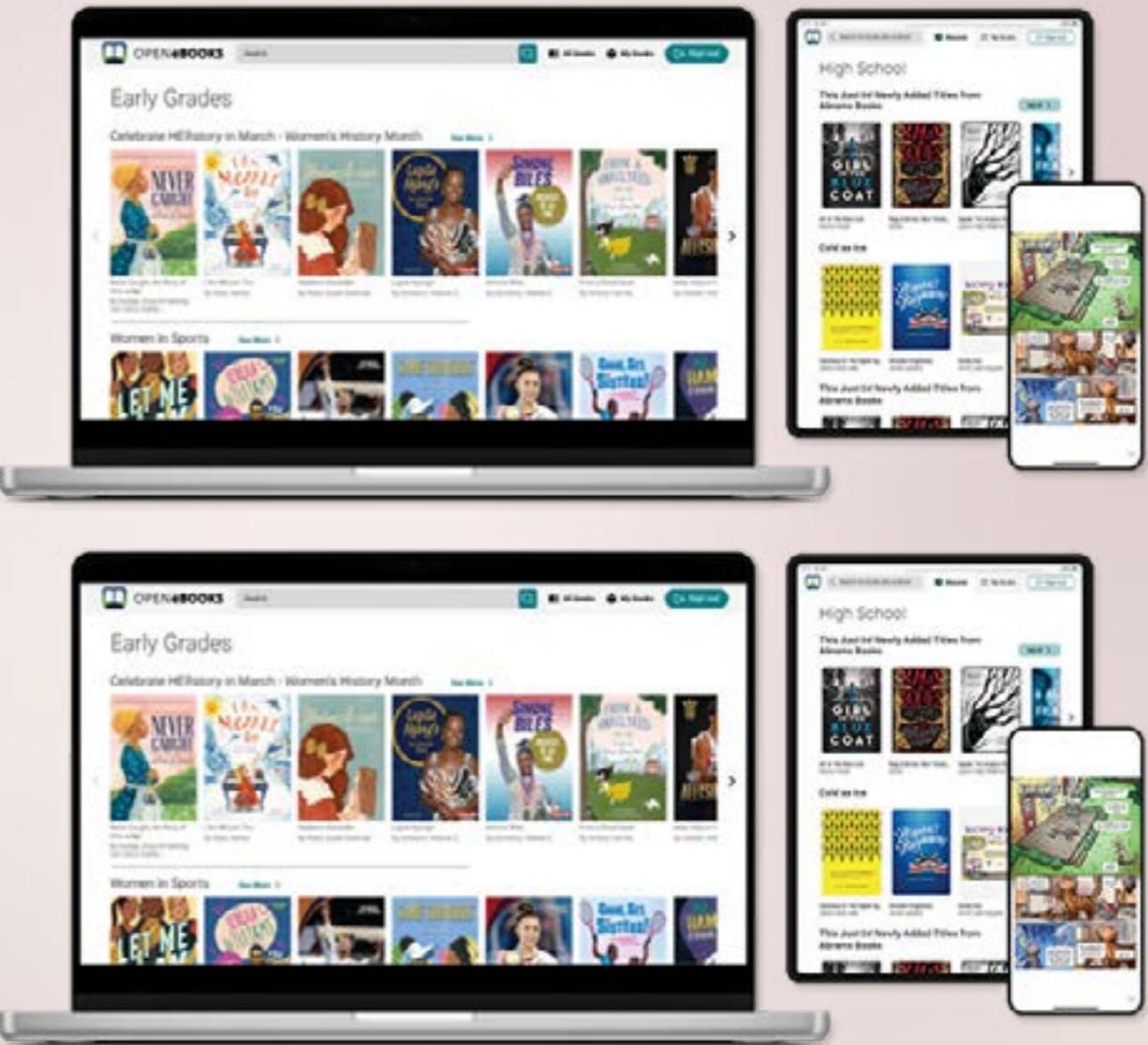
As we reflect on the past year that has at times felt like a disaster to those working in the national service, out-of-school time, and education fields and for those of us who care so deeply about our young people, our communities, and our democracy, the YSA team takes this moment to recognize our partners and applaud your ongoing resilience and adaptability, your advocacy and resistance to authoritarian forces, and your continued commitment to building a better and brighter future than may seem possible right now.

We hope you all take time to rest and enjoy the holiday season with family and friends, and return to our shared work with renewed energy to change the future in 2026.





## What is Open eBooks?



Open eBooks is a FREE eBook library that contains a rotating catalog of thousands of popular, award-winning eBook titles! Students and families can access Open eBooks at home or on-the-go through a free app (available on Apple or Android devices) or through a web browser on their computer or Chromebook.

First Book members working in any setting (classrooms, libraries, afterschool programs, etc.) can order free Open eBooks access codes/PINs for students and families, allowing them to log in to Open eBooks and access this incredible resource. After you place your order, First Book will send you an

email containing your students' access code/PIN combinations along with instructions to help families download the free app (requires a minimum of iOS 10 or Android 6) or log in via Open eBooks on Web ([www.openebooks.org](http://www.openebooks.org)).

Get started by following the step-by-step instructions below!

## How It Works



### Order 1 Open eBooks Collection for each student.

Each student will need their own unique code/PIN combination to log in to the Open eBooks app.



### Check your email.

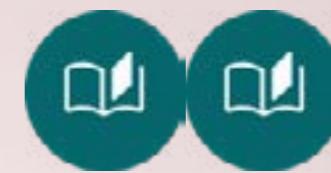
We'll send you an email with all your Open eBooks codes/PINs so that you can pass them along to your students and their families.



### Use the Get Started Letter Template (available in English and Spanish) to share codes/PINs with students and families.

It includes instructions on how to access Open eBooks (via the free

Apple/Android app or Open eBooks on Web), log in, and get started.



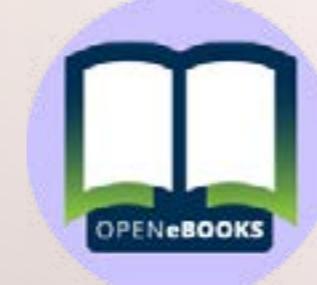
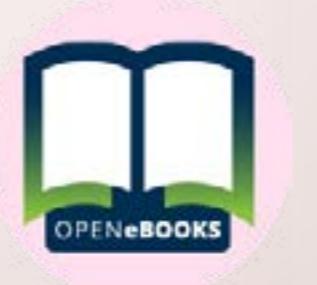
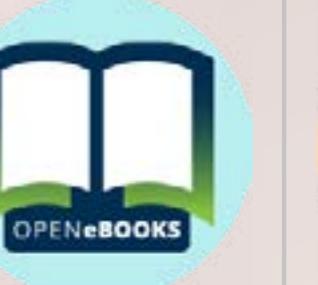
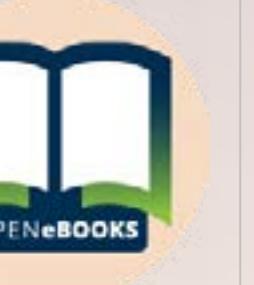
### Students start reading!

Kids can check out up to 30 eBooks at a time and titles can be downloaded and read online using the app. Open eBooks access codes/PINs never expire—it's like a digital library card!

## Order Open eBooks Collections Now

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See All

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why do I have to be a First Book Member to access Open eBooks?

Open eBooks was created to provide free ebooks to children and families from communities where physical books may be scarce. First Book is a non-profit that provides affordable—and sometimes free—books and resources (like Open eBooks) to its growing member network of over 500,000 educators and program leaders working in under-served communities across the country. Per our agreement with the publishers who generously donated titles for Open eBooks, you must be a First Book member to order access codes/PINs for your students. [Learn more about becoming a First Book member](#)—signing up is FREE and takes about 5 minutes!

### What are the technical requirements for Open eBooks?

The Open eBooks mobile app is available for download on both iOS and Android platforms. The app requires a *minimum* of iOS 10 or Android 6. Android devices that have a version lower than Android 6 may not be able to see Open eBooks in the Google Play Store.

Open eBooks on Web ([www.openebooks.org](http://www.openebooks.org)) can be accessed via Chromebooks, laptops, or desktop computers, and on other devices where you can't download a mobile app. Open eBooks on Web is fully supported on Safari, Google Chrome, and Firefox. For any browser, users should use Standard Mode; Developer and Dark/Night Mode are not supported at this time.

### Do you need internet access to use Open eBooks?

Using Open eBooks on Web requires internet access. When using the app, browsing available titles and checking out a book from a collection requires internet access. However, Open eBooks titles can be downloaded and read from the app while offline. When using the app while connected to your mobile network, standard data rates apply.

### I haven't received my follow up email with my access codes/PINs. What do I do?

Please allow a few hours to receive your email with access codes/PINs (especially for large orders) and be sure to double check your junk/spam folder in case the email landed there. You can also view your Open eBooks access codes/PINs under the Orders screen in your First Book Account Dashboard. If you do not receive your access codes/PINs within 72 hours (be sure to double check your junk/spam folder), please contact us at [help@firstbook.org](mailto:help@firstbook.org) or by phone at 866-732-3669.

### How many Open eBooks access codes/PINs can I order at once?

First Book members are limited to 500 Open eBooks access codes/PINs per order. If you serve more than 500 students, you're welcome to place multiple orders.

### Does Open eBooks collect or share any data from students?

We take student privacy seriously. First Book and Open eBooks do not collect or share any data from users of the Open eBooks app. The access codes/PINs used to log in to the app are anonymous. For more information, refer to [First Book's Privacy Policy](#) and [Open eBooks' Privacy Policy](#).

### If I'm planning to use Open eBooks in my classroom or program, should I still order 1 access code/PIN per student?

The Open eBooks app is intended for kids to use at home for individual reading, but it can also be used in your school, library, or program. If you wish to use the app in your program or classroom on a shared device, we still recommend that you order one code/PIN combination per student. This allows each student to check out their own titles and keep their place as they read.

### Do Open eBooks access codes/PINs expire?

Access codes/PINs do not expire. Each access code/PIN is like a digital library card that never has to be renewed!

### Do you have to renew books checked out from the Open eBooks library?

Yes, each eBook will be available for 30 days before it must be renewed. The Open eBooks app allows users to check out up to 30 eBooks at a time.

### Can I search for specific titles within the app?

Within the app, students and families can search by title or author or browse thousands of different eBook titles based on topics of interest.

### As an educator, can I order an Open eBooks access code/PIN for myself?

Yes! If you'd like to browse the rotating Open eBooks catalog of titles before sharing access codes/PINs with students and families, you're welcome to place an order for yourself so you can log into the app and look around.

### Do Open eBooks access codes/PINs work for different collections?

Open eBooks access codes/PINs are specific to the Open eBooks collection you order (i.e., If you order the Open eBooks Elementary Collection, those access codes/PINs will not give the user access to titles in the Middle School or High School Collection). Please be aware the All Ages and High School Collections may contain titles with mature content.

## Have additional questions?

Check out the [Open eBooks FAQs](#) page or [contact](#) the Open eBooks team!



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## New Heights Educational Group

We are now part of the First Book Network!



**Need Books?**

Members of the First Book Network have 24-hour, year-round access to an award-winning repository of affordable and new books, educational resources, and basic necessities curated for kids in need ages 0-18.

If your Child or Student lacks access to quality books, NHEG can help provide you with a high quality, online library through First Book.

**WE CAN HELP YOUR STUDENT GAIN ACCESS TO FREE, HIGH QUALITY READING MATERIAL!**

**CONTACT US**





## Dear Friends of New Heights Educational Group

Hello! My name is Heather Ruggiero. In 2017, I began working with the organization as a tutor and course developer. I'm excited to be joining the Board of Directors and contributing to the organization as the Assistant Virtual Development Director of Education.

### vision

I envision an evolution in education, where we compassionately walk alongside our students on the learning journey. Instead of manufacturing them to a set of standards, we nurture their creativity, curiosity, and innate love for learning.

“  
Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.  
”

### personal notes

With a warm cup of tea, favorite blanket, and our fluffy Shiba Inu, my (almost) five-year old daughter and I relish a good story book.

It's my pleasure to support the growth and efforts of the New Heights Educational Group and to create meaningful resources for the community.



### background

MASTERS OF ARTS,  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION



TEACHER, TUTOR, CURRICULUM  
DEVELOPER, CONTENT CREATOR



BACHELORS OF SCIENCE, BUSINESS  
MANAGEMENT



DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATOR,  
COORDINATOR, CONSULTANT



Heather Ruggiero

# Uplifting Memoir UNPREDICTABLE Chronicles Abuse Recovery, Courage

Through Faith

**SUBHEAD:** Palmetto Publishing unveils stellar, inspirational autobiography on overcoming lifelong trauma

CHARLESTON, SC, November 9, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -

Honey Kasper is an overcomer. After beating cancer, surviving eighty-nine surgeries, and processing a childhood filled with every kind of abuse, she has built a successful and deeply fulfilling life. Her true story is recounted in her memoir, *Unpredictable: The walk in and out of darkness*, a brand new title launched this fall by Palmetto Publishing. Kasper's website contains additional information.

The book was written to reach those who have faced chronic illness, other serious health conditions, domestic violence, and childhood trauma. Kasper believes sharing her story candidly will help readers experience a sense of camaraderie in their journeys.

More than anything, she believes she was able to heal as a result of her faith. Kasper describes her story as "the hand of God steering my life away from tragedy," and she adds that "overcoming with grace and faith in God can change a life."

The book itself is deeply emotional, showing how trauma can affect a person's mindset for a lifetime—but also demonstrating how perseverance and taking back control of one's choices can help survivors to recover. The title also features a collection of poems and a list of song titles that the author has found inspirational.

Reviewers have called the book "an insightful, honest, and inspirational tale of a battle survivor," and a story that "gives hope to readers . . . from dysfunctional families." Kasper, who writes under a pseudonym, invites readers to embark on the incredible journey of healing, and to "build a life of purpose and love." Kasper can be found on Twitter (@KasperHoney) Facebook and LinkedIn for readers who wish to stay connected.

**UNPREDICTABLE: THE WALK IN AND OUT OF DARKNESS** is available for purchase online at Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble.com.

**About the Author:**

Honey Kasper is an overcomer whose life shows how grace and faith in God can transform a life. Having survived many years of abuse, trauma, severe malnutrition, over eighty-nine surgeries, and cancer, Kasper writes to help people find freedom from their struggles.

**About the Book:**

**Title:** *Unpredictable: The walk in and out of darkness*

**Author:** Honey Kasper

**Publisher:** Palmetto Publishing

**Publication date:** November 2023

**ISBN-13:** 979-8-8229-3211-1

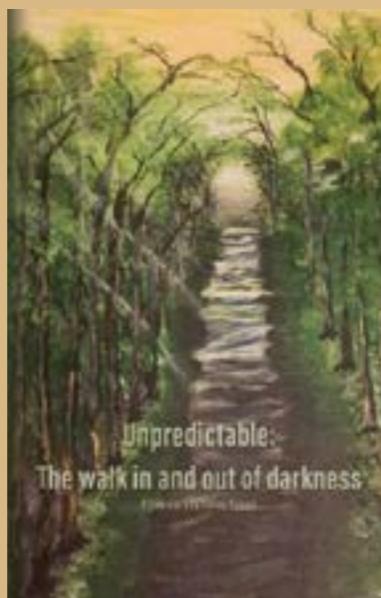
**Media Contact:**

Honey Kasper

**Email:** [unpredictablethewalk@yahoo.com](mailto:unpredictablethewalk@yahoo.com)

**Available for interviews:** Author, Honey Kasper

**Related Images**

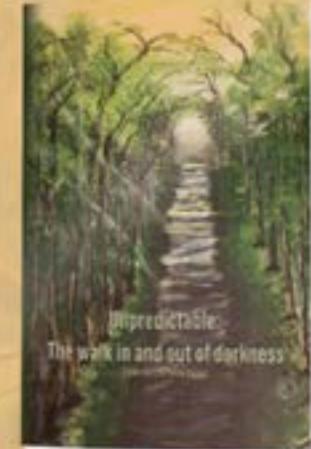


## FROM DARKNESS TO TRIUMPH: A TALE OF FAITH AND RESILIENCE

Step into Honey Kasper's world as she navigates life's cruelest challenges. In *Unpredictable: The Walk in and Out of Darkness*, Honey shares her tale of survival against malnutrition, surgeries, abuse, and cancer. Fueled by faith and resilience, this is a story of triumph over trauma. Be inspired. Find hope.

AVAILABLE  
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Paperback ISBN:  
979-8-8229-3211-1

## 2024 INTERNATIONAL IMPACT BOOK AWARDS

- WINNER -

AWARDED TO

**Honey Kasper**

**Unpredictable: the walk in and out of darkness**

**Inspirational & Religious Autobiographies**

Presented by Go All In Media, May, 2024





**HONEY KASPER, AUTHOR**

<https://UnpredictableTheWalk.com/>  
[UnpredictableTheWalk@yahoo.com](mailto:UnpredictableTheWalk@yahoo.com)  
NW Ohio



**DEADLINE:** Uplifting Memoir UNPREDICTABLE Chronicles Abuse Recovery, Courage Through Faith.  
**SUBHEAD:** Unpredictable: the walk in and out of darkness, just became a bestseller. Palmetto Publishing unveiled this stellar, inspirational autobiography on overcoming lifelong trauma in November 2023.

NW Ohio Author October 4, 2024 -

Honey Kasper is an overcomer. Two battles with cancer, surviving ninety-three surgeries, and processing a childhood filled with every kind of abuse, she has built a successful and deeply fulfilling life. Her true story is recounted in her memoir, Unpredictable: The walk in and out of darkness, her work became a bestseller on October 4, 2024. The Kindle e-book scored Best Sellers Rank: #317 Free in Kindle Store

#1 in Two-Hour Biography & Memoir Short Reads  
#2 in Survival Biographies & Memoirs

The book was written to reach those who have faced chronic illness, other serious health conditions, domestic violence, and childhood trauma. Kasper believes sharing her story candidly will help readers experience a sense of camaraderie in their journeys. More than anything, she believes she was able to heal as a result of her faith. Kasper describes her story as "the hand of God steering my life away from tragedy," and she adds that "overcoming with grace and faith in God can change a life."

The book itself is deeply emotional, showing how trauma can affect a person's mindset for a lifetime—but also demonstrating how perseverance and taking back control of one's choices can help survivors to recover. The title also features a collection of poems and a list of song titles that the author has found inspirational.



FROM AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR HONEY KASPER  
**Unpredictable**  
*The walk in and out of darkness*

ABC Boston Herald FOX CBS NBC

NW Ohio Author <https://UnpredictableTheWalk.com/>



FROM AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR, HONEY KASPER

# Unpredictable

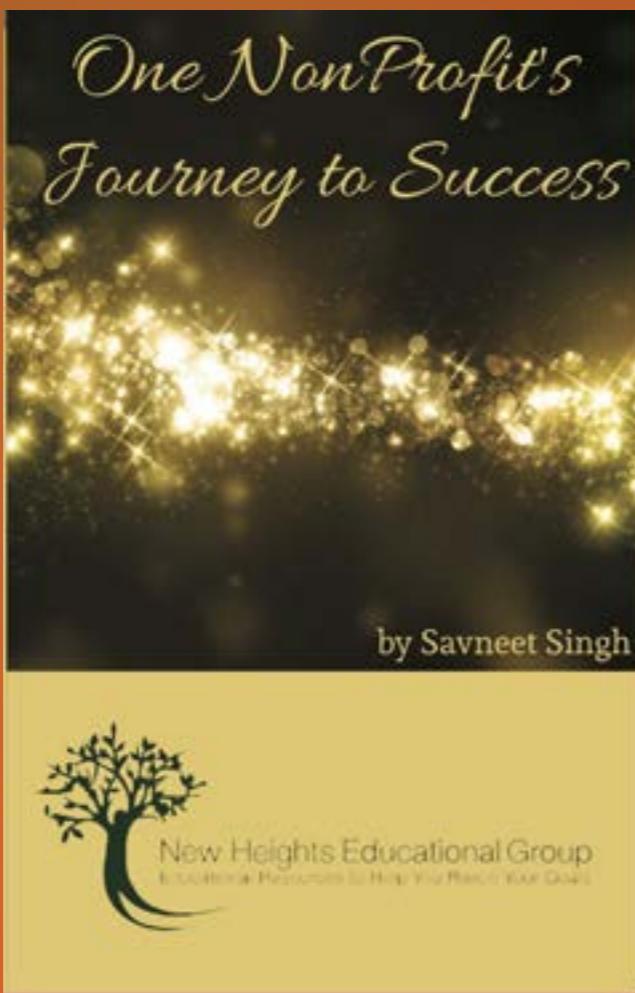
*The walk in and out of darkness*



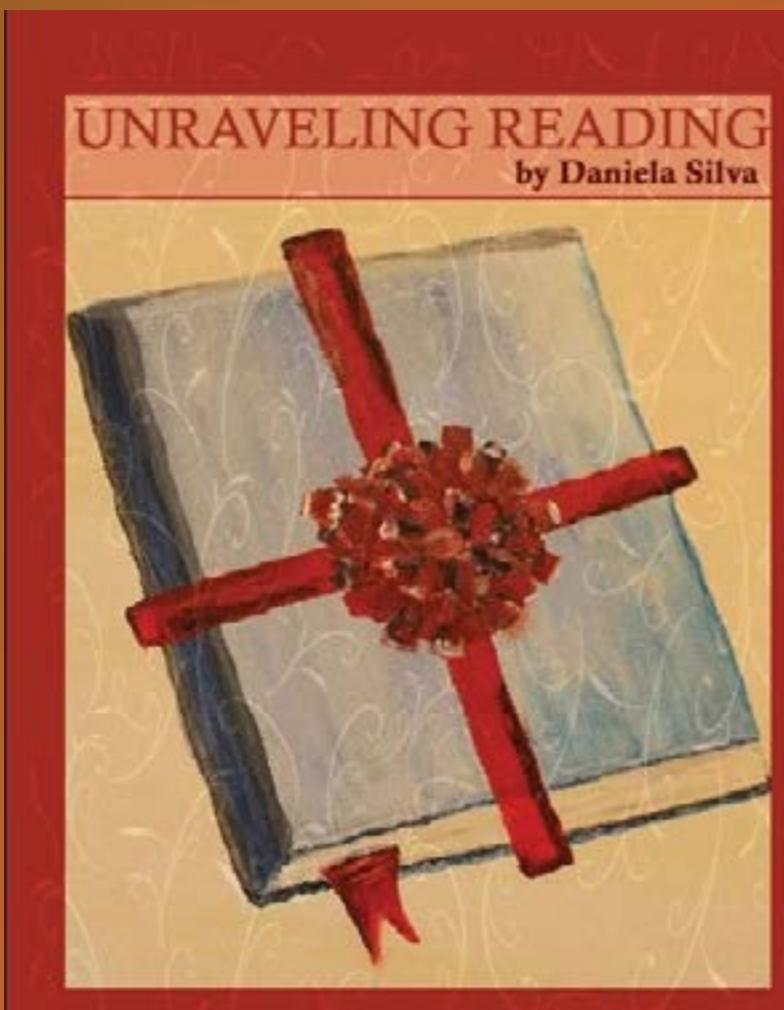
ABC Boston Herald FOX CBS NBC



# One Nonprofit's Journey to Success



# Unraveling Reading



## One Nonprofit's Journey to Success - NHEG's New Book

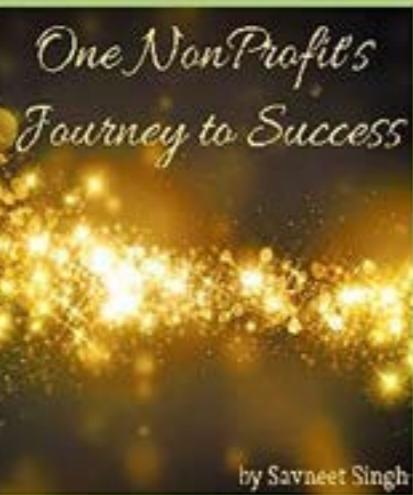
Savneet Singh, MS, M.Ed., M.Sc.

### About Our Writer

Savneet discovered the world of freelance writing 9 years back and she is currently exploring the endless possibilities associated with it.

She had the pleasure to work on several projects as a writer, instructional designer and social media specialist.

She has a strong inclination for spirituality, and practices meditation and yoga every morning during the sunrise.

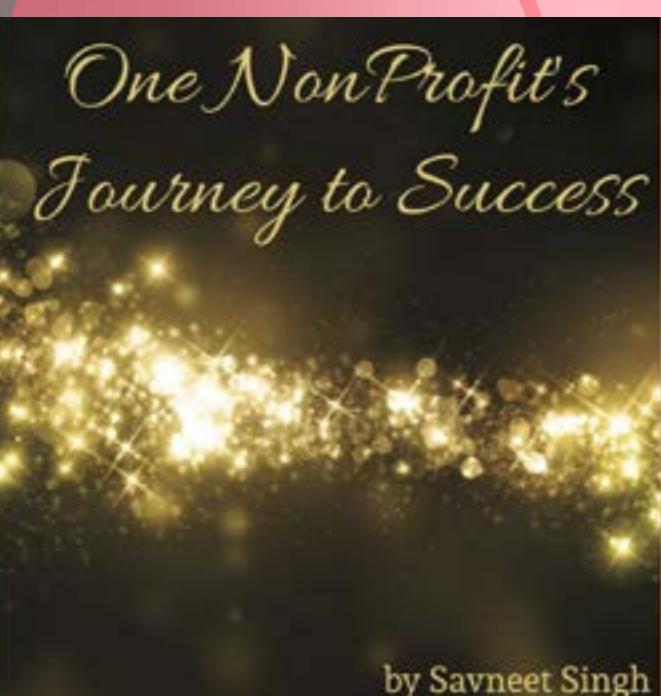


### Book Summary

This book will make people believe that there's a natural power dynamic that comes along with personal experience and willingness to serve others. Parents, nonprofit stakeholders or just someone who wants to learn more about educational services and opportunities - everyone will find this book helpful. Many readers will find Ms. Clark's good work, perseverance and Christian faith inspirational.



Order Your Copy on Amazon Today!



New Heights Educational Group  
Educational Resources to Help You Reach Your Goals

# International Adult Literacy Facts

ProLiteracy's work to improve adult literacy rates worldwide directly aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goal on education to ensure all youth and a substantial number of adults—both men and women—achieve literacy and numeracy by 2030.<sup>1</sup>

**763**  
Million  
adults worldwide do not have basic literacy skills.

## The Global State of Literacy

Despite the steady rise in literacy rates over the past 50 years, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) data shows that in 2020, 763 million adults worldwide still don't have basic literacy skills.

While more adults are literate today, it is largely because more went to school when they were young—not because they were given a second chance to learn as adults.<sup>3</sup>



## The Cost of Low Literacy

### Economic

**\$1** Trillion

Low literacy costs the global economy more than **\$1 trillion** each year.<sup>5</sup>

**30%-42% less earnings**

Adults with low literacy earn **30%-42% less** than their literate peers.<sup>6</sup>

### Social

**50% more likely**

In developing countries, a child born to a mother who can read is **50% more likely to survive** past age 5.<sup>7</sup>

If all adults completed secondary school, the global poverty rate would be more than halved.<sup>8</sup>

## Women's Literacy

**2/3** of adults with low literacy skills are women.<sup>2</sup>

**50%**

**More than half** of all disadvantaged rural women in developing countries lack basic literacy skills.<sup>11</sup>



Of the 99 million illiterate youth, **56% are girls.**<sup>12</sup>

**56%**

## The Digital Divide



No Internet Access

**53% of people in developing countries** do not have access to the internet compared to 13% in the rest of the world.

Globally, only **40%** of primary, **50%** of intermediate, and **65%** of high school-level schools have internet access.

Almost 9% of the global population—and more than **70%** of people in rural sub-Saharan Africa—lack **access to electricity.**<sup>10</sup>

**ProLiteracy**

# US Adult Literacy Facts

## US Facts

**48**  
Million

Approximately 48 million adults in the United States cannot read above a third-grade level.<sup>1</sup>

## Member Services

**51%**

51% of ProLiteracy member programs put students on a waiting list due to demand exceeding program capacity.<sup>2</sup>

**29%**

29% of adult basic literacy students enter a program reading at or below a third-grade level.<sup>2</sup>

## The Cost of Low Literacy

**\$2.2**  
Trillion

**\$106-238**  
Billion

Bringing all adults to the equivalent of a sixth-grade reading level would generate an additional \$2.2 trillion in annual income for the country.<sup>4</sup>

It is estimated between \$106-\$238 billion in health care costs a year are linked to low adult literacy skills.<sup>4</sup>

**3X**  
The Earnings

Workers who have less education than a high school diploma have the lowest median weekly earnings (\$592), three times less than the highest level of education.<sup>5</sup>

## Incarceration

**75%**

**75% of state incarcerated individuals** did not complete high school or can be classified as low literate.<sup>10</sup>

**43%**

Incarcerated individuals who participate in correctional education programs are **43% less likely to recidivate** than inmates who do not.<sup>11</sup>

## English Language Learners

**50.6**  
Million

**53%**  
Proficient

The US has the world's largest immigrant population. Immigrants comprise 15% of the US population.<sup>6</sup>

The US immigrant population is projected to grow to 69 million by 2060, or to about one in six people living in the US.<sup>13</sup>

## One-in-Six

## Family Literacy



**A mother's reading skill** is the greatest determinant of her children's future academic success, outweighing other factors, such as neighborhood and family income.<sup>9</sup>

**ProLiteracy**



**THE NEW HEIGHTS EDUCATIONAL GROUP**

# 19<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

**The New Heights Educational Group will be celebrating its 19th anniversary on June 1, 2025. Join us in commemorating this milestone by sharing in our story with your friends and family.**

**EASYTOONS**

**EDGuide**

**New Heights Educational Group - Educational Resources to Help Reach Your Goals**

**NEW HEIGHTS**

**LEARNING ANNEX**

**DONATE NOW**





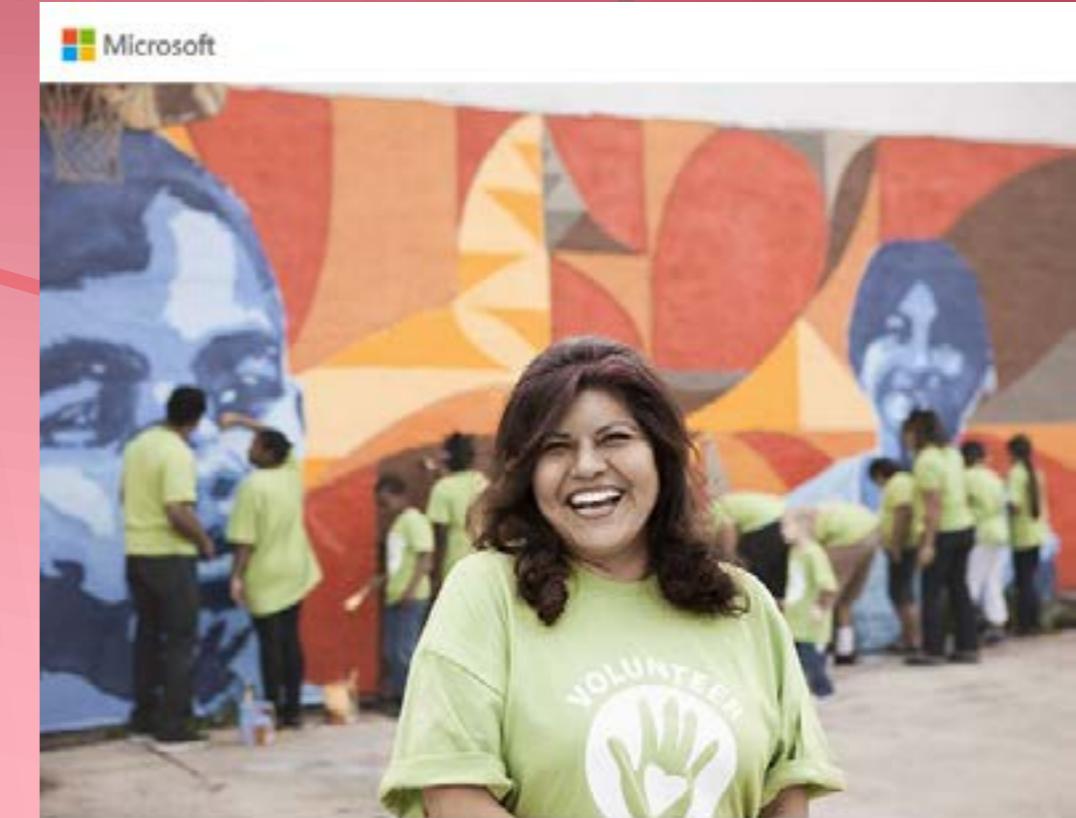


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WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE! COMPLETE THIS QUICK SURVEY FOR A CHANCE TO WIN AN AMAZON GIFT CARD!

**KENT STATE UNIVERSITY** | Center for Public Policy and Health





Thank you for all that you do

Hi Pamela,

We hope you and your team are achieving all your year-end appeal goals (and more)! Remember, as you use our tools during this busy time, our team and our partners are here to answer your questions and help you find the best resources to meet the moment.

Our team is in awe of how New Heights Educational Group is making its mark on the world. We see how you are continually asked to do more with less, yet still create meaningful change in your community. It is such a joy to engage with you and the over 300,000 nonprofits around the globe who are leveraging Microsoft resources to drive this positive impact.

Your stories inspire us every day and we are grateful for your tireless work.

Thank you again for all that you do, and we look forward to deepening our collaboration in the year ahead.

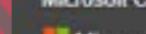
Regards,

Microsoft Tech for Social Impact

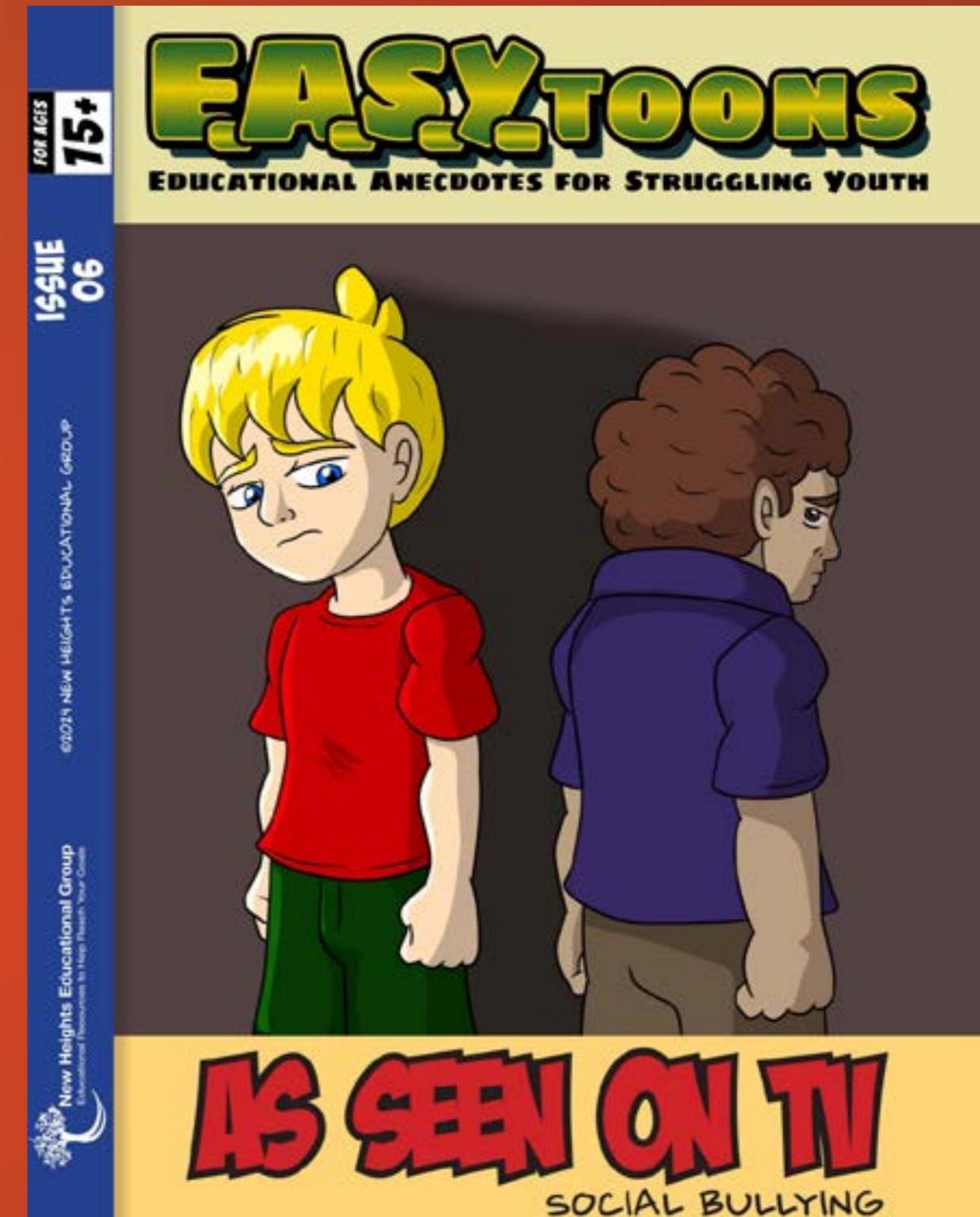
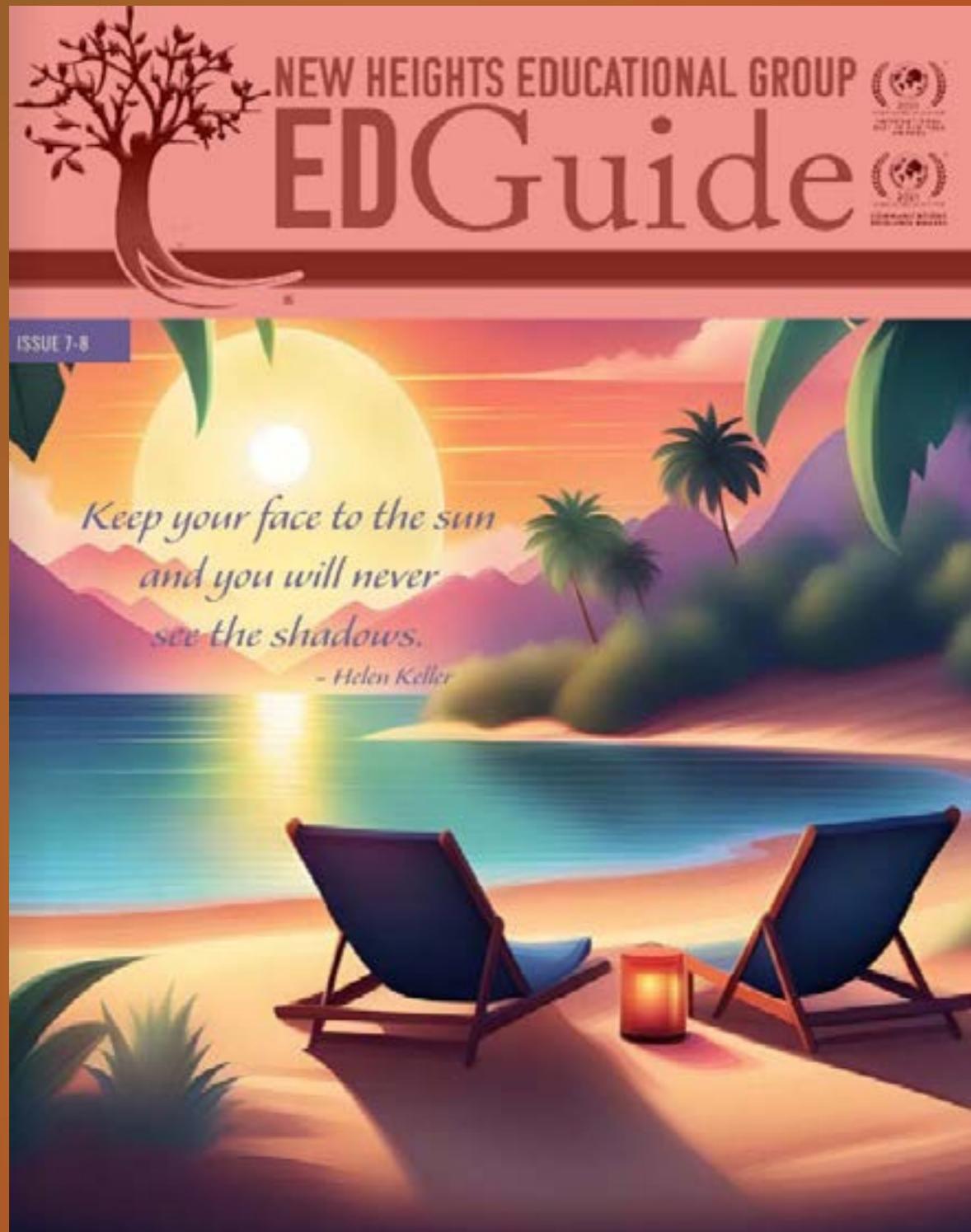
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Microsoft Corporation One Microsoft Way Redmond, WA 98052 USA



# YUMPU & OUR PUBLICATIONS



**Due to costs, our magazine and comic book will be moving from Yumpu to their own web page.**

**The NHEG EDGuide and E.A.S.Y.Toons can be found by visiting**  
<https://Publications.NewHeightseEducation.org/>

**Check it out and give a like, and subscribe, share and follow us.**

# SEAL-OF-TRANSPARENCY

Bronze  
Transparency  
**2024**

**Candid.**

Silver  
Transparency  
**2024**

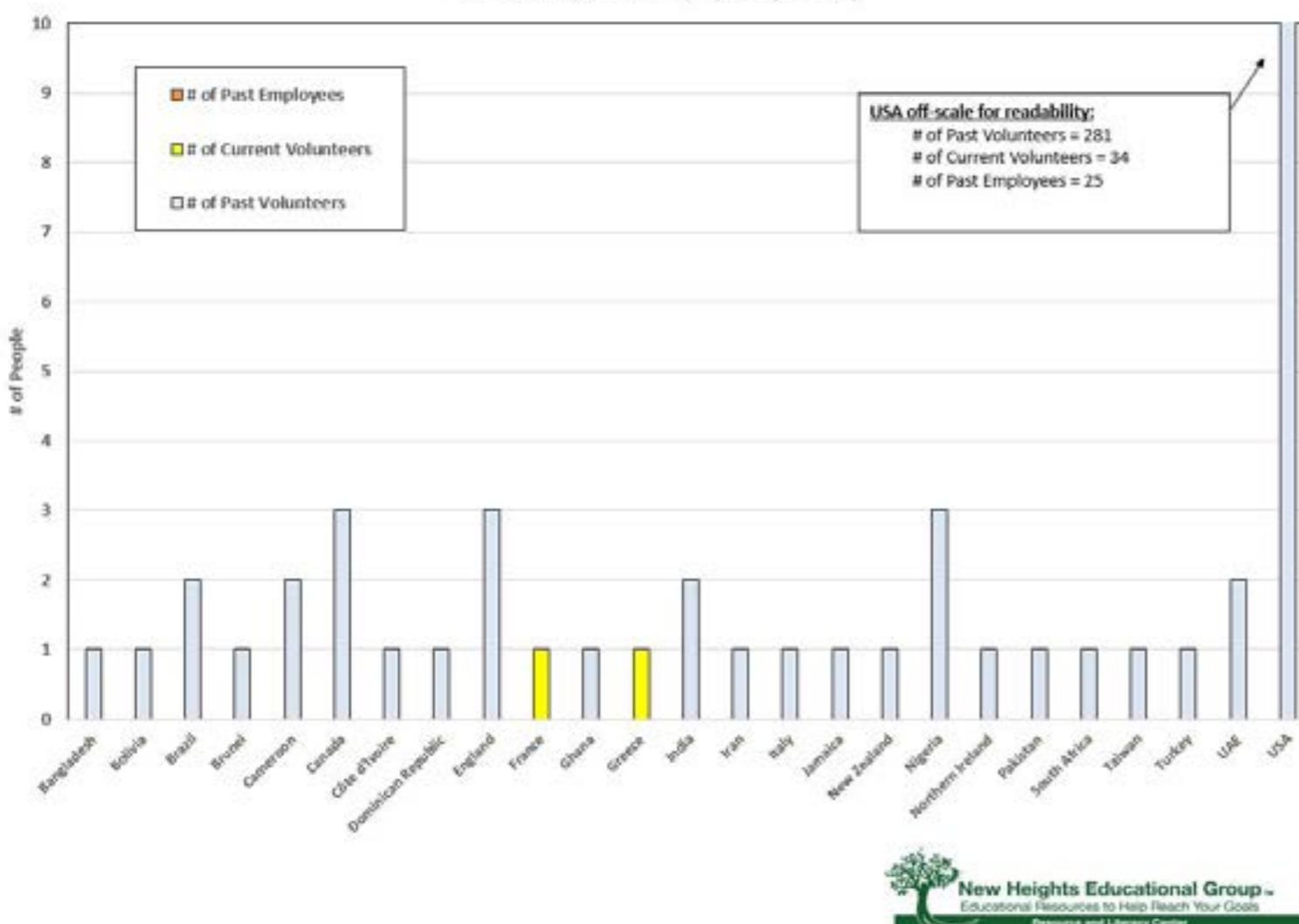
**Candid.**

Gold  
Transparency  
**2024**

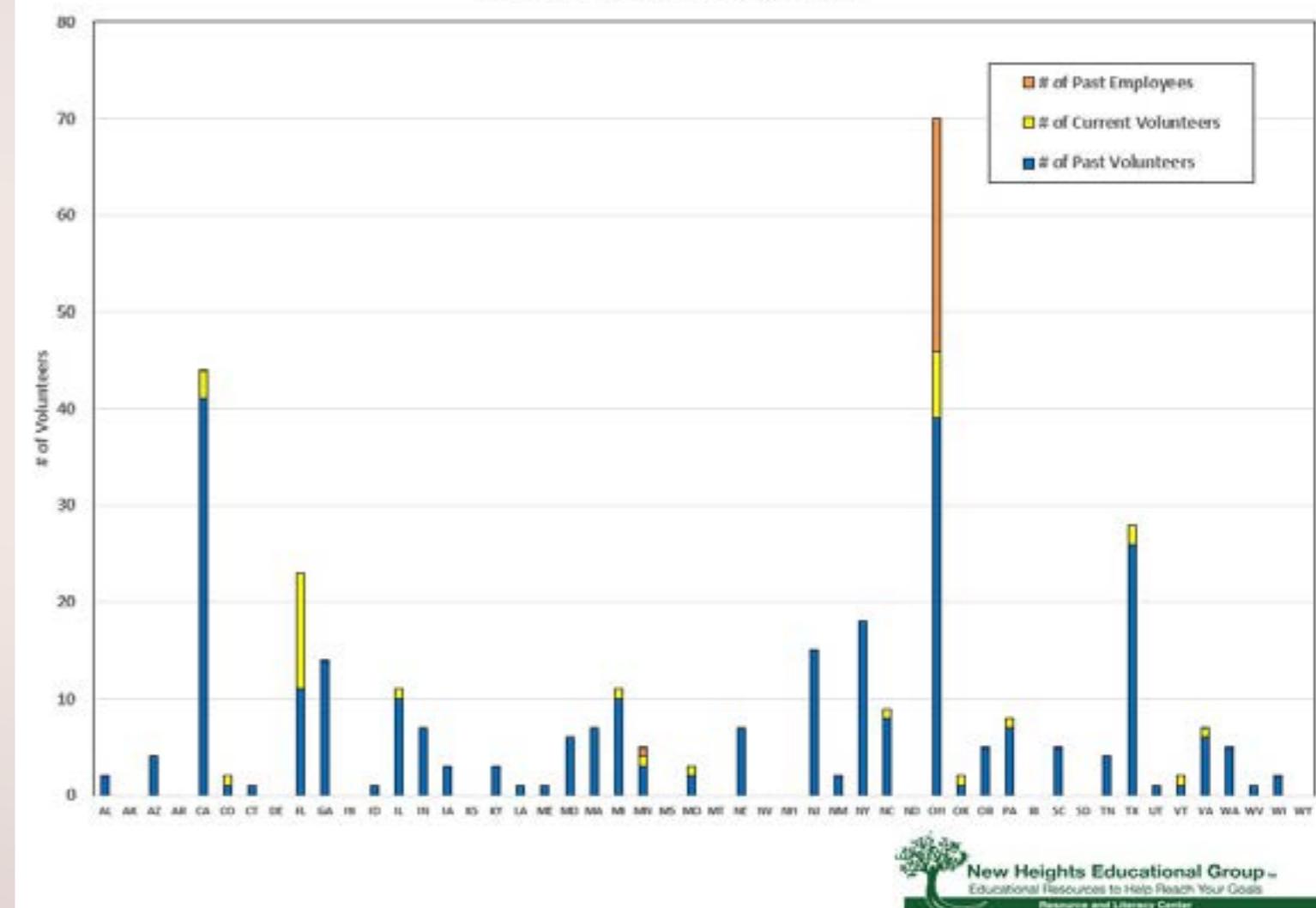
**Candid.**

# New Volunteer Stats

NHEG Volunteers and Employees by Country

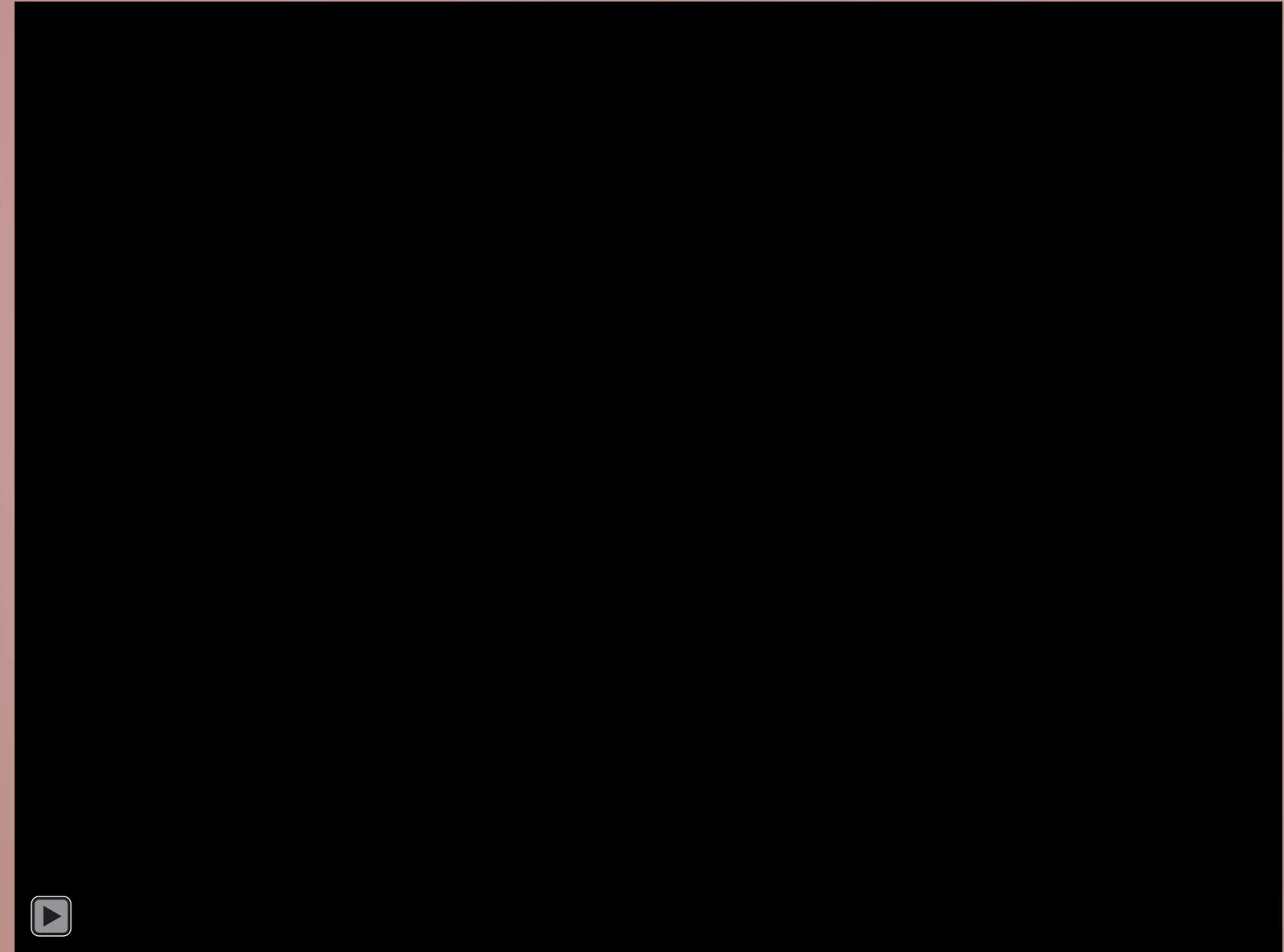


NHEG Volunteers and Employees by State



Organized/Created by Gary Stevens

# NHEG PITCH DECK



Help us fulfill the NHEG dream

**NHEG fall/winter fundraiser will provide much needed funds to keep our services, NHEG created courses and website(s) free and available to all those looking to improve their lives.**

Donate via Paypal or Zeffy or send a check to  
**NHEG**  
**11809 US Route 127**  
**Sherwood, Ohio 43556**

Scan QR code to donate



PayPal



**New Heights Educational Group**  
Educational Resources to Help Reach Your Goals

[www.NewHeightsEducation.org](http://www.NewHeightsEducation.org)

419-786-0241

Info@NewHeightsEducation.org

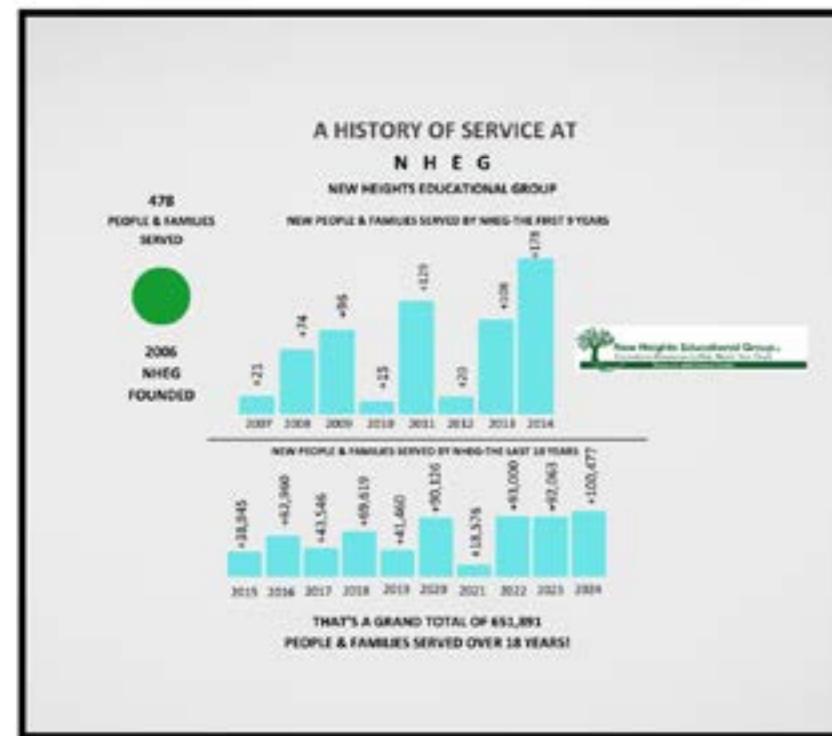
**New Heights Educational Group**  
Educational Resources to Help Reach Your Goals

**LITERACY FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS**

**EDGuide** **EASYTOONS**

[www.NewHeightsEducation.org](http://www.NewHeightsEducation.org) 419-786-0247 [Info@NewHeightsEducation.org](mailto:Info@NewHeightsEducation.org)



## The Growing Impact of NHEG Media

Each year, NHEG touches the lives of hundreds of thousands of individuals and families through the enchanting waves of NHEG Radio and its captivating publications.

### EASYTOONS

EDUCATIONAL ANECDOTES FOR STRUGGLING YOUTH



# QR CODES

For quick access to a world of information

Course Catalog

New Heights Show on Education

Awards

Online Store

Brochure

Scan. Pay. Go.  
DONATE NOW

Learning Annex

Media Pack

Website

Publications

Volunteer  
Opportunities

[www.NewHeightsEducation.org](http://www.NewHeightsEducation.org) | [NewHeightsEducation@yahoo.org](mailto:NewHeightsEducation@yahoo.org) | 419-786-0247

## CAN YOUR TEEN DO THIS IN 30 SECONDS OR LESS?

$$15/6 + 2 \frac{7}{9} = 83/18 = 4 \frac{11}{18} = 4.61$$

If not... Get  
**FRACTIONS MADE EASY**  
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CALCULATOR  
7 ONLINE TUTORIAL VIDEO  
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[HTTPS://WWW.TRIADMATHINC.COM/FRACTIONS-MADE-EASY/?AFFILIATE=1996](https://www.triadmathinc.com/fractions-made-easy/?affiliate=1996)

# NEW HEIGHTS EDUCATIONAL GROUP COURSE CATALOG



# 2025-2026 School Year CATALOG

 New Heights Educational Group  
Educational Resources to Help Reach Your Goals  
Resource and Literacy Center  
Info@NewHeightsEducation.org | www.NewHeightsEducation.org

# Language Arts



## WRITING

In this ten-lesson writing course, students will learn about basic writing patterns. The course includes warm-up exercises, detailed instructions and multiple examples for students to visualize writing movements. Students will also have the opportunity to practice writing strategies to develop functional handwriting. At the end of the course, students will be proficient in basic writing skills and able to compose words involving different types of letters.

## LEARN TO READ - YOUTH FREE!

The NHEG Learn to Read online course aims to educate parents/tutors/teachers/guides on how to help their student practice reading skills and fluency, cultivate strategies for reading, broaden vocabulary, increase spelling ability and conquer reading anxieties. Proven exercises and fun tips are provided to keep the student motivated and engaged throughout the process. The course takes the student and their selected reading guide through easy-to-follow stages – Expectations & Tips for Success, Prepare, Read in a Relaxed Setting, After Reading, Daily Practice and Practice Tips – creating a foundation of literacy on which they can build over time.

This course is for younger students from first grade to seventh grade. Note: This class works as a complement to the lessons in Natural Speller, which are available, for free, on NHEG's website.



## LEARN TO READ - ADULTS

The NHEG Learn to Read: Adult Literacy online course gives teachers/tutors/reading guides strategies for helping older students acquire literacy skills and provides methods for consistent, repeated practice. The course demonstrates the reputable and proven Laubach method, and provides resources for continuing practice beyond the course: Preparing for the Course, Reading the Laubach Charts, Reading the Laubach Stories, Writing the Laubach Lessons, Continuing Your Practice – creating a foundation of literacy on which they can build through consistent, repeated practice.

NHEG recommends the Laubach Learning System for middle school, high school and adult reading students. An online course for younger students is also available.

## NATURAL SPELLER

The NHEG Learn to Read online course aims to educate parents/tutors/teachers/guides on how to help their student practice reading skills and fluency, cultivate strategies for reading, broaden vocabulary, increase spelling ability and conquer reading anxieties. Proven exercises and fun tips are provided to keep the student motivated and engaged throughout the process. The course takes the student and their selected reading guide through easy-to-follow stages – Expectations & Tips for Success, Prepare, Read in a Relaxed Setting, After Reading, Daily Practice and Practice Tips – creating a foundation of literacy on which they can build over time.

Even though this course can be taken by a student of any age, we suggest the Laubach Learning System for middle school, high school and adult reading students. The course for using the Laubach Learning System is coming soon, so you will be able to choose which course is best for your student.

Note: This class works as a complement to the lessons in Natural Speller, which are available, for free, on NHEG's website.



# Virtual Reading Five-Tier Program



FREE!

## ONE TIER



Is a virtual reading program designed for young children to read books along with 6-year-old Rishaan Gupta on special occasions. (Pre-school – 1st grade students)

## TWO TIER



In partnership with 2nd & 7 Foundation and our Reading Ambassador Rhone-Ann Huang, we have implemented a virtual reading program for children. As part of 2nd & 7's "Tackling Illiteracy" program, and with the help of Zoom video conferencing, student-athletes will read with second-grade students and discuss why reading and staying on top of schoolwork is essential.

This school year, the volunteer readers are student-athletes from Dartmouth University. The "Hog Mollies" books were written by 2nd & 7. Each book is 30 pages and contains a different lesson and moral. There are 13 "Hog Mollies" books, and we have now read all of them. Don't worry "Hog Mollies" is releasing another book this summer. Check back for updates. All second-graders are welcome to listen.

All virtual readings are available from our site.

FREE!



## THREE TIER

Rhone-Ann Huang is reading 9th- to 12th-grade and young adult books weekly.

## FOUR TIER



Rhone-Ann Huang reading time for students from 2nd to 5th grade.

FREE!

FREE!



## FIVE TIER

Rhone-Ann Huang reading time for students from 6th – 8th grade.

# First Book Network



If your children or students lack access to quality books, NHEG can help provide them with a high quality, online library through the First Book Network. Members have 24-hour, year-round access to an award-winning repository of new and affordable books, educational resources and basic necessities curated for kids and young adults up to 18 years of age.

To claim access to these free books, contact us at [Info@NewHeightsEducation.org](mailto:Info@NewHeightsEducation.org) and send us the name, email address and age for each child you would like access for. We will send you an email with sign-up information (check your spam folder if you don't see this email in your inbox).

## New Heights Educational Group

We are now part of the First Book Network!

If your Child or Student lacks access to quality books, NHEG can help provide you with a high quality, online library through First Book.



Eliminating Barriers. Inspiring Young Minds.

### Need Books?

Members of the First Book Network have 24-hour, year-round access to an award-winning repository of affordable and new books, educational resources, and basic necessities curated for kids in need ages 0-18.

WE CAN HELP  
YOUR STUDENT  
GAIN ACCESS TO  
FREE, HIGH  
QUALITY READING  
MATERIAL!

### CONTACT US



[Info@NewHeightsEducation.org](mailto:Info@NewHeightsEducation.org) | [www.NewHeightsEducation.org](http://www.NewHeightsEducation.org)

# Foreign Languages



## CHINESE

The 10-week course will take place for one hour twice a week and will be open for middle school to adult students who wish to learn to speak and write Chinese.

The pre-recorded course will include greetings, essential dialogues, useful words and phrases and basic grammar. This course will also teach students basic writing. For those students who don't have a Chinese name, this course will assist students in getting their! Throughout the process, students will learn about Chinese cultures and etiquette. This class is a great beginning course for anyone who wants to learn Mandarin Chinese but doesn't know where to start.

The course will introduce the Chinese writing system, both pinyin and the romanization system. It will have step-by-step guides on how to write Chinese characters and is great for a self-motivated beginner student who wants to learn to speak, read and write in Chinese. The course will provide beginner students of Chinese with a good basic knowledge of the language and build a great foundation for future learning.

FREE!

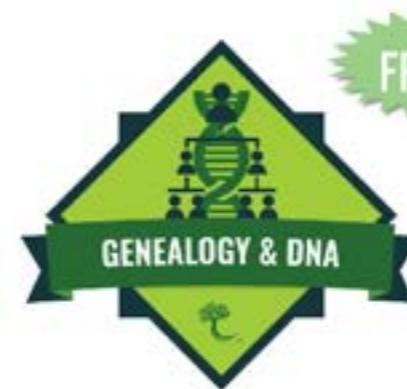


# Science & Math

## CHEMISTRY

In the NHEG Chemistry online course, we will provide you a better understanding of chemistry and how it is used.

We will discuss a variety of topics, from chemical bonds and reactions to electronegativity trends in the periodic table and atomic structure. It's important to complete all your assignments on time and on your own (and to have fun, too!).



## GENEALOGY & DNA

NHEG is launching a Genealogy and Education course and a DNA and Education course. These courses will help students begin to explore their ancestry and are a precursor to a potential genealogy program that will help youth explore their roots.

These classes are for middle- and high school-level students and adults. In this course, students will explore the history of genealogy and be inspired to learn about their family history and its connection to their community.

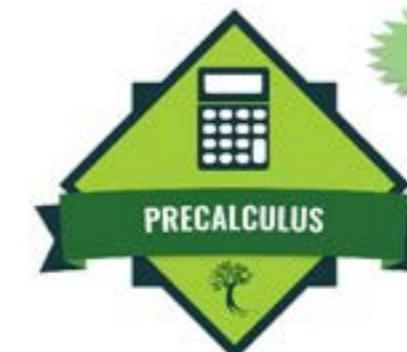
Course topics:

- History of genealogy
- Family history and its ties to their environment
- Significance of learning about family history
- Steps to researching family history
- Sites to help organize a family tree
- Steps to downloading and transferring family tree data

## ALGEBRA 1

Algebra 1 is a high-school level course that is typically taken in the 9th grade. It prepares students for more advanced mathematics. In this course, students will be introduced to the concepts of variables, negative numbers and advanced mathematical operations and use them to write, solve and graph linear and quadratic equations.

Students should have a strong foundation in basic mathematical operations and will develop the analytical and critical-thinking skills needed to model real-life application word problems. The tutor uses "Teaching Textbooks" to teach this course.



## PRECALCULUS

Pre-Calculus with Chinmay Arvind Chapter 1-7 and Meghna Kilaparthi teaches chapter 8 to the end of the book. Learn Function Basics, Polynomial Functions, Rational Functions, Exponential and Logarithmic Functions, Radical Functions, Power Functions, Triangle Trigonometry, Trigonometric Functions, Trigonometric Identities, Vectors and Polar Coordinates, Systems, Matrices, and Determinants, Analytic Geometry, Sequences, Probability, and Statistics, Introduction to Calculus, and many more topics. All off which will prepare you for the Calculus course. Sign up now free with members to our Learning Annex.

## PRE-ALGEBRA

Pre-Algebra course is taught by Meghna Kilaparthi. It is an online course with recorded lectures that will help you strengthen your mathematical and, more specifically, algebraic skills. This course will encompass topics such as adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing whole numbers, fractions and decimals as well as discussing percentages, powers, roots, measuring the area and volume, negative numbers and solving algebraic equations with and without variables.

PRE-ALGEBRA COURSE LAYOUT:

- Topic 1 - Adding, Subtracting, Multiplying and Dividing Whole Numbers (Chapter 1 and 2)
- Topic 2 - Fractions (Chapter 3, 4, and 5)
- Topic 3 - Decimals (Chapter 6)
- Topic 4 - Percents (Chapter 7)
- Topic 5 - Measuring Length, Area and Volume (Chapter 8 and 9)
- Topic 6 - Simple Algebra Equation (Chapter 10)
- Topic 7 - Negative Numbers (Chapter 11)
- Topic 8 - Longer Equations (Chapter 12)
- Topic 9 - Combining x's and Fractions with x's (Chapter 13 and 14)
- Topic 10 - Powers and Roots (Chapter 15)



# Electives



FREE!

## VIOLIN VISION with Satya Vedula

The Violin Vision course covers all content regarding how to play the violin and sight reading violin music. The course is divided from beginner to advanced content, even including easy-to-remember tips and tricks.

Goals:

- Identify & interpret basic musical symbols
- Understand parts of a single line of music
- Start to understand basic note-reading
- Identify parts of the violin and the bow
- Learn about 2 main violin-holding positions



FREE!

## MUSIC COURSE

NHEG Music Program will offer many musical opportunities, including Music Theory, History of Music, Famous Composers, Famous Musicians, individual classes, instrumental lessons and much more. These lessons will range in price from free to low-cost.

## FINANCIAL LITERACY

FREE!



NHEG Financial Literacy course is a self-taught class that helps you build a better understanding of your finances. This high school- and adult-level class covers topics such as financial responsibility, income sources, deductions, financial institutions, purchasing decisions, taxes, credit, debits, assets, risk management, protection laws and budgeting.



FREE!

## ORPHAN TRAIN

The Orphan Train Movement was a supervised welfare program that transported orphaned and homeless children from crowded eastern cities of the United States to foster homes located largely in rural areas of the Midwest. The orphan trains operated between 1854 and 1929, relocating about 200,000 orphaned, abandoned or homeless children. Charles Loring Brace, founder of the Children's Aid Society, decided the best way to help these children would be to take them out of the crowded eastern cities and instead put them in farming families in the Midwest.

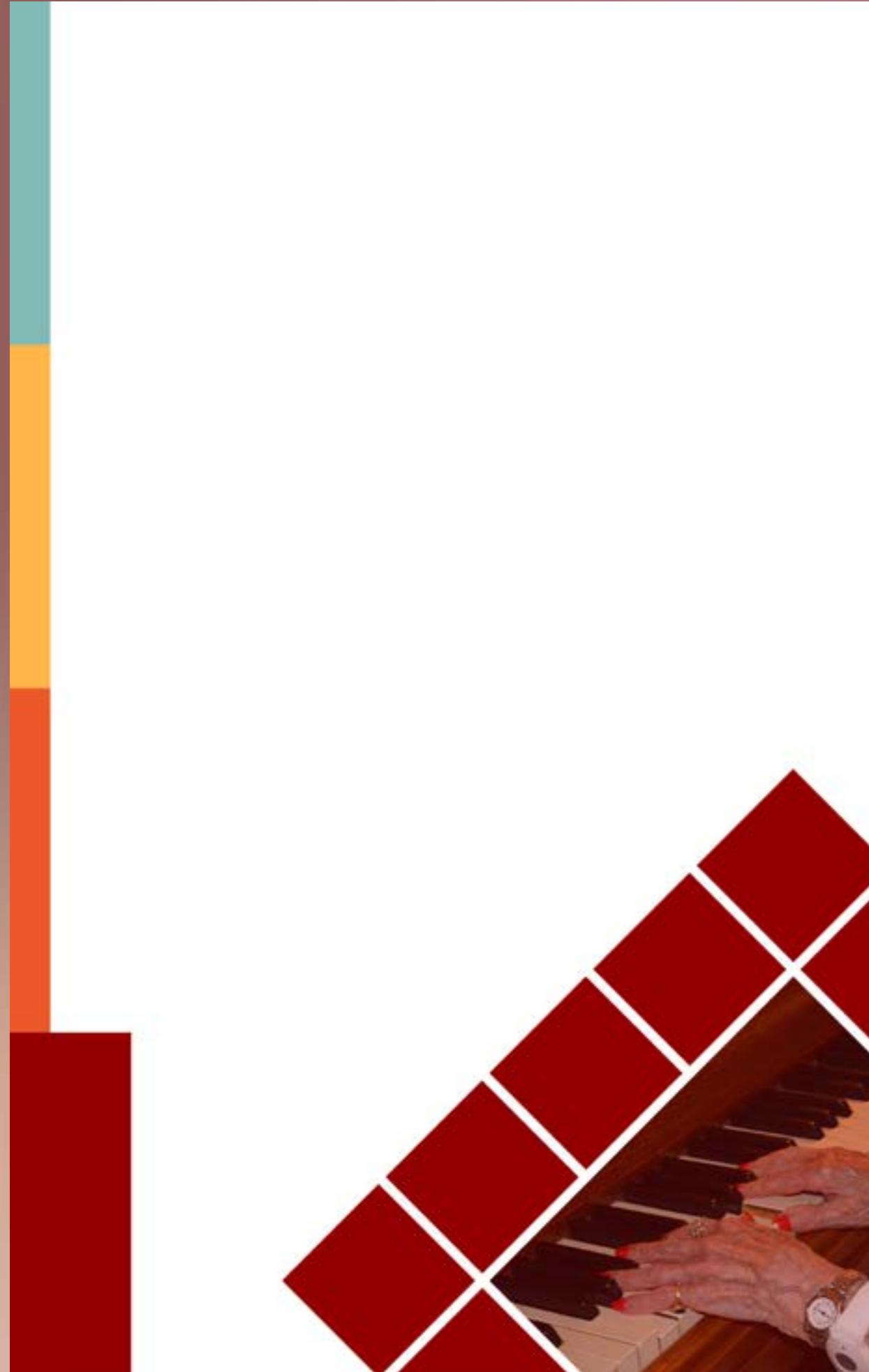
He believed by removing them from poverty, he would be able to change the fates of the children and allow them to be able to make something of their lives. Children would be transported by train from the east to the Midwest where they lived and worked with farming families for free. On the route west, the orphan trains stopped in 45 states across the country. This program helped over 120,000 children and led to reforms in child labor policies, adoption and foster care policies, health care and public education.

## HOW TO BE AN INTERNET RADIO HOST

FREE!

Ever dream of being heard in many places at one time? Are you often told that you have a voice that sounds "made for the radio"? We have an opportunity that you won't want to miss! Our professionals will teach you how to become an internet host or hostess! You will learn the requirements of the job, how to market a show, how to use the software and how to manage guests and hold roundtable discussions. And this is just the tip of the iceberg!





## HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD

The Holidays Around the World courses will explore cultures, foods, history and beginnings of holidays from all over the world. Each course will take a unique look at these holidays and will feature six classes. Parents are encouraged to review courses before sharing with their children, and many classes are aimed at middle school, high school, college-level and adult students.

### WORLD HOLIDAYS 1

#### CHRISTMAS

In this course you will learn about the history of Christmas and its origins, religious connections, comparisons between Christmas and Hanukkah, foods, cultures, beliefs, Santa Claus and so much more.

#### CHINESE NEW YEAR

In this course you will learn about the history of the Chinese New Year and its origins, traditions, foods, symbols and greetings and so much more.

#### EASTER

In this course you will learn about the history of Easter and its origins, persecution, religious beliefs, a comparison between Easter and Passover, foods, Christianity, Judaism, biblical references, Easter in America, eggs, rabbits, Babylonian heritage, Ishtar, festivals, cultures that celebrate it, fertility, folk customs, Palm Sunday, Easter Tuesday, Easter Parades and so much more.

#### HALLOWEEN

In this course you will learn about the history of Halloween and its origins, signs and symbols, saints, martyrs, Christianity, Samhain and Celtic roots, foods, bonfires, harvest times, beliefs regarding the boundary of this world and the outerworld, costumes, games, fortunes, dreams, altars and candles, the holiday's evolution to modern times in America and beyond, cultures that celebrate it and how they celebrate, All Hallows' Eve and so much more.

#### HANUKKAH

In this course you will learn about the history of Hanukkah and its origins, Jewish roots, the revolt, menorah candles and the lighting of them, errors in lighting the candles, Judaism, the Torah, foods and the use of oil, blessings, songs, the population of Jews and where they live.

#### PASSOVER

In this course you will learn about the history of Passover and its origins, Jewish and Christian roots, Tribes of Israel, the Death Angel, Egypt and escape from it, biblical references, foods, a comparison between Passover and Easter, references to Jesus Christ, early Christians, Galatians, Easter taking over Passover throughout time, churches and how they celebrate, Pesah, Sedar, Jewish practices, breads, unleavened bread, wine, genealogy/family roots, cultures that celebrate it and how they celebrate it and so much more.

### WORLD HOLIDAYS 2

All holidays covered explore its origins, traditions, foods, symbols, greetings and much more:

- DIWALI
- FATHER'S DAY
- GROUNDHOG DAY
- MOTHER'S DAY
- ST. PATRICK'S DAY
- VALENTINE'S DAY



## INTERVIEW SKILLS

This class will instruct students on how to apply for a job and what is expected of them during the hiring process.

# Partners & Affiliates

## PARTNERS AND AFFILIATES INCLUDE:

Homeschooler Today



Hillsdale College



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

Home School Legal Defense Online Academy


**HSLDA**  
Online Academy

Learn Play Connect

LEARN... PLAY... CONNECT... WITH MATH

Lima Symphony Orchestra



Chamber Theatre Productions



CHAMBER THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

Natural Born Leaders


**NATURAL  
BORN  
LEADERS.ORG**

National CSI



Fiverr

Personal & Professional Development Coaching -  
Georgia Woodbine

Personal Development Coaching - Buffy Williams

Civic Theatre of Fort Wayne  
(aka United Arts and Education)

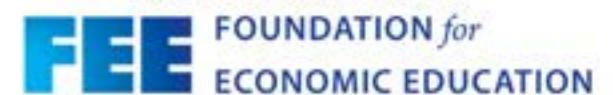
The Animation Course



THE DRAWING COURSE



FEE - Foundation for Economic Education



The Hip Hop Healthy Heart Program for Children™



Touch-type Read &amp; Spell



Sign Up

CollegeXpress



Info@NewHeightsEducation.org | www.NewHeightsEducation.org



# Contact:

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[Info@NewHeightsEducation.org](mailto:Info@NewHeightsEducation.org)  
(419) 786-0247



New Heights Educational Group, Inc.  
Learning Annex [www.School.NewHeightsEducation.org](http://www.School.NewHeightsEducation.org)  
Donate to NHEG [paypal.me/NHEG](https://paypal.me/NHEG)  
Stay up-to-date with educational news  
with the NHEG Magazine  
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and [www.Radio.NewHeightsEducation.org](http://www.Radio.NewHeightsEducation.org)



## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

New Heights Educational Group is an Award-Winning Organization.  
Scan Here to View the Full List!



## Student and Adult Leadership Opportunities

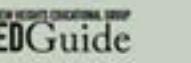
NHEG national groups promote leadership, providing student internship opportunities to serve in our organization and earn relevant experience. The Adult Advisory Group is for parents and others in the community who want a voice in education, and alongside these, NHEG offers various support groups for students and citizens.



## Other Programs and Services Include:

- A free online 5-tier reading program
- Publications - E.A.S.YToons Comic Book and the NHEG EDGuide Magazine
- Internet Radio Program - New Heights Show on Education

Check out...  
Our radio show: 

Our magazine:   
Our comic: 

## Our Achievements

Scan QR code to see our awards!



Education frustration?  
Confusion? Feeling  
overwhelmed?



## Contact Us

[Info@NewHeightsEducation.org](mailto:Info@NewHeightsEducation.org)  
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A Public Charity 501(c)(3)  
Nonprofit Organization

We know how to help you.



New Heights Educational Group  
Educational Resources to Help Reach Your Goals

We understand and we care.

## Student Services

NHEG offers resources for students who are homeschooled or attending charter schools or public schools in Ohio. This includes students from pre-k to adults of all ages. Resources include:

- Over 1,200 free and discounted courses
- Student leadership opportunities
- Access to free scholarship searches via our website
- Online affordable student assessments and placement tests
- Student lesson planning
- Diploma and transcript preparation



## Mission Statement

New Heights Educational Group, Inc., promotes literacy for children and adults by offering a range of educational support services. Such services include the following: assisting families in the selection of schools; organization of educational activities; and acquisition of materials. We promote a healthy learning environment and various enrichment programs for families of preschool and school-age children, including children with special needs.

## Learning Annex

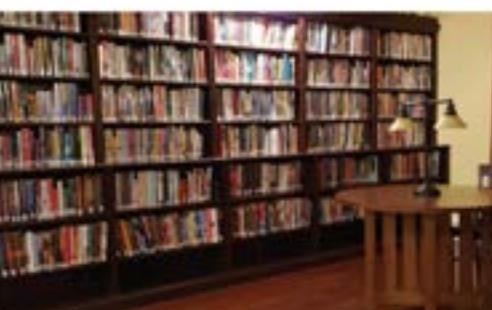
NHEG is providing students discounted and free online classes that they can take in their free time or incorporate into their current studies. This includes students who are homeschooled or attending a charter, private, or public school. Also, NHEG has partnered with HSLDA Academy, so you will receive a discount when you use our code in one of their classes.

Scan QR code to visit the Learning Annex



## Discounted and Online Classes

NHEG provides discounted and free online classes for home school, charter, public and private school students. Classes can be used to fulfill curriculum requirements (this only pertains to homeschool students) or to supplement current studies. NHEG has also formed a partnership with HSLDA which allows us to offer a discount to NHEG students taking HSLDA classes. Courses range from core subjects to hard-to-find subject matter, such as mathematics, economics, and even theology.



## Parent & Teacher Services

NHEG offers training courses and information for parents of homeschool, charter school, public school, and special-need students concerning schooling, resources, and education available to them. Likewise, NHEG also provides various resources to teachers such as classroom and training resources and educational technologies.



# NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN

## MISSING CHILD



Mekhi Kincade

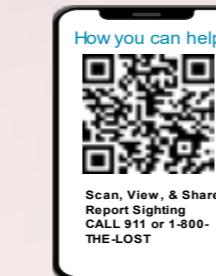
NCIC# M548622682

Missing Since: November 18, 2025

Toledo, OH

Age Now: 13 Years Old

Male



Toledo Police  
Department (OH)  
(419) 255-8443

### EXTRA PHOTOS



Both photos shown are of Mekhi. He may still be in the local area.



NCMEC: 2068960

## MISSING CHILD



Anthony Fogle

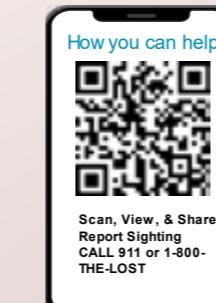
NCIC# M018695352

Missing Since: December 19, 2025

Dayton, OH

Age Now: 16 Years Old

Male



Dayton Police  
Department (OH)  
(937) 333-1070

Anthony was last seen on December 19, 2025.



NCMEC: 2072173

**CALL 911 OR**  
1-800-843-5678 (1-800-THE-LOST®)

Madison County Sheriff's Office (Ohio) 1-740-852-1212

## MISSING CHILD



Alexis Lynn Bartley

NCIC# M408663155

Missing Since: December 2, 2025

Youngstown, OH

Age Now: 13 Years Old

Female



Youngstown Police  
Department (OH)  
(330) 747-7911

Alexis may still be in the local area or may travel to Akron, Ohio. She may go by the name Lexie.



NCMEC: 2070463

## MISSING CHILD



Makayla Hillebrandt

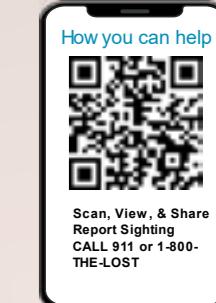
NCIC# M178740882

Missing Since: December 21, 2025

Dayton, OH

Age Now: 15 Years Old

Female

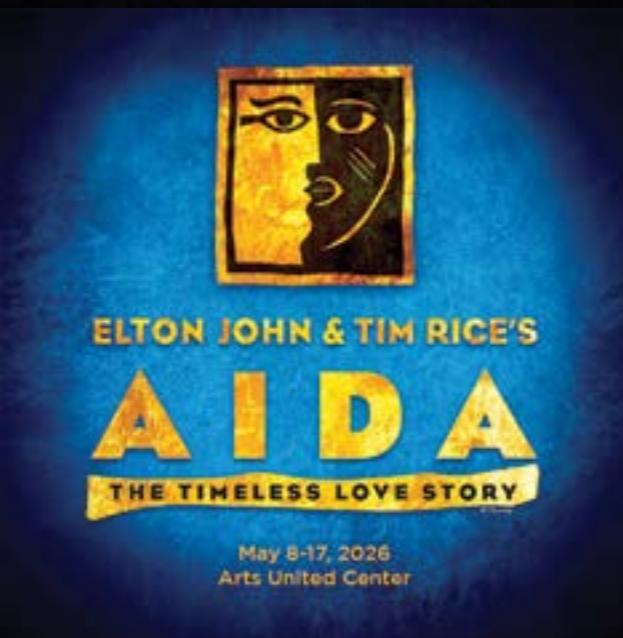
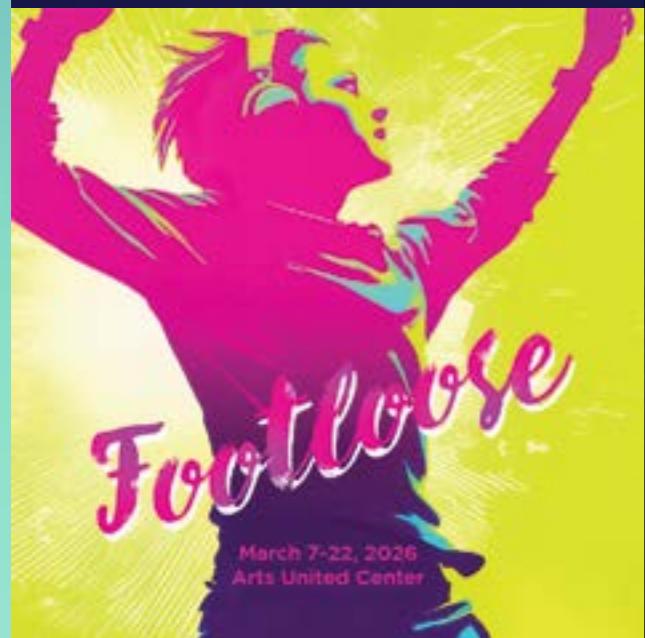
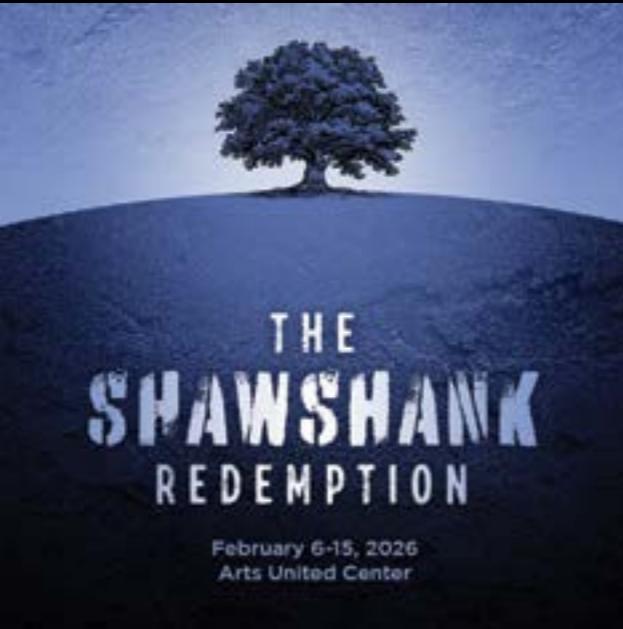
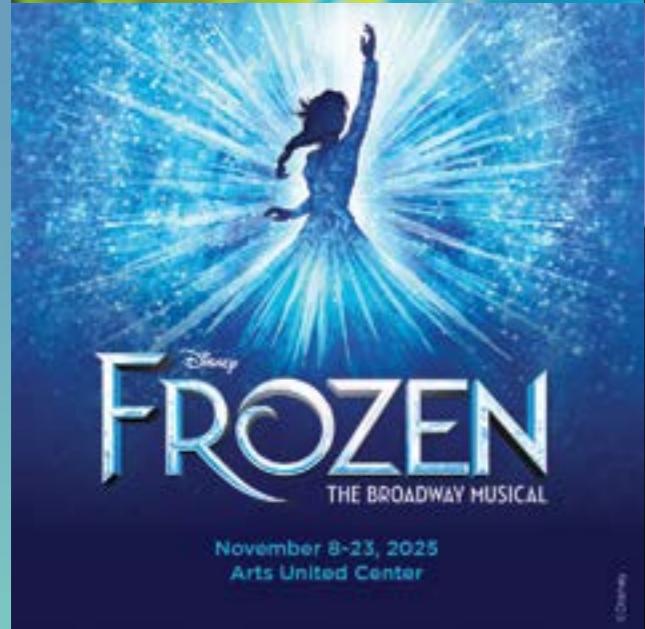
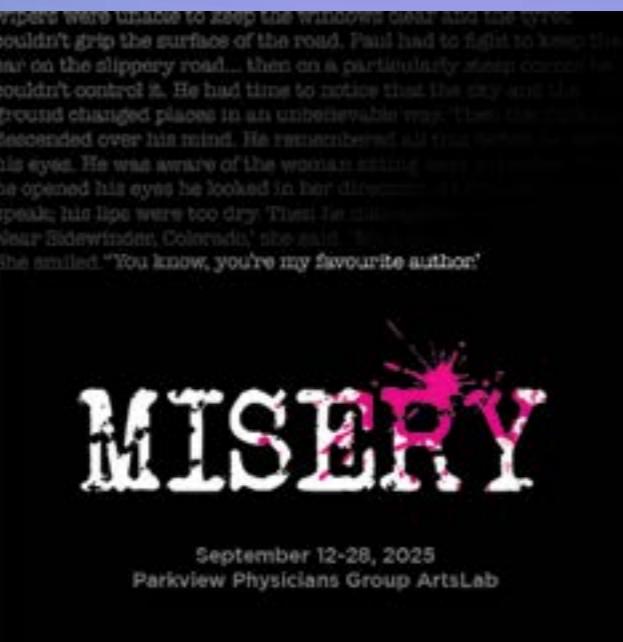
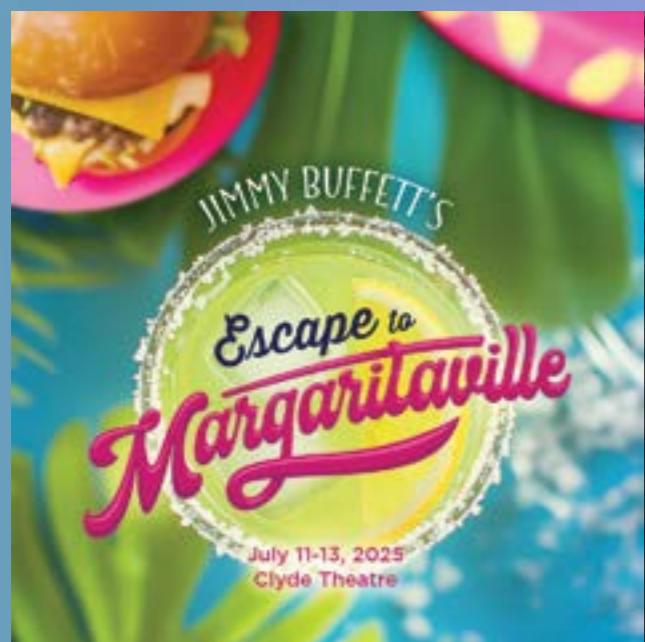


Dayton Police  
Department (OH)  
(937) 333-2677

Makayla was last seen on December 21, 2025.



NCMEC: 2072183



**New Heights Educational Group™**  
Educational Resources to Help Reach Your Goals  
Resource and Literacy Center

We are now part of the First Book Network!



Eliminating Barriers. Inspiring Young Minds.

## Need Books?

Members of the First Book Network have 24-hour, year-round access to an award-winning repository of affordable and new books, educational resources, and basic necessities curated for kids in need ages 0-18.

CONTACT US  
ON OUR WEBSITE AT  
[NEWHEIGHTSEDUCATION.ORG](http://NEWHEIGHTSEDUCATION.ORG)

WE CAN HELP  
YOUR STUDENT  
GAIN ACCESS TO  
FREE, HIGH  
QUALITY READING  
MATERIAL!

If your Child or Student lacks access to quality books, NHEG can help provide you with a high quality, online library through First Book.

\*First Book is for U.S. residents only

Also, our 5-Tier Virtual Reading Program

is **FREE** for all students

**Preschool-12th grade**

at [NewHeightsEducation.Org](http://NewHeightsEducation.Org)





Have professional genealogy research done for only  
**\$65** per hr

Genealogy costs cover the genealogist's time and there may be extra charges for expenses that include photocopies, travel, website fees (Ancestry, MyHeritage, and public library fees) and postage if necessary.

For more information, please visit <https://School.NewHeightsEducation.org/affordable-genealogy/>  
To sign up: <https://NHEG.MemberHub.com/store/items/838457>

New Heights Educational Group is now offering pre-recorded  
**Genealogy and DNA courses**

## Genealogy & Education

In this free course, students will explore the history of genealogy and be inspired to learn about their family history and its connection to their community.

### Course topics:

- History of genealogy
- Family history and its ties to their environment
- Significance of learning about family history
- Steps to researching family history
- Sites to help organize a family tree
- Steps to downloading and moving a family tree

## DNA & Education

In this free course, students will explore the world of genetics and DNA testing and be inspired to learn about their genetic makeup and their connection to others.

### Course topics:

- Significance of learning about family history
- Introduction to genetic testing
- Overview of DNA
- DNA testing options
- Steps to take after DNA testing
- Value of adding DNA results to other websites
- Using Gedmatch
- Comparing DNA in multiple systems
- Comparing DNA relatives
- DNA results and social media

For more information, please visit <https://School.NewHeightsEducation.org/online-courses/genealogy-dna-course/>

## Contact Us

419-786-0247

[NewHeightsEducation@yahoo.com](mailto:NewHeightsEducation@yahoo.com) • <http://www.NewHeightsEducation.org>



## Touch-type Read & Spell

An award-winning, multi-sensory course that teaches touch-typing, reading and spelling at the same time

**Sign Up**

<https://www.readandspell.com/home-course>

Discount: NHE10



The logo for the "Heroes of Liberty" campaign features the words "HEROES OF LIBERTY" in a stylized, yellow, blocky font. The "O" in "OF" and the "I" in "LIBERTY" have a wavy, sunburst-like effect. The background is a green gradient.

**HEROES OF LIBERTY**

RONALD REAGAN  
IT'S MORNING IN AMERICA

Thomas Sowell  
A SELF-MADE MAN

Amy Coney Barrett  
A JUSTICE AND A MOTHER

<https://NewHeightsEducation.org/NHEG-news/heroes-of-liberty-partnership/>



A close-up photograph of a Black man with curly hair and glasses, looking surprised or excited with his mouth open. He is surrounded by US dollar bills. The text on the right side of the image reads:

WIN THE  
**\$10,000**  
**CARNEGIE DARTLET SCHOLARSHIP**

[https://www.collegexpress.com/reg/signup?campaign=10k&utm\\_campaign=NHEG&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_source=NHEG](https://www.collegexpress.com/reg/signup?campaign=10k&utm_campaign=NHEG&utm_medium=link&utm_source=NHEG)

More Scholarship opportunities:

- <https://School.NewHeightsEducation.org/students/scholarship-opportunities/scholarship-search/>
- <https://School.NewHeightsEducation.org/students/scholarship-opportunities/>



Equal education for all those willing to work for it.



<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form>



<https://careeasy.org/nonprofit/NewHeightsEducationalGroup>

Call:

855-550-4483



Move & Play

Nature inspired

Personalized Learning

Loving & Inclusive

give your child *Meraki*

K-3 Fall 2024

Yukon, OK

Meraki Primary School

MerakiPrimarySchool.com

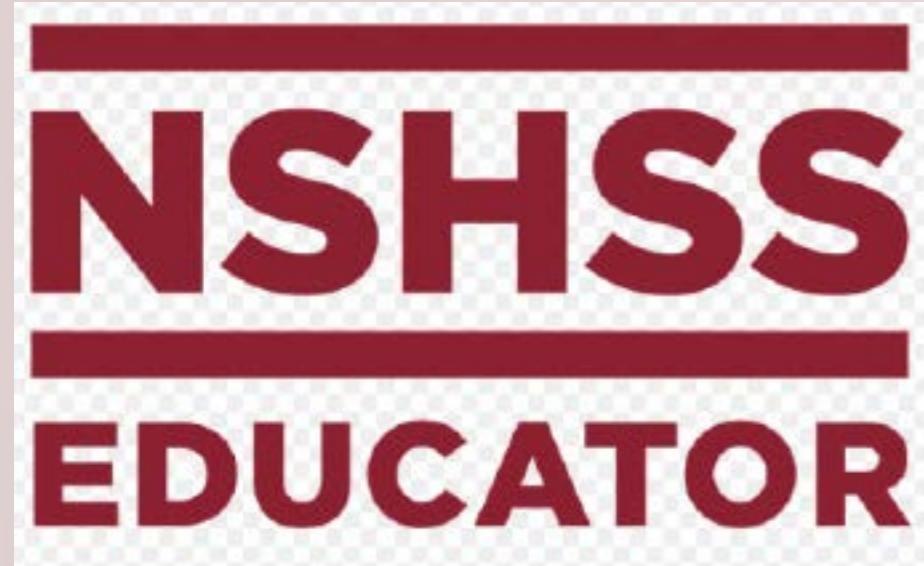
Give your child...

- **small** class sizes (10 max)
- **support** from a **professional** teacher
- **built-in** **social** opportunities
- **quality** **curriculum**
- **flexible** options (hybrid/full-time)
- a **caring** community

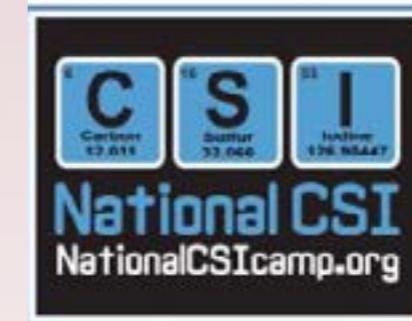
MERAKI PRIMARY SCHOOL



<https://School.NewHeightsEducation.org/online-courses/personal-development-coaching-courses/>



<https://www.nshss.org/>



<https://School.NewHeightsEducation.org/membership/national-csi-classes/>

 An advertisement for 'Two FREE Math Gifts'. It features a blue and orange background with a teal circle containing the text 'Use Code: NHEG'. The text 'Two FREE Math Gifts' is prominently displayed in yellow. Below the code, there are two numbered sections: '#1 - A/V book: "How and Why Homeschool Math can be vastly Superior to Public School Math."' and '#2 - A \$47 Gift of an Interactive Self-paced Online Math Program: "Learn to do Arithmetic Calculations with a TI30Xa Calculator - Quick and Easy!"'. At the bottom, the website 'www.VastlySuperiorMath.com' is listed.
 

**Two FREE Math Gifts**

Use Code: **NHEG**

#1 - A/V book: "How and Why Homeschool Math can be vastly Superior to Public School Math."

#2 - A \$47 Gift of an Interactive Self-paced Online Math Program: "Learn to do Arithmetic Calculations with a TI30Xa Calculator - Quick and Easy!"

[www.VastlySuperiorMath.com](http://www.VastlySuperiorMath.com)

<https://School.NewHeightsEducation.org/online-courses/discounted-and-free-online-classes/>



<https://NewHeightsEducation.org/NHEG-educational-programs/virtual-reading-program/>



New Heights Educational Group (NHEG)

and  
**Chamber Theatre Productions**  
offer a unique virtual education experience

## **Edgar Allan Poe: The Midnight Collection**

A one-hour dramatic educational package  
based on the works of Poe, offering flexible  
one-week rental options for classroom or  
remote learning

To learn more about this unique opportunity, visit

<https://school.chambertheatre.com/>

and enter code: HS5 at checkout - and you will receive 5% off.



**Chamber Theatre Productions**  
America's Premiere Educational Theatre Company



**New Heights Educational Group**  
Educational Resources to Help Reach Your Goals  
Resource and Literacy Center

<https://www.NewHeightsEducation.org>



**Chamber Theatre Productions**  
America's Premiere Educational Theatre Company

# VOLUNTEER PAGES

## NEW VOLUNTEERS

GARY STEVENS MAY 4, 2026  
COMPILING EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES,  
DOCUMENT BUILDER AND EDITOR  
DONNALIE YAP 7/14/25  
RESEARCH COORDINATOR AND COMPILING  
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

## VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH

Laura Casanova  
Marina Klimi  
Yusuf Musibau  
Manya Shukla  
Gary Stevens

THE INTERNET RADIO PROGRAM  
FROM NEW HEIGHTS EDUCATIONAL GROUP



# New Heights Educational Group Launches Podcast

The New Heights Educational Group is excited to announce the launch of a new podcast titled "American Service Men and Women Tell Their Stories of Survival." Hosted by Pamela Clark, this podcast will feature firsthand accounts from sailors who served aboard the USS Drexler, with plans to explore additional stories and branches of the military, as well.

This pre-recorded show will be available on our website [Radio.NewHeightsEducation.org](http://Radio.NewHeightsEducation.org) starting June 25, 2026. Homeschool families are encouraged to incorporate this resource into their American History studies.

*P.S. If anyone from the families would like to be interviewed on the show they can reach me at my email address.*

*(Info@NewHeightsEducation.org)*

Commercial for show

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAGVqZ9Ny2U/EZ8XuV0tHQU0URfQj07j9w/watch?utm\\_content=DAGVqZ9Ny2U&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=uniquelinks&utllId=ha977a70340](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGVqZ9Ny2U/EZ8XuV0tHQU0URfQj07j9w/watch?utm_content=DAGVqZ9Ny2U&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniquelinks&utllId=ha977a70340)



# NEW HEIGHTS

SHOW ON EDUCATION



# Interested in Broadcasting?



Attention Students interested in broadcasting or working in radio and television:  
NHEG offers unique opportunities for students to explore.

Positions are all volunteer based and offer hands on experience working on a syndicated show, "New Heights Show on Education" (currently only online)

## The Positions of Interest Include:

Internet Radio Host Assistant, Internet Radio Monitors, Creating of New Media, Editing Audio and Video, Press Secretary, Experience with Spreaker and Zoom, Experience working as a Communications Secretary, Hosting of Round-table discussions. There might also be an opportunity to become a host for our organization.

### Contact us:

NewHeightsEducation@yahoo.com  
419-786-0247

<http://www.NewHeightsEducation.org>  
<https://Radio.NewHeightsEducation.org/>  
Learning Annex: <https://School.NewHeightsEducation.org/>



# NEW HEIGHTS

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SHOW ON EDUCATION



The image is a promotional graphic for the 'New Heights Show on Education'. It features a central graphic of a microphone inside a green circle, with a stylized tree branch above it. The background is black. The title 'NEW HEIGHTS' is in large, bold, red letters. Below it, 'SHOW ON EDUCATION' is written in a smaller, green, stylized font. At the bottom, there are two gold-colored award logos for 'GLOME AWARDS GOLD WINNER' in both 'COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE AWARDS' and 'INTERNATIONAL BEST IN BUSINESS AWARDS' categories for the year 2021.

## The Voices Of NHEG Internet Radio



CHARLOTTE MC GUIRE      MARIA ORTIZ      PAMELA CLARK      VICTORIA LOWERY      ERIKA HANSAN

KATHY WOODRING      BRIANA DINCHER      OLANIYAN TABAT      PRISCILENA SHEARON      BUFFIE WILLIAMS

ANNA SHI      SADIA EIJAZ      MANYA SHUKLA      SHANNON WILLIAMSON

KADEN BEHAN

FeedSpot

The image is a promotional graphic for 'The Voices Of NHEG Internet Radio'. It features a central circular logo for 'NEW HEIGHTS SHOW ON EDUCATION' with a microphone icon. Surrounding this center are 15 circular portraits of hosts, each with a name label below it. The background is a green and yellow gradient with a purple decorative band. The 'FeedSpot' logo is in the bottom left corner.

# The New Heights SHOW ON EDUCATION

JOIN HOST

*Pamela Clark*



AIRING WEDNESDAYS  
6:00PM EST  
INTERNET RADIO

AS SHE DISCUSSES EDUCATION NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

FeedSpot



# The New Heights SHOW ON EDUCATION

JOIN HOST

*Manya Shukla*



AIRING, FRIDAYS  
7:00PM EST  
INTERNET RADIO

EMPOWERING HR WITHIN THE WORKFORCE

FeedSpot



# The New Heights SHOW ON EDUCATION

NEW PODCAST

**American Service Men and Women Tell Their Stories of Survival**



Airing Wednesdays  
6 PM EST

JOIN HOST

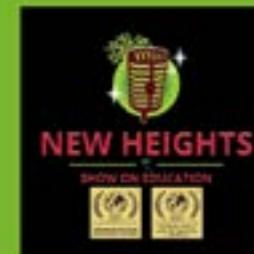


Pamela Clark

New Heights Educational Group  
Educational Resources to Help Reach Your Goals



Empowering HR within the Workforce is the podcast where we explore the latest trends in human resources, workforce development, leadership, and personal development. This show will bring insights on building a more effective and efficient workforce while also focusing on personal growth. Tune in for some healthy solutions to elevate your personal development and team goals.



The New Heights SHOW ON EDUCATION

JOIN HOST

*Manya Shukla*

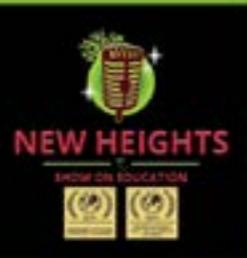


AIRING, FRIDAYS  
7:00PM EST  
INTERNET RADIO

EMPOWERING HR WITHIN THE WORKFORCE

FeedSpot





**The Voices Of NHEG Internet Radio**

The internet radio show hosts cover various topics of education for home, charter and public-school families in Ohio and beyond. We cover many aspects of education: education in the news, civil rights, the power of education, restructuring schools, the IEP process, tips for teens, zoology, technology, Common Core, history, science, reading, business, entrepreneurship, special needs, round-table discussions, Empowering HR within the Workforce, and reading of our teen comic book series that tackles youth issues.

FeedSpot



Welcome to the New Heights Show on Education, an Internet radio program and podcast in which the hosts cover various topics of education for Home, Charter and Public School families in Ohio and beyond.

We cover many aspects of education: the power of education, restructuring schools, the IEP process, tips for teens, zoology, technology, common core, history, science, reading, business, entrepreneurship, special needs, round-table discussions, and reading of our bi-monthly teen comic book series which tackles youth issues.

The show educates and inspires its audience by sharing and welcoming discussions. We invite the audience to send in show ideas and provide feedback.



**The Voices of NHEG Internet Radio**

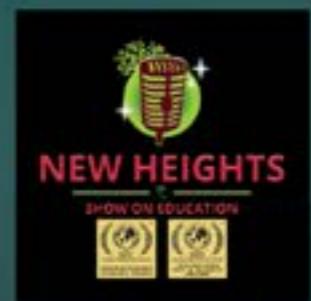
## New Heights Educational Group LAUNCHES PODCAST

The New Heights Educational Group is excited to announce the launch of a new podcast titled "American Service Men and Women Tell Their Stories of Survival." Hosted by Pamela Clark, this podcast will feature firsthand accounts from sailors who served aboard the USS Drexler, with plans to explore additional stories and branches of the military, as well. This pre-recorded show will be available on our website [Radio.NewHeightsEducation.org](http://Radio.NewHeightsEducation.org) starting June 25, 2025. Homeschool families are encouraged to incorporate this resource into their American History studies.

P.S. If anyone from the families would like to be interviewed on the show, email [Info@NewHeightsEducation.org](mailto:Info@NewHeightsEducation.org)



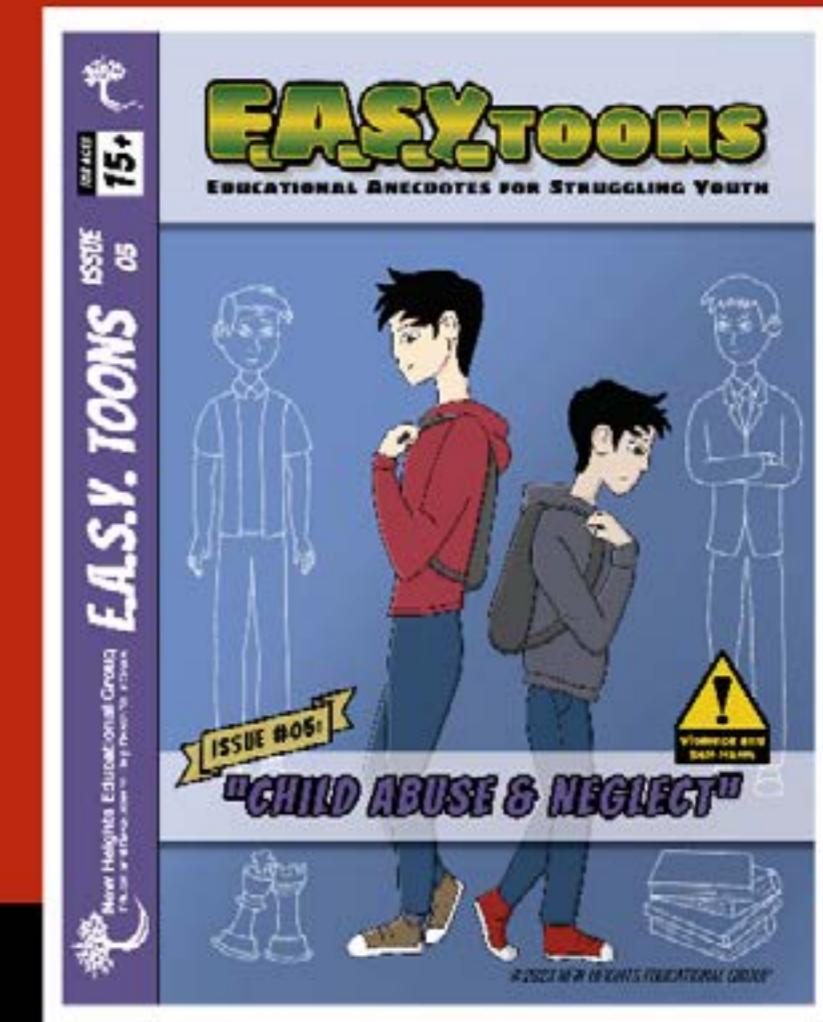
**New Heights Educational Group**  
Educational Resources to Help Reach Your Goals



# NEW ISSUE

## E.A.S.Y. TOONS COMIC BOOK

AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER 1, 2023



[www.yumpu.com/kiosk/newheightseducation](http://www.yumpu.com/kiosk/newheightseducation)



For 30 years, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation has been helping individuals increase their potential and pursue their dreams of a better tomorrow through the power of education. Through grant investments in local schools, nonprofits and libraries, we are supporting teachers, librarians and nonprofit leaders as they help individuals of all ages learn to read, prepare for the high school equivalency test or learn English. If you would like to learn more about the Foundation and our grant programs, please visit [www.dgliteracy.org](http://www.dgliteracy.org).

#### Grant Focus Areas:



##### ADULT LITERACY

Grants provide support to organizations that help create access and opportunity for adults through adult basic education, high school equivalency preparation or English language acquisition.



##### SUMMER READING

Grants support efforts to prevent the summer slide and engage students who are below grade level or reader's with learning differences during the summer months.



##### YOUTH LITERACY

Grants support efforts to implement, enhance or expand K-12 literacy instruction with a focus on increasing access for all students.



##### FAMILY LITERACY

Grants support learning for the whole family. Preferred programs include adult education, children's education and parent and child together time.

#### Since 1993, the Foundation has:

**AWARDED more than  
\$233 MILLION  
IN GRANTS**



**SERVED more than  
19.3 MILLION  
INDIVIDUALS**



**IMPACTED more than  
23,000  
ORGANIZATIONS**





TECHNOLOGY SHOULD **ALWAYS SUPPORT**  
HOLISTIC LEARNING

PASSIVE LEARNING → ACTIVE HOLISTIC LEARNING

FREE ACCESS  
TO FIRST MODULE!



**ACTIVE LEARNING  
BOOSTER**  
Hands-on Online  
Teacher Training

**NATURAL BORN LEADERS.ORG**

STANDARDS CPD

NATURAL BORN LEADERS.ORG

**ACTIVE LEARNING BOOSTER™**

SELF-PACED HANDS-ON ONLINE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM  
FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD & PRIMARY EDUCATORS

**CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION**

**YOU'LL LEARN:**

- HOW to support ALL areas of child development through Active Experiential Learning
- HOW to create Indoor and Outdoor Active Learning Experiences
- HOW to use everyday objects in Active Holistic Learning
- HOW to design and implement Play & Learning Stations
- HOW to use technology to support Active Experiential Learning
- HOW to provide Multi-Sensory support
- And so much more!

Aligned with EYFS Framework & NVQ in CCLD Level 3

The Early Years Foundation Stage

**NATURAL  
BORN  
LEADERS.ORG**

**NEW PAYMENT PLANS**  
from \$11.99 per person!

PROGRAM DURATION: 3 MONTHS

## NHEG January Birthdays

**JAN 24** Daniela Silva

**SEPT 23** William Atkinson

**SEPT 28** Donnalie Yap

## NHEG February Birthdays

**FEB 02** Pamela Clark

**FEB 10** Desiree Clark

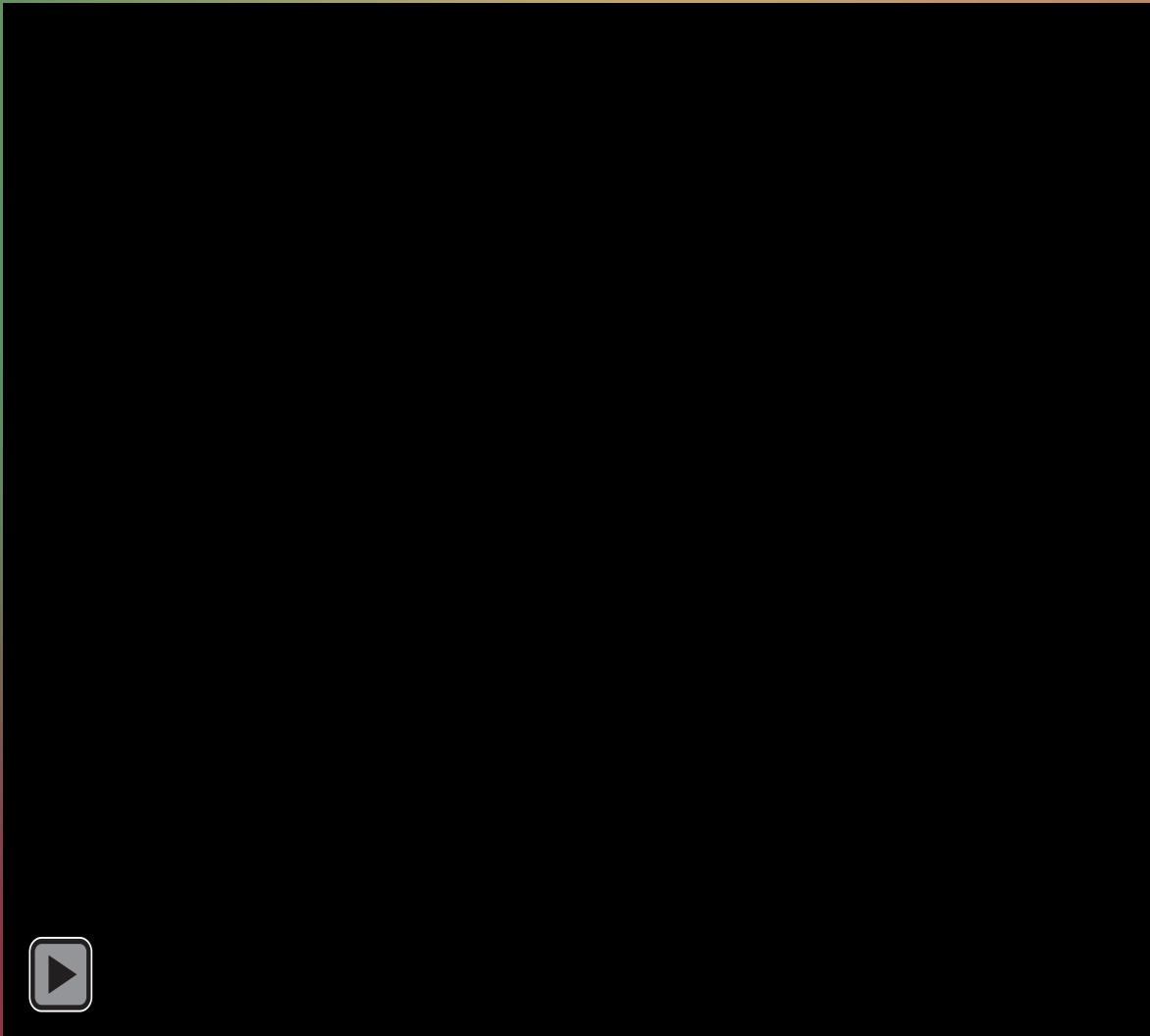
**FEB 10** Briana Dincer

**FEB 24** Mack Clark

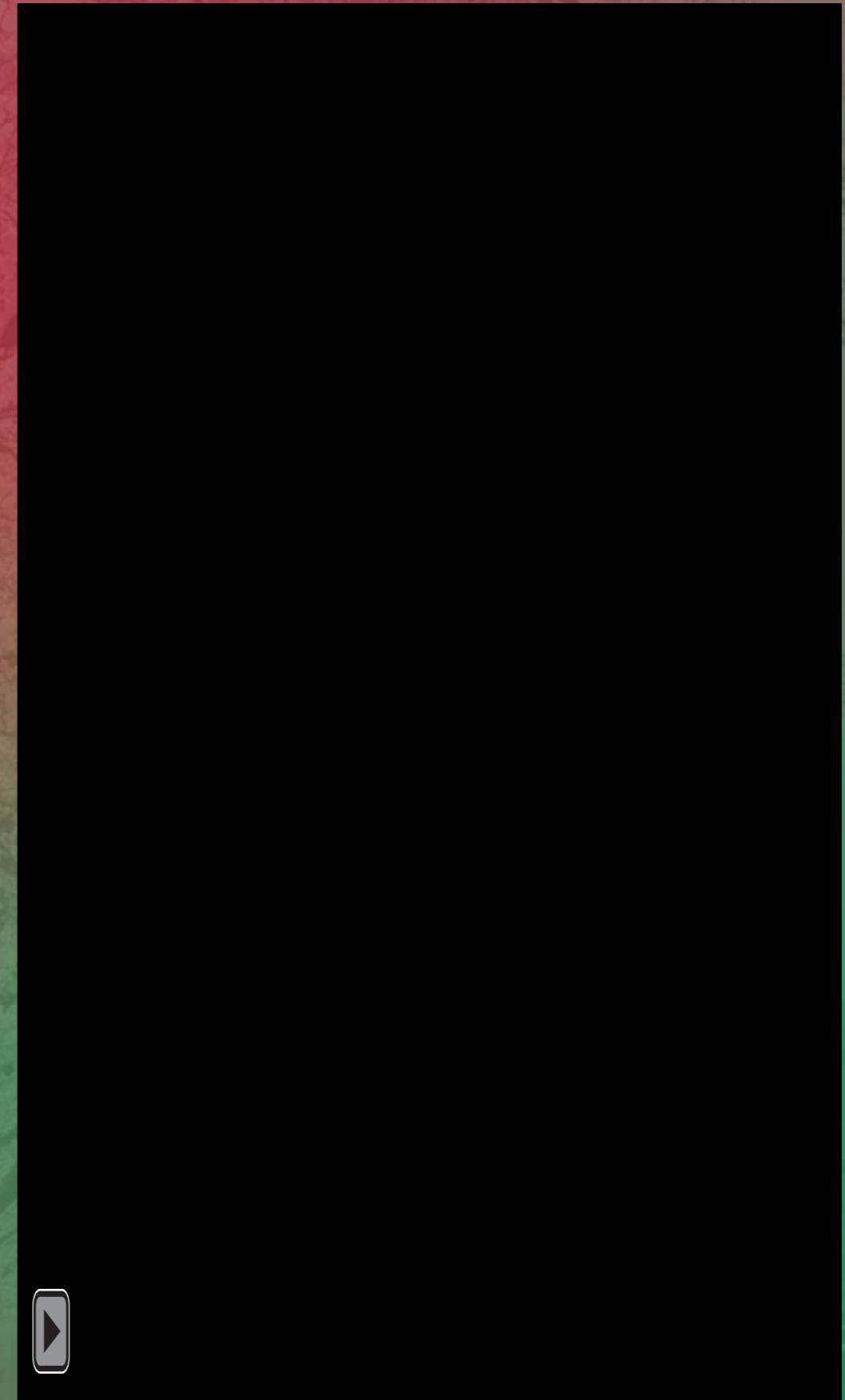
## NHEG January Anniversaries

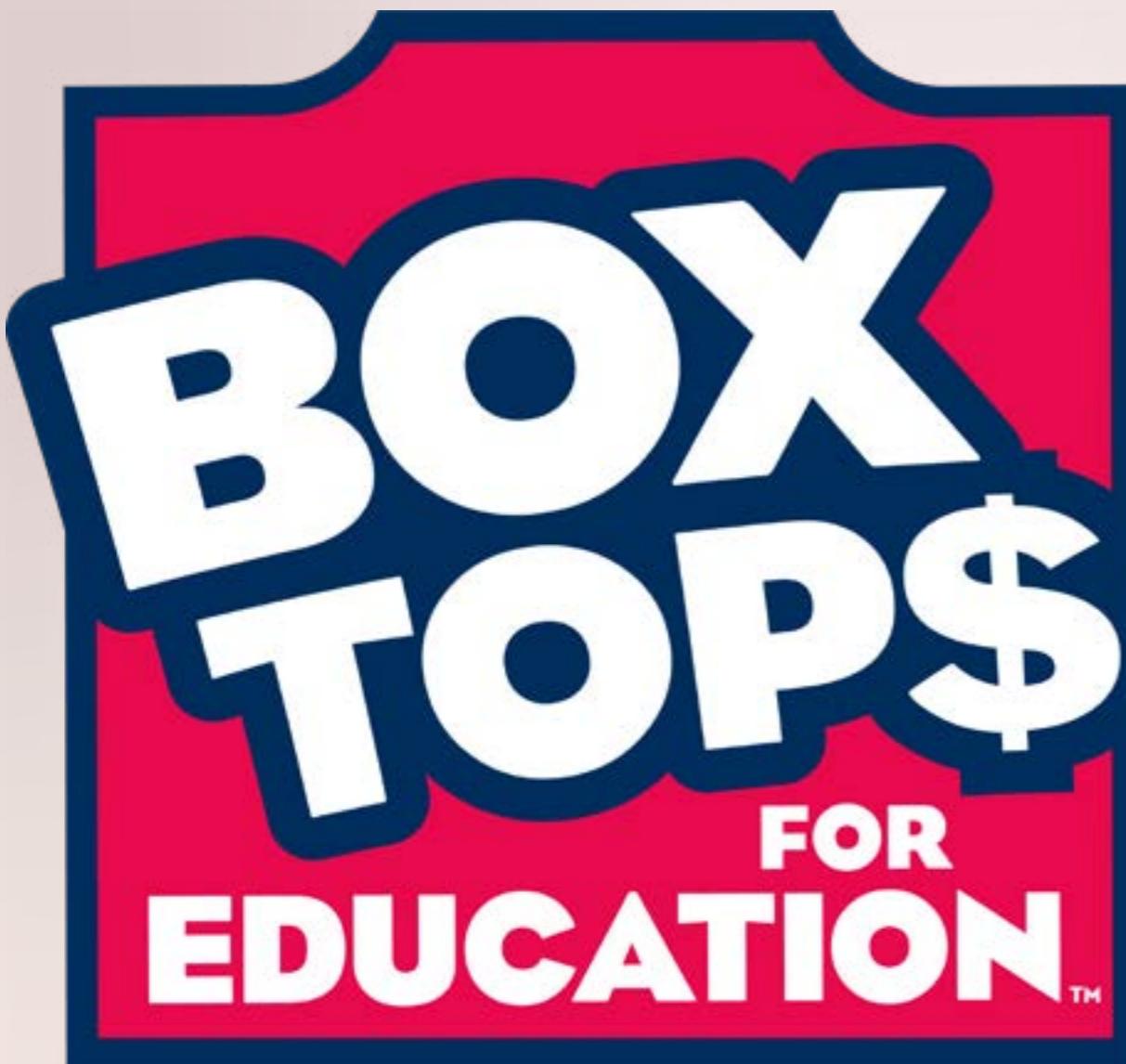
**JAN 22** Rachel Lisa Mathurin

## NHEG Birthday Card



## NHEG Anniversary Card





## HOW TO EARN

### BOX TOPS MAKES IT EASY

All you need is your phone! Download the Box Tops app, shop as you normally would, then use the app to scan your store receipt within 14 days of purchase. The app will identify Box Tops products on your receipt and automatically credit your school's earnings online.

Twice a year, your school will receive a check and can use that cash to buy whatever it needs!

DO YOU NEED TO ENROLL YOUR SCHOOL? FIND OUT HOW HERE.

<https://www.boxtops4education.com/enroll>

# PRESS RELEASE

## THE NEW HEIGHTS SHOW ON EDUCATION AND THE NEW HEIGHTS EDUCATIONAL GROUP (NHEG) WELCOMES A NEW HOST.

3/28/25

The New Heights Show on Education and the New Heights Educational Group (NHEG) welcomes a new host. Manya Shukla is a certified HR professional and a dedicated advocate for personal development and team growth. She is excited to bring her podcast show "Empowering HR Within the Workforce" to NHEG. It's your go-to podcast for the ever-evolving world of HR. The podcast shares insights on building a more effective and efficient workforce while also focusing on personal growth. Manya firmly believes that high-quality work is best achieved when employees feel valued, engaged, and happy in their roles. She also believes that what is important is not the number of hours an employee spends in the office but the quality of work he or she performs. Manya currently volunteers with NHEG as an HR Coordinator. She resides in Austin, Texas, loves singing and dancing, and is deeply interested in geopolitics. The award-winning New Heights Show on Education covers educational topics and news for families, students and educators. The internet radio show hosts cover various topics of education for home-, charter- and public-school families in Ohio and beyond. We cover many aspects of education: education in the news, civil rights, the power of education, restructuring schools, the IEP process, tips for teens, zoology, technology,

Common Core, history, science, reading, business, entrepreneurship, special needs, and round-table discussions. Our shows can be followed and listened to on your favorite podcast player or by visiting <https://Radio.NewHeightsEducation.org/>. Manya's show starts on March 28, 2026, and airs on Fridays at 7:00 p.m. EST. Pamela Clark (Founder/Executive Director, Creator of Show) hosts a show titled "Education in the News" that airs Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. EST.

## THE NEW HEIGHTS EDUCATIONAL GROUP PODCAST NEW HEIGHTS SHOW ON EDUCATION

The New Heights Educational Group podcast New Heights Show on Education has been selected by the FeedSpot panel as one of the 10 Best Ohio Education Podcasts on the web, for the second year in a row. It is listed among the Top 10 Best Ohio Education Podcasts online, and NHEG is honored to be part of this. Anuj Agarwal, founder of FeedSpot, personally congratulated NHEG's work on the podcast and its many shows. The award-winning New Heights Show on Education covers educational topics and news for families, students, and educators. The internet radio program and podcast hosts cover various topics of education for home-, charter-, and publicschool families in Ohio and beyond. Content topics include many aspects of education: education in the news, civil rights, the power of education, restructuring schools, the IEP process, tips for teens, zoology, technology, Common Core, history, science, reading, business, entrepreneurship, special needs, round-table discussions, and reading of our teen comic book series that tackles youth issues. The show educates and inspires its audience by sharing and welcoming discussions.

New shows are added on a regular basis on our website: <http://Radio.NewHeightsEducation.org/>

## STUDENT EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICE PROVIDER OF THE YEAR 2024

The New Heights Educational Group was named the Student Educational Support Service Provider of the Year 2024 - Ohio by the North America Business Awards.

<https://newworldreport.digital/winners/New-Heights-Educational-Group-2/>

NHEG Founder/Executive Director Pamela Clark stated "I'm always thankful for recognition of our work. The work at NHEG is all done by volunteers, and I appreciate them for their passion and support." Thank you to New World Report for recognizing our work.

Sincerely, Pamela Clark

It is listed among the Top 10 Best Ohio Education Podcasts online, and NHEG is honored to be part of this. Anuj Agarwal, founder of FeedSpot, personally congratulated NHEG's work on the podcast and its many shows.

The award-winning New Heights Show on Education covers educational topics and news for families, students, and educators. The internet radio program and podcast hosts cover various topics of education for home-, charter-, and public school families in Ohio and beyond. Content topics include many aspects of education: education in the news, civil rights, the power of education, restructuring schools, the IEP process, tips for teens, zoology, technology, Common Core, history, science, reading, business, entrepreneurship, special needs, round-table discussions, and reading of our teen comic book series that tackles youth issues. The show educates and inspires its audience by sharing and welcoming discussions.

New shows are added on a regular basis on our website: <http://Radio.NewHeightsEducation.org/>

## PRESS RELEASE

### THE NEW HEIGHTS EDUCATIONAL GROUP IS NOW PART OF THE FIRST BOOK

#### New Heights Educational Group

We are now part of the  
First Book Network!



Eliminating Barriers. Inspiring Young Minds.

#### Need Books?

Members of the First Book Network have 24-hour, year-round access to an award-winning repository of affordable and new books, educational resources, and basic necessities curated for kids in need since 2018.

If your Child or Student lacks access to quality books, NHEG can help provide you with a high quality, online library through First Book.

WE CAN HELP  
YOUR STUDENT  
GAIN ACCESS TO  
FREE, HIGH  
QUALITY READING  
MATERIAL

#### CONTACT US



The New Heights Educational Group is now part of the First Book Network! If your children or students lack access to quality books, NHEG can help provide them with a high quality, online library through the First Book Network. Members have 24-hour, year-round access to an award-winning repository of new and affordable books, educational resources and basic necessities curated for kids and young adults up to 18 years of age. To claim access to these free books, contact us at [Info@NewHeightsEducation.org](mailto:Info@NewHeightsEducation.org) and send us the name, email address

and age for each child you would like access for. We will send you an email with sign-up information (check your spam folder if you don't see this email in your inbox). You can also sign up via the following link:

<https://NewHeightsEducation.org/NHEG-educational-programs/virtual-reading-program/>.

While you are there, check out the FREE 5-tier reading program.

### ARTICLES FROM HILSDALE COLLEGE

The first link is an issue of *Imprimis*, Hillsdale's free "Digest of Liberty," by Trent England on "The Danger of the Attacks on the Electoral College": <https://imprimis.hillsdale.edu/danger-attacks-electoral-college/>

The second is an article for the Wall Street Journal in 2016 entitled, "The Electoral College is Anything But Outdated": <https://www.hillsdale.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/PR-The-Electoral-College-Is-Anything-But-Outdated-WSJ.pdf>

Check out the digital version of *Imprimis*, one of America's most widely-read publications in support of individual liberty, limited government, free market economics, moral responsibility, and strong national defense.

My name is Larry P. Arnn, and I am the president of Hillsdale College, which has published *Imprimis* since 1972.

## PRESS RELEASE

[https://info.hillsdale.edu/e3t/Ctc/LS+113/c2xp-04/VXb3fY2hTH5TV7IKQ41v9XpFW5I3Nw35g8q1SN1PJbts3qgyTW6N-1vHY6lZ3lfW4hyg5z17-J43W7SnRr57R-43LW1Q2Mk21fj04DW83zt6N2-ypn2W1wl\\_HM6R5SyRW7v\\_brC8qMZzBVR4SWs2Gbj-SyW7hFsf02M7kTzW70915v6MHZgdW1jR62Z1hhzwYW7h459C7IMvd\\_W5BR4Wz6x4YhMW79PK482fmGtJW5WbbSN1v6C1FW6n2zmT2bd9bBVkGDcf83-YWyW7rKFwY36fWbyW8l8vth29\\_LxSW3TknPQ5pNFnjW2BFMwp6xNTVvW6wDbsh49qmBSVNkwI-3M78Xxf4P84Y404](https://info.hillsdale.edu/e3t/Ctc/LS+113/c2xp-04/VXb3fY2hTH5TV7IKQ41v9XpFW5I3Nw35g8q1SN1PJbts3qgyTW6N-1vHY6lZ3lfW4hyg5z17-J43W7SnRr57R-43LW1Q2Mk21fj04DW83zt6N2-ypn2W1wl_HM6R5SyRW7v_brC8qMZzBVR4SWs2Gbj-SyW7hFsf02M7kTzW70915v6MHZgdW1jR62Z1hhzwYW7h459C7IMvd_W5BR4Wz6x4YhMW79PK482fmGtJW5WbbSN1v6C1FW6n2zmT2bd9bBVkGDcf83-YWyW7rKFwY36fWbyW8l8vth29_LxSW3TknPQ5pNFnjW2BFMwp6xNTVvW6wDbsh49qmBSVNkwI-3M78Xxf4P84Y404)

### LETTER TO VETERANS' COMMUNITY

ARE YOU A VETERAN?

DO YOU KNOW A VETERAN?

The New Heights Educational Group has recently launched a new radio show titled, "American Service Men and Women Tell Their Stories of Survival." Our goal is to provide veterans with a platform to share their experiences through interviews with our Founder and Executive Director, Mrs. Pamela Clark. Mrs. Clark has a personal connection to this cause, as her paternal grandfather heroically gave his life in WWII, and his father served in WWI. Both were awarded Purple Heart medals.

Mrs. Clark has been passionate about honoring veterans' contributions to our nation for quite some time, envisioning this initiative either as a history class or a radio show. Through this program, we aim to amplify veterans' voices and foster community education about our nation's history.

We warmly welcome any suggestions on how we can effectively proceed and connect with veterans interested in participating. Your support is invaluable to us in making this project a success.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to honor and share the incredible stories of our veterans.

Sincerely, Pamela Clark, Executive Director

419-786-0247

[Info@newheightseducation.org](mailto:Info@newheightseducation.org)

## NEUROEDUCATION IN SCHOOL: PRINCIPLES OF NEUROSCIENCE

Neuroeducation implies understanding how a child's brain works and how the nervous system affects their learning.

Neuroscience studies applied to schooling have been essential both for teachers to innovate in pedagogical strategies and for parents to create more favorable conditions for their children's learning.

This article presents eight principles of neuroscience in action to help children learn in the classroom. As a strategy for writing the article, I will use a study conducted by the Social Service of Industry (SESI) of Brazil, which is now part of the National

Network of Science for Education (Rede CPE), an association that integrates Brazilian researchers and laboratories from different areas that develop research to improve educational practices and policies.

The following principles also contribute to the transformations of education over time:

1. Learning changes the brain: Neuroimaging tests have found that our brain changes both in structure and in functioning as a person learns new skills such as reading, writing, counting, practicing a new language, etc. This is due to neuroplasticity and the brain's ability to reorganize itself and form new brain synapses with each new learning or experience acquired throughout life. For this

reason, students need to know that intelligence is malleable and that it is always time to learn, regardless of the difficulty they have with a given content. Research in the field of neuroscience reveals that when students understand that their intelligence is malleable and that learning changes the structure of their

brain, they can renew their self-confidence and motivation to study.

2. How we learn is unique: Although each of us has the same set of neural circuit

(linked to attention, motivation, motricity, language, reasoning, etc.), how each person's brain connects to these circuits is different, as it depends on the set of experiences inherent to how each person learns and experiences learning. Each student has a different type of neural circuitry that influences their performance and learning.

Thus, a classroom with students of the same age does not necessarily mean that everyone will learn in the same way. For this reason, it is necessary to awaken everyone's interest, investigating their previous knowledge, what they like to do most, their desires, and their curiosities. Diversifying pedagogical practices, as well as teaching resources, are alternatives for each student to put into practice their way of learning.

As the teacher manages to connect with the students, the easier it will be to connect the interests of the class to the concepts of the school curriculum.

3. Social interaction is conducive to learning: We are social beings. Learning by observing others is not as effective as learning by interacting with others. In a classroom, the exchange between teacher and student generates changes in each person's cognitive processing, and this is evident when the teacher needs to modify the lesson plan because of a doubt presented by a student. Learning occurs all the time, whether between students or groups of teachers. This way, a new neural construct is developed in the brain for each new learning. The neural circuits activated by social interactions have connections with the reward system, which triggers motivation, essential for quality learning!

4. The use of technology influences the processing and storage of information:

The teacher, when using smartphones, laptops, and tablets, as a pedagogical tool, first needs to ask himself/herself "What are the benefits and drawbacks that information technologies offer to students in the classroom?

The indiscriminate use of these devices in the classroom can cause distractions and multitasking behaviors in students in a way that impairs their ability to focus and pay attention. For technology to be used to benefit learning, support and guidance are needed. It is necessary to guide the student on how to use selection strategies and identify inaccurate news when researching and seeking information, for example. Another important tip is to develop deep readings with students.

Students need to use cognitive strategies that allow in-depth reading, not only in printed texts but also on screens.

5. Emotion drives learning: In the human brain, reason and emotion are processes that work independently to allow our best adaptation to the environment.

From a neuroscientific point of view, it is impossible to build memories, carry out complex thoughts, or make meaningful decisions without emotion. That is why they are so important for human development and learning. In the classroom, "what" the student feels and "how" he feels about what is being taught will directly impact his learning. Leading him, for example, to pay more attention (or not) to the content of the class, to ask (or not) questions, and to dedicate himself more (or less) to his studies. This is how emotion guides learning. On the other hand, emotions that trigger episodes of stress and anxiety in students impair learning. Working with emotions in the classroom, and incorporating socio-emotional learning into pedagogical practice, means considering students in all their dimensions. It is about understanding and valuing the way students perceive themselves, interact, and perceive learning.

6. Motivation puts the brain in action for learning: Motivation is associated with the activity of brain areas that analyze the value of a given experience and also whether it is rewarding enough to be repeated and maintained over time. In learning, this process occurs when the student decides to dedicate more time to studying certain content.

A tip to stimulate motivation in students is to arouse their curiosity through thought-provoking questions in the classroom. Remember that every research project starts with a question or a problem!

Research indicates that when something truly awakens curiosity, brain regions associated with motivation and memory are activated. In other words, curiosity can be a great motivator that makes the brain want to learn.

7. Attention is the gateway to learning: Attention is the gateway to learning. It is through this that the brain is able to filter the necessary and relevant information for our knowledge. Without focus and attention, we cannot filter the information necessary for learning, and consequently, we cannot learn. But the challenge of attention is to maintain concentration, and this involves emotion. For this reason, it is essential that the learning content has value and meaning for the student.

This was proven through research in which, using electrophysiology techniques, they observed that when adolescents were presented with stimuli they considered more "interesting," areas related to selective attention were influenced by brain areas related to motivation. Thus, the study demonstrated that more interesting stimuli increase attentional focus.

8. The brain is not multitasking: Although the modern world values multitasking behavior in people, neuroscience has proven that the brain is not multitasking, alternating its attention on one stimulus at a time when performing a task.

Simultaneous tasks require the brain to compromise the same brain area, the prefrontal cortex, responsible for working memory. Thus, carrying out multiple tasks when studying can compromise academic performance and the reading comprehension, for example. Other harmful factors include difficulty maintaining focus, mental fatigue, working memory overload, and difficulty retaining the content studied.

In order to make students understand the harm of multitasking behavior, it is necessary to explain to them that the greater the number of activities they are doing, the greater the level of distraction. In practice, this means avoiding using social media while studying and only using it again during the break between classes. cannot filter the information necessary for learning, and consequently, we cannot learn. But the challenge of attention is to maintain concentration, and this involves emotion. For this reason, it is essential that the learning content has value and meaning for the student.

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The educator's work can be more effective when he/she understands how the brain learns, what motivates learning, and how it better captures attention—in short, how stimuli and social interactions impact the learner's formation. The brain is the organ of learning, and neuroeducation aims to provide scientific evidence of how the brain learns more effectively in the classroom. Hence the importance of neuroeducation for the student's academic life and for the teacher's teaching process.

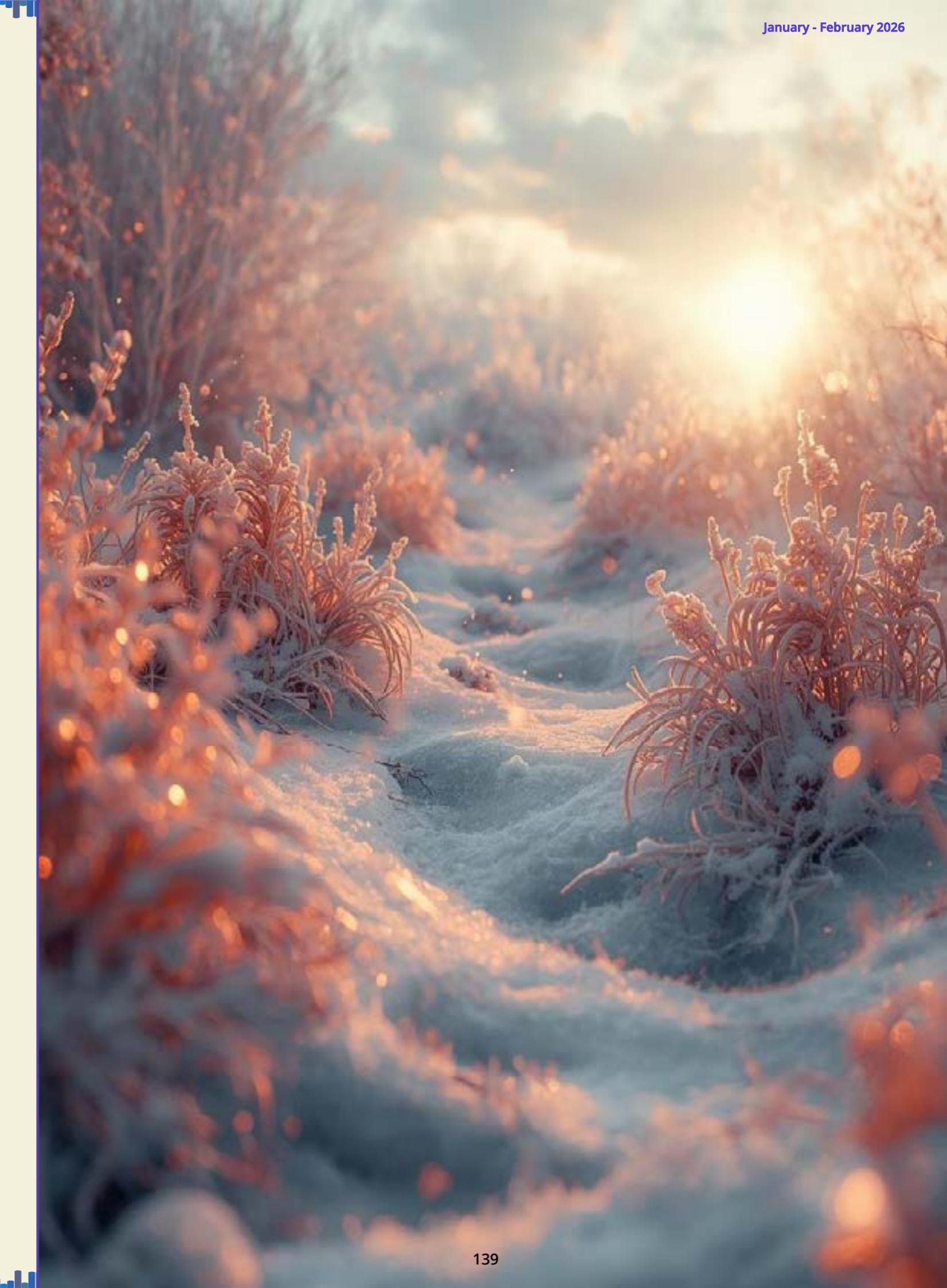
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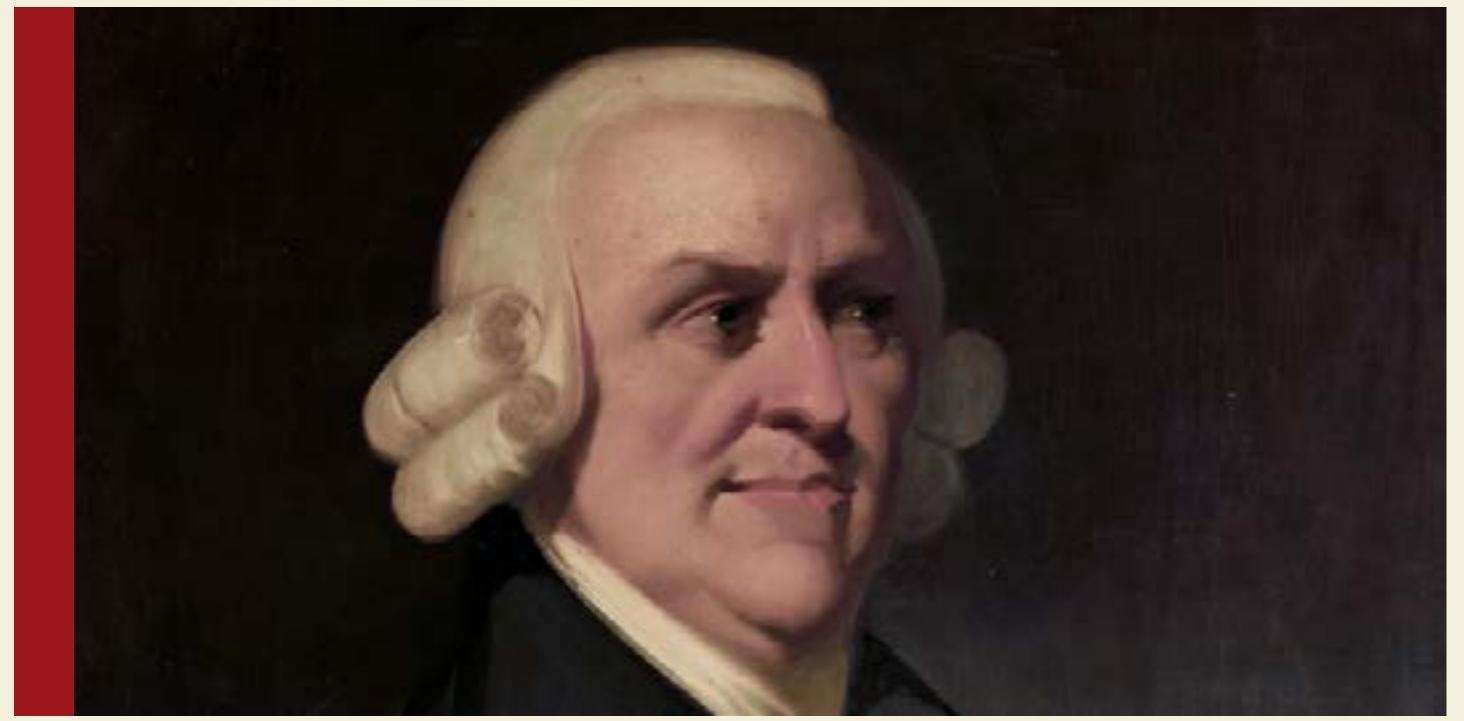
*Serviço Social da Indústria. Departamento Nacional.*

*Neuroscience and education: looking out for the future of learning / Serviço*

*Social da Indústria, Ana Luiza Neiva Amaral, Leonor Bezerra Guerra;*

*translation Mirela C. C. Ramacciotti. Brasília : SESI/DN, 2022.*





MONDAY, JULY 14, 2025

RYAN STREETER

Lessons from the 18th century.

## It's Not Easy, But We Can All Learn to Think Like Adam Smith

When the disciplines of economics and sociology were being invented in Britain 250 years ago, their progenitors such as Adam Smith, David Hume, Adam Ferguson, and others were preoccupied with how vibrant commercial activity and human behavior were related. Economic dynamism was not only about economic growth, money, and the division of labour, though it was that, too. It was about how and why individuals make commerce succeed.

The father of modern economics, Adam Smith, memorably wrote in his 1776 *Wealth of Nations* that merchants made much better land developers than the landed gentry. Their "habits... of order, economy, and attention," cultivated in urban markets, formed the bedrock on which their profit and successful projects were built. The languid posture of the aristocrat, in Smith's telling, is a good picture of stagnation. Satisfied with the status quo and unable to envision how their land could produce a profit, they live uncreatively and do not recognise innovation.

Stagnation is everywhere in the news now. And with good reason. Slowing productivity, aging infrastructure, fiscal imbalances, less innovation—these and related trends make dynamism in the UK seem more like a thing of the past than the future.

It is tempting to see stagnation and dynamism purely as matters of economic policy, but we do ourselves a disservice if we begin there. To truly understand what a dynamic economy requires, we would do well to recover

that 18th-century sensibility and understand dynamism as a social and cultural phenomenon as much as an economic one. Putting it simply, if we want to live in a society where more people in more places are making and creating a greater number of good things, what kind of people and communities do we need? Approaching economic dynamism through regulatory changes, tax rates, and innovation policy gets us part of the way there, but not all the way.

Nobel laureate Edmund Phelps and co-authors have shown convincingly that societies with higher rates of business creation, entrepreneurship, and invention also promote and embrace openness, experimentation, risk-taking, even adventurism. Contrary to conventional wisdom, dynamic societies also record higher rates of job satisfaction among working-class people. The idea that disruptive and innovative economies create economic anxiety among working people is one of the more empirically dubious beliefs that is commonly accepted as fact. More companies trying out new technologies means more jobs and more opportunity—working people benefit from these as much as those in professional jobs. Surveys show that job dissatisfaction and unhappiness more generally are prevalent in places with higher levels of risk aversion, close-mindedness, and lower levels of recorded innovation.

So instead of wondering whether this or that regulatory change will result in this or that small percentage increase

in GDP, perhaps we should start by asking ourselves what types of behaviour and activity at the individual level we wish were more prevalent.

Modern social science has found that those early economists and sociologists 250 years ago were on to something, so perhaps we should start there. Certain types of traits emerge in the economic and social psychology literature that echo what Adam Smith and his contemporaries wrote about and correlate with upward mobility, entrepreneurial activity, and creativity—i.e., those types of things a dynamic society requires and encourages.

First, an exploratory mindset is the habit of learning that comes from building on that reward we feel when we learn something new. It is investigatory and the opposite of treating all questions as settled. Second, and related, is the Big Five personality trait, openness, which is especially useful in ambiguous circumstances where it correlates with creativity. Being open for its own sake can get you in trouble, but as a general posture of being willing to consider new ideas, embracing new experiences, and feeling comfortable with difference, it is essential in an innovative society. Third, embracing challenges rather than taking the easy path corresponds with higher levels of achievement. Challenging coursework predicts success among students, as does the belief that hard work will pay off. Coddling young people in the name of safety can backfire.

A fourth important trait is conscientiousness, another Big Five trait, that is one of the best predictors of lifetime earnings. The combination of reliability, organisation, and thoughtfulness is essential to upward mobility. Developing "weak ties" in personal and professional relationships is an important fifth trait. "Who you know" helps open up opportunity, but counterintuitively, it usually does not come from close friends and family as much as the wider network, so those who do well at relationship cultivation are more successful when they have new ideas or are ambitious. Lastly, non-pecuniary motivations such as building something new or creating great teams are more prevalent traits among entrepreneurs than making a lot of money.

These traits can all be cultivated, but they are not hardwired into our DNA. Thinking creatively about how to cultivate and promote them is an important step to recovering a vibrant economy of opportunity.

Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)

<https://fee.org/>



**FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2026**  
PETER JACOBSEN

The Next Generation Accreditation pilot program aims to offer faster, more affordable, and more flexible routes for emerging schools.

## How New Microschool Accreditation Pathways Are Opening Doors for Founders and Families

When the disciplines of economics and sociology were being invented in Britain 250 years ago, their progenitors such as Adam Smith, David Hume, Adam Ferguson, and others were preoccupied with how vibrant commercial activity and human behavior were related. Economic dynamism was not only about economic growth, money, and the division of labour, though it was that, too. It was about how and why individuals make commerce succeed.

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<https://fee.org/>



TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2022

LAWRENCE W. REED

For centuries, the extraordinary influence and prosperity of the tiny Republic of Genoa stemmed not from a political leader but from a well-run private bank.

## Why the Separation of Bank and State Is so Important

Most lovers of freedom and free markets champion the separation of the state (politics and politicians) from a lot of things—church, family, business, education, etc. Perhaps if the Constitution of the United States had expressly forbidden the establishment by the federal government of a national bank, Americans would have been spared the endless mischief of its various iterations in our history.

Maybe if money creation at the Federal Reserve continues to stoke rising price inflation, old debates about separating state and banking will become front-and-center again. I for one certainly hope so.

Meantime, it can be instructive to explore what history offers on the issue of states and banks. Here's a story you might not know because, unfortunately, it is largely forgotten. It's a story of separation of state and banking so remarkable and so thorough that it deserves to be dusted off and retold.

The country was the Republic of Genoa, known also as the Ligurian Republic, in what is now northwestern Italy. In the late Middle Ages and before Italian unification in the 19th Century, Genoa was one of the most fascinating of many so-called "maritime republics" that dotted the Mediterranean. Others included Venice, Pisa, Amalfi, Ancona, Gaeta and, across the Adriatic, the incredible Republic of Ragusa.

The Republic of Genoa is very interesting but as a free-market economist and historian, I find a financial institution within its boundaries to be far more so. It was known as the Bank of St. George. Consider this stunning description from James Theodore Bent's 1881 book, *Genoa: How the Republic Rose and Fell*:

*The Bank of St. George, its constitution, its building, and its history, form one of the most interesting relics of medieval commercial activity... Elsewhere than in Genoa we search in vain for a parallel for the existence of a body of citizens distinct from the government—with their own laws, magistrates, and independent authority—a state within a state, a republic within a republic. All dealings with the government were voluntary on the part of the bank. Over their [the bank's] deliberations, the Genoese government and senators could exercise no influence, nor could they interfere with their general assemblies without violating the most stringent oaths, and without destroying the very basis of the constitution.*

The formal founding of the bank took place in 1407, when it assumed its name and when its status as an independent entity—essentially a state within a state—was established. But for two centuries prior, what became the Bank of St. George was a loose federation of businessmen and creditors who earned great respect among the Genoese people. Indeed, one of them in 1371 bailed out the state and the country with a generous gift. Bent explains the context:

*At this time, so great was the distress that the government was reduced to placing taxes on some of the most outrageous things, such as dead bodies, etc. No possession, no industry or traffic, was untaxed; cart-loads of sand and rubbish could not be carted away without a tax; a man could not even sweep snow from his doorstep without paying for it... At this critical moment a worthy man stepped forward to save his country, a name almost lost to history [but] claiming far higher merit as a statesman-patriot than many of those whose lives have called for volumes. Guilty Until Proven Innocent*

That man was one Francesco Vivaldi, a very successful and wealthy businessman and money lender. Seeing Genoa and its government deep in debt and taxes and on the verge of bankruptcy, Vivaldi donated his bank shares to the public treasury on condition that their value be used to repair the government's finances and reduce both debt and taxes. It worked. Vivaldi's donation inspired confidence and similar generosity from others in Genoa.

When the Bank of St. George was formally opened in 1407, it was against the backdrop of public appreciation for what its precursor's leadership had done for Genoa more than 30 years before, as well as the need once again for somebody to bail out the state. The bank would prove to be the foundation of the next 400 years of Genoese trade, prosperity, and empire. Bent observes,

*The government of Genoa always respected the liberties of the bank, and the bank always did its best to assist the government when in pecuniary distress. And whilst the state was convulsed by continued revolutions from within and tyrannies from without, the Bank of St. George... always kept an equal course, never deviated from its paths of justice, grew in riches and credit—in short, was the heart of the Ligurian (Genoese) Republic.*

On several occasions when the government of the Republic found itself in dire financial straits, it used its overseas possessions as collateral for loans from the bank. For years, the bank would then govern those territories until the Republic paid its debts.

The bank's management and lending practices were solid. Bent notes, for instance, that it "would only issue paper for the coin in its actual possession." Inflation was never a problem while the Bank of St. George existed. To strengthen its independence, it adopted a policy in 1528 that no person who served in the Genoese government could hold any position within the bank.

The Bank of St. George and one of its directors, Benedetto Centurione, set the stage for centuries of economic growth when they recommended in 1447 that European trading partners embrace a gold standard for international transactions.

In 1768, the government of the Republic of Genoa sold its island of Corsica to France. A few months later, a boy named Napoleon Bonaparte was born on the island. If his birth had occurred when Corsica was Genoese, he might never have become a French citizen, let alone the Emperor of France. What an irony that it would be an invading Napoleon who put the Bank of St. George out of business in 1805. To a tyrant who wants to oversee everything, a private bank that won't give him money is a constant annoyance.

I wanted to tell my daughter that we're so much better now than those Puritans, that "innocent until proven guilty" now prevails. But I'm honestly not so sure.

Attesting to the sterling reputation of the Bank of St. George are notable historical figures who most lovers of liberty will recognize.

Thomas Babington Macauley in his *History of England* referred to it and Holland's Bank of Amsterdam in these glowing terms:

The immense wealth which was in the keeping of those establishments, the confidence they inspired, the prosperity which they had created, their stability, tried by panics, by wars, by revolutions and found proof against all, were favorite topics. The Bank of Saint George had nearly completed its third century. It had begun to receive deposits and to make loans before Columbus had crossed the Atlantic, before Gama had turned the Cape, when Christian Emperor was reigning at Constantinople, when a Mahomedan Sultan was reigning at Granada, when Florence was a Republic, when Holland obeyed a hereditary prince.

Scottish Enlightenment philosopher David Hume, in his *Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary*, noted the stark contrast between Genoa's independent Bank of St. George and the government of Genoa's Republic:

For while the state was always full of sedition, and tumult, and disorder, the Bank of St. George, which had become a considerable part of the people, was conducted, for several ages, with the utmost integrity and wisdom.

Even Italian philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli praised the Bank of St. George. He mentioned it in his *Istorie Fiorentine*:

*This establishment presents an instance of what in all the republics, either described or imagined by philosophers, has never been thought of: exhibiting within the same community, and among the same citizens, liberty and tyranny, integrity and corruption, justice and injustice. For this establishment preserves in the city many ancient and venerable customs; and should it happen (as in time it easily may) that the [Bank of] San Giorgio should have possession of the whole city, the republic will become more distinguished than that of Venice.*

In 2017, the University of Liverpool's Matteo Salonia authored a small but information-packed volume titled *Genoa's Freedom: Entrepreneurship, Republicanism and the Spanish Atlantic*. He attributes the relative freedom of the Republic to the operation of the bank:

*Indeed, the Genoese showed a tendency to limit the disruptive effects of both factional strife and unchecked government spending, in order to preserve their dynamic, business-oriented, and pragmatic idea of libertà [liberty]. They achieved this, at least in part, thanks to the creation of the Bank of St. George, a unique association of creditors which soon acquired political, fiscal and diplomatic powers.*

The fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453 sounded alarms across Christian Europe. To the Genoese, it meant loss of lives and property in the area, as well as an imminent threat to the Republic's eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea colonies. The response of the Genoese may surprise you. As Salonia explains,

*In this situation of emergency, facing one of the most dramatic crises in the history of the republic, the Genoese refused to entrust more financial resources or more power to the doge [the top political figure]. The idea of raising an emergency tax or to allow the government to borrow more money never crossed the Genoese people's minds.*

The merchants engaged in the Eastern Mediterranean trade, under the direction of the Bank of St. George which financed those trades, assumed the defense of the threatened Genoese colonies. Quite apart from the government, notes Salonia, they agreed amongst themselves to "guarantee the money necessary for the defense of the colonies and to be in charge of delicate diplomatic relations."

This remarkable episode is further evidence of a Genoese inclination "to protect the rule of law, to limit the power of the doge, to create financial self-government, and to safeguard economic prosperity." Perhaps we today underestimate the potency of private initiative in the important area of defense, which is often assumed to be the monopolistic duty of government.

Economist Douglass C. North wrote in *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* in 1991, "A capital market entails security of property rights over time and will simply not evolve where political rulers can arbitrarily seize assets or radically alter their value." By imposing limitations on the power of Genoa's politicians, the Bank effectively secured the conditions for a capital market to flourish.

One result was for Genoa to become one of the most important lenders in Europe and a safe place for even European governments to open accounts and deposit funds. Among the bank's clients were monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, who borrowed from the bank to finance such ventures as the explorations of the most famous of all Genoese, Christopher Columbus.

Shortly before departing on his fourth voyage, Columbus wrote a letter to the Governors of the Bank of St. George. His appreciation for their good work was quite apparent:

Although my body is here my heart is always near you. Our Lord has bestowed on me the greatest favor which He has ever granted anyone except David. The results of my undertaking are already being seen and would shine considerably if the darkness of the government did not conceal them. I shall go again to the Indies in the name of the Holy Trinity and shall soon return. But as I am a mortal, I have ordered my son Don Diego to give you every year, forever, the tenth of all the revenue obtained, in payment of the tax on wheat, wine and other provisions.

The Bank of St. George supervised the finances of the Columbus family for decades into the 16th Century.

Who can recall the name of a single political leader of the Republic of Genoa? One name, Andrea Doria, is remembered by a handful of historians. But the tenure of one even as wise and famous as Doria was but a fleeting moment.

For centuries, the extraordinary influence and prosperity of the tiny Republic of Genoa stemmed not from a political leader but from a well-run private bank and the limitations on the state that it helped to maintain.

And it was a foreign state—that of dictator Napoleon Bonaparte—that snuffed it all out. What a shame!

#### For additional information, see:

[Genoa: How the Republic Rose and Fell](#) by J. Theodore Bent

[Genoa's Freedom: Entrepreneurship, Republicanism, and the Spanish Atlantic](#) by Matteo Salonia

[The Republic of Venice and Republic of Genoa: The History of the Italian Rivals and their Mediterranean Empires](#) by Charles River Editors

[The Republic of Genoa: The History of the Italian City](#) by Charles River Editors

[Letter from Christopher Columbus to the Governors of the Bank of St. George Institutions](#) by Douglass C. North

[The World's First Modern, Public Bank](#) by Vincent Boland

Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)

<https://fee.org/>



MONDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2018

NOLAN GRAY Density controls, whether the result of zoning, land use regulations, or subdivision regulations, effectively prohibit the working poor from outbidding the rich for urban land.

## How Density Controls Banish the Working Poor from Cities

The great failing of modern land use regulation is the failure to allow densities to naturally change over time. Let me explain.

### Maximizing Profits While Helping the Poor

Imagine you are trying to sell a property you own in a desirable inner suburban neighborhood in your town. The lot is 4,000 square feet and hosts an old 4,000 square-foot home. There is incredible demand for housing in this area; perhaps the schools are good, or the amenities are nice, or the neighborhood sits adjacent to a major jobs center, meaning residents can walk to work. I'll leave the reasons to you. Who do you sell it to?

You have at least two options: First, you could sell it to a wealthy individual who would use the entire property as his home. He is willing to pay the market rate for single-family homes like this, which in this case is \$300,000. Under current financing, he would likely have a monthly mortgage payment in the ballpark of \$1,300. Second, you could sell it to a developer who intends to subdivide the house into four 1,000 square-foot one-bedroom apartments, renting each of them at a market rate of \$500 to service workers who commute to downtown. After factoring in expenses, her annual net operating income would be around \$20,160. Assuming a multifamily cap rate of 6.0 percent, this means she could pay up to \$336,000 for your property.

Based on this analysis, who do you sell it to? The

answer is obvious: you will sell it to the multifamily developer who will subdivide and rent out the house, not necessarily because you're a bleeding heart urbanist but in order to maximize your earnings. As rents in the area rise, the pressure to sell to a buyer who will densify the property will only grow. The prospective mansion buyer simply cannot compete with the service workers under these very typical market conditions. How cool is that?

This may sound like an oversimplification. As with all economic examples, it is. But at the end of the day, these very simple market dynamics play an essential role in guiding the spatial patterns of our cities. When demand for housing grows in urban neighborhoods, low-density uses will convert into higher density uses. This might often start small—homeowners converting underutilized floorspace in attics and basements into additional housing units to earn income—and under high demand, circumstances might escalate—tearing down single-family homes and constructing apartment buildings.

### Higher Density Ensures Opportunities

When my great-grandmother, a grocery store clerk and single mother, migrated to Louisville from a small town in Kentucky in the 1940s, they shared a subdivided mansion in Old Louisville with multiple other working-class families. The opposite also happens occasionally: When demand for housing falls, high-density uses may be converted into low-density uses or demolished altogether. When Louisville's population collapsed in the 1970s and 80s, the glorified tenement my grandmother

grew up in was converted back into a mansion owing to lack of demand.

Thus, density is the key to ensuring that the incredible opportunity that cities offer is available to everyone. It's the only sustainable way that the working poor can outbid the rich for urban land, and it's naturally facilitated by markets under normal conditions. Density is what makes a room in an old mansion affordable to a grocery store clerk struggling to provide for her children. Density is what enables the apartment developer discussed above to outbid the prospective mansion developer for land because, in a sense, what she is actually doing is pulling the resources of those working poor families.

### Controls Undermine Potential

Density controls, whether the result of zoning, land use regulations, or subdivision regulations, break this system, effectively prohibiting the working poor from outbidding the rich for urban land. These policies come in a variety of forms: minimum lot sizes, single-family zoning, parking requirements, minimum unit sizes, etc. But they all require some minimum level of housing consumption—purportedly for the residents own good, in many cases—which means that residents who cannot afford to consume this minimum threshold of urban land cannot consume housing in this neighborhood at all.

Let's return to our above example. If your property was zoned for single-family housing, the developer who intended to subdivide wouldn't even bother to bid, and the structure would remain a single-family home despite high market demand. The four prospective tenants would have to look elsewhere, bidding up other scarce units and suffering longer than desirable commutes.

Or imagine if the city allowed subdivisions but restricted apartments to 1,500 square feet. In this case, the developer could only divide the house into two units. Rents normally rise with floor space and additional bedrooms, but they rarely double in price. If the developer could only earn \$800 per unit on the market, she could only justify spending \$268,000 on the project, meaning she would be outbid by the prospective mansion buyer. If she could squeeze out \$900 per unit, she would barely outbid the prospective mansion buyer, letting in only two tenants, and only those who could afford a 45 percent increase in rents. The two other tenants would be forced out of the community. Other mandatory minimum standards like parking requirements and lot sizes work the same way, prohibiting density and pricing potential residents out of the community. Needless to say, this process falls hardest on the working poor.

Banning density, whatever the pretense, whatever the means, effectively means banishing the working poor from cities. As the urban planner Alain Bertaud has put it, the market is not an end or a construct, it is a mechanism. It is an emergent system for distributing scarce resources. Sometimes it fails, and state actors or civil society must intervene. Sometimes it produces undesirable outcomes that warrant rectification. But if we don't understand it and work to build policy around it, the results will be ugly. From the mounting affordability crisis to the income and racial segregation of our cities, the failure of shifting responsibility for the distribution of densities from markets to planning boards has been a self-evident failure.

Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)

<https://fee.org/>



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2023

JOSHUA D. GLAWSON

A good sense of humor is typically associated with intelligence, a likable personality, and work ethic.

## How Comedy, Laughter, and Humor Can Improve Your Life

Laughter has amazing social perks, health benefits, and can help enhance memory capacity. Over the past few years there has been a revival in comedy, with dad jokes, stand-up comedy, skit comedy, sketch comedy, and workplace humor. Although humor varies from culture to culture, creating laughter has a universal effect of making people feel happy, and brightening the immediate environment.

A great documentary to watch on the cultural differences of humor is *Exporting Raymond*, which is about getting the American sitcom *Everybody Loves Raymond* aired in different cultures while maintaining its comedic appeal to audiences all over.

According to comedy writer Scott Dikkers, the founding editor of satirical news site *The Onion*, there are 11 categories of comedy:

1. Irony- Intended meaning is opposite of literal meaning
  2. Character- Comedic character acting on personality traits
  3. Reference- Common experiences that audiences can relate to
  4. Shock- Surprising jokes typically involving sex, drugs, gross-out humor, swearing
  5. Parody- Mimic a familiar character, trope or cliché in an unfamiliar way
  6. Hyperbole- Exaggeration to absurd extremes
  7. Wordplay- Puns, rhymes, double entendres, etc.
  8. Analogy- Comparing two disparate things
  9. Madcap- Crazy, wacky, silly, nonsensical
  10. Meta Humor- Jokes about jokes, or about the idea of comedy
  11. Misplaced Focus- Attention is focused on the wrong thing
- Of course, not all humor is fit for every situation or environment, but finding that balance is surely helpful for social interactions. Humor can lighten moods, improve morale, encourage positivity, boost energy, freshen perspectives, create and strengthen interpersonal relations, and spark cognitive thinking. Yet, no matter your efforts, some people will still take offence to anything and everything, not smile, not laugh, become envious, or cause problems for those wishing to share humor.
- Thorin Klosowski, a staff writer for The New York Times who covers privacy and security for Wirecutter, says the best way to handle a sourpuss is to, first, find that person's baseline to determine if this is a personality trait or difference of opinion. Second, get the opinions of three other people who are not too connected, in order to see varying perspectives of the person in question. And third, ask the person directly, and respectfully, "why" they think the way they do.
- Nevertheless, fret not because most people will still enjoy and appreciate tasteful comedy. A good sense of humor is typically associated with intelligence, a likable personality, and work ethic.

Another benefit of utilizing humor is that it enhances one's health. Michigan State University's Jonathan Novello explains how humor is medicine in five key ways:

1. Laughter is a potent releaser of endorphins creating a sense of euphoria.
2. Laughter contagiously forms social bonds which is also an endorphin releaser.
3. Laughter has an effect similar to antidepressants by releasing serotonin.
4. Laughter improves mental health all around.
5. Laughter protects your heart as it is a natural anti-inflammatory helping the circulatory system, also known as the cardiovascular system.

Other independent research shows other health benefits. A 15-year study of 53,556 women and men in Norway suggested that having a good sense of humor may significantly increase life expectancy, according to *Scientific American*. It's as if those "Live, Laugh, Love," signs may be onto something after all (even though some of us feel like we die from cringe a little each time we see them).

For Evan "The Cass Man" Cassidy, stand-up host and improv-comedian of Southern California, comedy and laughter play a large role in healing individuals as well as communities. Evan speaks of genuine comedy, not the luxurious shows and television specials, as being much simpler and raw in its delivery, while serving as a catalyst for bonding. In a recent interview with me, he describes comedy like this:

*"Live stand-up comedy is a pretty niche thing. It often fails to be funny. A guy says laughter is the best medicine to get you to spend \$75 on cover charge and drinks at a comedy club. Comedy is the trade of inducing laughter. It's like a massage for the soul, mind, and nerves. The hardest I've ever laughed was just sitting at a diner with a couple buddies. When we have a good laugh, it's like winning an arm wrestling match with the absurdity and uncertainty of life, the bill I haven't paid, the interpersonal conflict, and overseas wars."*

A third benefit of humor is the practical application of memory enhancement through mind games. By memorizing many jokes like stand-up comedians do or for the average person who just wants to know a few funny jokes to share, a person naturally improves his capacity for memorization. The process is rewarded and reinforced by the laughs and social bonding the person creates with the jokes, and it helps wire a person's mind for quicker response times. This internal dopamine reward system functions by releasing dopamine when the jokes are told and well-received by the audience, improving the retention of the joke even further for later recollection. In turn, this strengthens the muscles necessary for memory building.

Imagine reading silly dad jokes every day, and using them when given the opportunity. Not only will the memorization allow for further amplified memorization, but it will also naturally elevate the jokester and their environment in a myriad of ways. When communicating with people from various cultures, consider learning what makes them smile, what makes them "Live, Laugh, Love," and what humor to share between you. It will benefit everyone involved.

Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)

<https://fee.org/>



## Allen Mendenhall

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025

A scholar reflects.

ALLEN MENDENHALL

### Leaving the Academy, Still Defending Markets

After five years teaching at a business school—following an academic journey through English literature, law, and humanities—I depart with an unexpected observation: many students require convincing that profit serves a legitimate purpose.

The calculation is straightforward—revenue minus expenses—yet the moral dimension perplexes these undergraduates. They arrive harboring suspicion toward the very economic engine that creates prosperity and opportunity.

Perhaps more revealing is the contrast between students of different backgrounds. Those from modest circumstances—particularly young African American men from rural South Alabama—approached entrepreneurship with refreshing clarity. Having experienced economic hardship firsthand, they viewed profit as a practical necessity rather than a moral compromise. They regarded with genuine puzzlement their more advantaged peers who displayed ambivalence toward commercial success while benefiting from its results.

These first-generation college students understood intuitively what others needed to be taught: that profit enables rather than hinders social good. It finances innovation, creates employment, delivers valued goods and services, and improves living standards. It

transforms good intentions into concrete improvements. This anti-commercial posture is probably more common outside business education. During my doctoral studies in English, I witnessed similar contradictions among fellow graduate students who composed passionate critiques of capitalism while complaining about their meager stipends.

They denounced the profit motive while simultaneously lamenting that society insufficiently rewarded their literary analyses, never acknowledging the irony that they were essentially aggrieved about markets undervaluing their output. These same colleagues drove imported cars, clutched designer coffee, and used technologies developed by the corporate entities they routinely excoriated.

In other words, they desired the material rewards of capitalism while disdaining its mechanisms and confused their professional frustrations with moral superiority rather than recognizing the market's unsparing assessment of consumer demand for radical critical theory, gender studies esoterica, or medieval poetry exegesis. I'm reminded of a curious episode during my graduate school days, when I participated in a law-and-humanities conference at the University of British Columbia. A particularly earnest doctoral candidate presented what he believed to be his revolutionary business concept:

organizations that deliberately eschewed profit. He stood before distinguished faculty, practically vibrating with intellectual self-satisfaction, explaining this "groundbreaking" paradigm as though he had just discovered fire.

Asked how these enterprises might fund operations, compensate employees, or survive economic downturns without retained earnings, he waved these concerns away as "capitalist thinking." The audience maintained polite Canadian composure while he elaborated on his concept, essentially reinventing the nonprofit organization while seemingly unaware that such entities had existed for centuries, complete with their own legal classification and tax treatment.

What struck me was not merely his conceptual confusion but his certainty that he had transcended conventional wisdom rather than misunderstood it. It exemplified how academic environments can sometimes nurture theoretical constructs untethered from practical experience, the same disconnect I later observed in business students who required persuasion that profit serves as a force for human flourishing.

For all its imperfections, the American economic system has demonstrated a remarkable capacity to generate broad-based prosperity. Those acquainted with genuine economic struggle recognize this fact without elaborate explanation. Their practical wisdom offers a valuable perspective to classmates from more comfortable circumstances.

As I leave teaching for a new role beyond the university, I carry this paradox with me: the students who grasped the value of profit most instinctively were often those with the least exposure to privilege—and the most experience with reality.

Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)

<https://fee.org/>





THURSDAY, JULY 3, 2025

LIKA KOBESHAVIDZE

## Bureaucracy, Conformity, and Mediocrity

Europe's free university model is often seen as a triumph of modern society. With no crushing tuition bills, minimal student debt, and a promise of equal access, it sounds ideal. In countries like Germany and France, students pay only a small administrative fee, typically between \$200 and \$500 a year, compared to the staggering tuition costs in the US or UK. Many also receive financial aid in the form of grants that don't need to be repaid, or low-interest loans based on need.

But behind the promises of fairness and opportunity lies a system that too often feels rigid, overcrowded, and uninspiring. For all its accessibility, the reality of navigating these institutions can leave students feeling like just another number in a giant, bureaucratic machine.

When education is available to everyone, universities become packed. Lecture halls overflow, and personal contact with professors becomes rare. In many European countries, it is normal to attend classes with hundreds of other students. There is little space for discussion, feedback, or even questions.

You sit, you take notes, you pass or fail. It feels more like an assembly line than a place for learning. And the numbers explain why. In 2022, the European Union had 18.8 million students, about 7% of its total population, enrolled in tertiary education. In the United States, about 19.1 million people were enrolled in college during the 2024-25 academic year. In addition to similar enrollment figures, both the EU and the US have made higher education widely accessible. In the EU, where tuition is often free or heavily subsidized, higher education has

been expanded to accommodate the majority. As of 2022, 44% of EU citizens aged 25-34 had completed a tertiary degree, compared to 50% in the US.

The two systems differ in structure. What sets these systems apart is not the number of students, but how education is delivered. European universities tend to rely on large lectures, rigid course pathways, and limited institutional competition. The result is a model built for efficiency over individualization. US institutions, by contrast, operate in a competitive, decentralized environment with a wider range of academic structures, including smaller colleges and more flexible program design.

When higher education is scaled to serve nearly everyone, as in much of Europe, it risks trading depth for throughput and personalization for administrative convenience. It works, but at the cost of treating education less as a journey and more as a bureaucratic process.

Because of this scale, the system relies heavily on standardization. Programs are designed to fit the needs of the majority, which means they often leave no room for those who think or learn differently. This rigidity doesn't start at the university gate. In countries like Germany and France, students are tracked into academic or vocational pathways as early as age 11 or 12. If you're not placed on the right path then, your chances of accessing university later can shrink dramatically. So by the time students enter higher education, they've already been funneled through a system that limits personal growth, experimentation, and second chances.

This rigidity produces something deeper than just frustration. It creates a culture of conformity. Students are expected to follow the official path, finish on time, and not make too much noise. Failing or taking longer to graduate is seen as a weakness, even though trial and error is essential to genuine learning. The idea of exploring different disciplines or pausing to reflect is rarely encouraged. Success is measured by how efficiently you complete the program, not by how much you discover about yourself or the world.

As a result, creativity gets lost. Students who want to take risks, try new things, or ask uncomfortable questions end up finding little support. Professors often lack time to mentor individuals. Students have limited choice in what they study or how they approach it. In this system, the goal is not to inspire but to produce.

Now compare this with systems where competition and choice are more central. In the United States, students can design their own majors, switch fields, or even take time off without penalty. In the UK, universities compete for students, pushing them to offer more innovative programs and better teaching. These models are far from perfect, especially when it comes to cost. But they often offer more room for personal growth, independent thinking, and academic freedom.

This is not a call to bring back high tuition fees. Education should be accessible. But accessibility alone does not guarantee quality. Europe's model often gives up flexibility for access. It is built to serve everyone the same way, which means it struggles to serve anyone exceptionally well.

This wasn't always the case. As European universities opened their doors to the masses in the 20th century, the need for efficiency led to rigid structures and standardized curricula. What was once a system for a privileged few became an assembly line for millions. To put it in context for American readers: most European students pay less than \$500 a year in tuition. In comparison, while private US colleges average over \$38,000 annually, the majority of American students attend more affordable institutions with in-state tuition at public universities averaging around \$10,000, and community colleges around \$3,000.

Take Sweden, for example. Many students do not start university until their mid-twenties, partly because the system offers little incentive to start earlier. Once enrolled, academic paths are narrow, and changing direction is difficult.

In Italy, students often remain in university for many years. Not because they are overly curious or passionate, but because the system is outdated and slow. Dropout rates are high, and degrees can carry little weight in the job market.

And in France, some of the most respected schools aren't part of the public university system at all. The Grandes Écoles charge tuition, are more selective, and offer more personalized education. Ironically, they are considered better precisely because they do not follow the free-for-all model.

The truth is that real educational freedom means more than removing tuition fees. It means allowing students to explore, fail, change, and find their own way. It means encouraging innovation and rewarding curiosity. And yes, it means allowing systems to compete and evolve.

Europe's education system is something to be proud of. But pride should not prevent reform. We need to ask harder questions. Are we building institutions that truly serve students, or just creating machines that treat everyone the same?

If education is meant to prepare people for the future, then we must make sure our systems are flexible enough to grow with them. When you force everyone into the same mold, you risk crushing the very thing that makes education powerful: the ability to think differently.

Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)

<https://fee.org/>



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2018

BRIAN BALFOUR

There's no denying that an overwhelming majority of academics in universities across the country are liberal, progressive, socialist, or otherwise Left-wing.

## Why Most Academics Tilt Left

There's little disputing the fact that an overwhelming majority of university professors in America are on the political Left. A common response from leftists circulating to this reality is that "academics are liberal because that is the way intelligent people think."

It's easy to dismiss such a response, as it reflects nothing more than an "all smart people think like me" assumption held by people who insulate themselves in an ideological bubble.

It does, however, make one to ponder why such a disproportionate share of academics are Left-wing.

In his 1949 essay "The Intellectuals and Socialism," Friedrich Hayek explored this topic with observations still very much alive today.

### The Problem with Intellectuals

Intellectuals, according to Hayek, are drawn to utopian visions. First and foremost among those visions is the creation of a new social order, specifically one designed by "experts." They also have the hubris to anoint themselves as the experts to design this new order. Hayek wrote:

*The intellectual, by his whole disposition, is uninterested in technical details or practical difficulties. What appeal to him are broad visions, the spacious comprehension of the social order as a whole which a planned system promises.*

Socialist intellectuals often misapply observations from the hard sciences as inspiration for designing a new

society. Hayek noted that such intellectuals observed engineering techniques that enabled man to organize the forces of nature (natural resources) and convert them into useful technology. These observations have "contributed a great deal toward the creation of the belief that a similar control of the forces of society would bring comparable improvements in human conditions."

In short, progressive intellectuals fancy themselves as radicals, desiring to overturn capitalism and traditional Western culture, with themselves at the helm. But what are the best means for them to achieve their goals? For the ambitious among them, an academic career provides a rosy opportunity. For those radicals, "an intellectual career is the most promising path to both influence and the power to contribute to the achievement of his ideals," Hayek explained.

### Power Disguised as Expertise

Like most humans, Leftist intellectuals desire to exert influence and, in turn, feel important. Their desires to re-make society can only realistically be brought about through the existence of a massive government; a government in which these academics will be able to influence, under the guise of academic "expertise." There is an inherent liberal bias favoring greater social control by the state among academics in part because it's the only avenue academics have to become the social reformists they desire to be.

Hayek also pointed out that the young are especially receptive to idealist theories aimed at transforming the world. He explained:

(S)ocialist thought owes its appeal to the young largely to its visionary character; the very courage to indulge in utopian thought is in this respect a source of strength to the socialists which traditional liberalism sadly lacks.

The allure of advancing a utopian vision combined with classrooms full of highly amendable students proves to be a powerful magnet attracting Leftist intellectuals to academic positions. And once a majority of academics are progressives, then confirmation bias connects the dots for some to conclude that is the case because "that is how intelligent people think."

As Hayek put it, "The socialist will, of course, see in this merely a proof that the more intelligent person is today bound to become a socialist."

### Arrogance and Selfishness

Meanwhile, those wishing to largely preserve traditional systems find other avenues to pursue personal success. Even those who fight for freedom and to roll back government are perceived, as Hayek described, as being merely "those who aim at a piecemeal improvement of the existing order." Such an approach does not excite the imagination of many young intellectuals.

Finally, there is the role played by naked self-interest. Government subsidies and student financial aid make up a significant share of revenue for universities. Furthermore, government grants dominate funding for academic research. Academics reap financial benefits from government largesse. What a tidy coincidence that most academics favor big government.

There's no denying that an overwhelming majority of academics in universities across the country are liberal, progressive, socialist, or otherwise Left-wing. To dismiss this fact with the thoughtless trope that "this is the way intelligent people think" displays a lack of genuine intellectual curiosity.

Academic research and intellectuals continue to exert influence on public policy and public opinion. We at least owe it to ourselves to have a serious discussion about why there is such a lack of intellectual diversity on our college campuses.

Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)

<https://fee.org/>



FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 2019

MARK J. PERRY

Diversity statements will actually be anti-diversity statements of uniform, leftist-liberal-progressive thought.

## The Problem with Universities Demanding “Diversity Statements”

The quotation of the day on university corruption and the lack of diversity when it comes to ideology is from Walter E. William's column this week "More University Corruption":

*For most of the 20th century, universities were dedicated to the advancement of knowledge. There was open exchange and competition in the marketplace of ideas. Different opinions were argued and respected. Most notably in the social sciences, social work, the humanities, education, and law, this is no longer the case. The most important thing to today's university communities is diversity of race, ethnicity, sex and economic class, on which they have spent billions of dollars. Conspicuously absent is diversity of ideology.*

Students are taught that all cultural values are morally equivalent. That's ludicrous. Here are a few questions for those who make such a claim. Is forcible female genital mutilation, as practiced in nearly 30 sub-Saharan African and Middle Eastern countries, a morally equivalent cultural value? Slavery is currently practiced in Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad and Sudan; is it morally equivalent? In most of the Middle East, there are numerous limitations placed on women, such as prohibitions on driving, employment and education. Under Islamic law in some countries, female adulterers face death by stoning. Thieves face the punishment of having their hands severed. Homosexuality is a crime

punishable by death in some countries. Are these cultural values morally equivalent, superior or inferior to Western values?

The latest diversity trend in higher education is the increasingly frequent requirement of including a "diversity statement" when applying for an academic position, and in some cases when applying for tenure and/or promotion. Here's what Dr. Jeffrey Flier, Harvard University Distinguished Service Professor and Higgins Professor of Physiology and Medicine, and former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Harvard University said on Twitter last November:

*As a dean of a major academic institution, I could not have said this. But I will now. Requiring such statements in applications for appointments and promotions is an affront to academic freedom, and diminishes the true value of diversity, equity of inclusion by trivializing it.*

Along with Dr. Flier, here are some reasons I find those diversity uniformity statements objectionable.

What is called a "diversity statement" is essentially a pledge of allegiance to higher education's orthodox and uniform agenda in its ongoing battle against a color-blind, gender-blind, merit-driven academia. Successful diversity statements will be expected to support an unspoken ideology that emphasizes group identity

an assumption of group victimization, and a claim for group-based entitlements. Diversity statements compromise both academic freedom and academic standards as "purity tests" of an applicant's worthiness in adherence to a uniform, leftist-liberal-progressive view of "diversity."

Diversity statements will serve to weed out politically incorrect opinions and politically incorrect candidates because only leftist-oriented statements will be acceptable, reinforcing an ideologically uniform and monolithic professoriate. In reality, "diversity statements" will be in practice "uniformity statements" of adherence to a uniform view of diversity.

Overall, only diversity statements that adhere to a uniform statement of allegiance to a uniform leftist/liberal/Marxist/progressive view of group identity, group victimization, and a claim for group-based entitlements in higher education will enhance and advance a candidate's application. Failure to profess allegiance and conform to a uniform, orthodox diversity agenda, an agenda that ignores the most important diversity in higher education—intellectual and viewpoint diversity—will doom an applicant's job prospects.

Diversity statements will actually be anti-diversity statements of uniform, leftist-liberal-progressive thought that completely ignore the diversity of viewpoints, ideology and thought, and are therefore dangerous and misguided efforts that are threats to academic freedom and will weaken true intellectual diversity.

Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)

<https://fee.org/>



MONDAY, JULY 29, 2024

The problem isn't the students. It's the schools.

KERRY MCDONALD

## Chronic Absenteeism Is a Problem, but Most Proposed Solutions Miss the Point

Two weeks ago, three unlikely bedfellows joined forces to announce their intention to cut K-12 chronic absenteeism in half by 2029.

The right-leaning American Enterprise Institute, the left-leaning Education Trust, and the nonprofit organization Attendance Works revealed their plan in Washington, DC. The coalition hopes to combat chronic absenteeism, defined as students missing 10 percent or more of school days in a given academic year, by implementing a variety of initiatives, including home visits and similar interventions. Chronic absenteeism rates more than doubled during and after the Covid response. The goal is to reduce these rates to pre-pandemic levels, or around 13 percent.

Beyond the creepiness of random home visits by school-related personnel, the trouble with proposed chronic absenteeism fixes is that they miss the point: Many students don't want to be at their school.

We have collectively internalized the sad notion that school is drudgery, that most kids would rather not be there, but—like eating their peas—they must endure it, and, if they don't, their parents will go to prison.

Good ideas don't require force, and compulsory school attendance laws have been a bad idea since their inception here in my home state of Massachusetts in

1852.

Even with these laws, however, the fact that so many students are staying home rather than going to school should signal that school is actually the problem—not students.

The innovative schools and spaces I spotlight each week are places where young people want to be. I consistently hear stories from parents and teachers who say that their students are sad when school vacations start or when snow days cancel school. One group of students at a new microschool in Pennsylvania literally squealed in delight upon hearing that their school would run year-round, without stopping for summer break.

Joyful learning is possible. It's real. There are schools and spaces where teachers and students are happy and engaged. Already low in cost, these creative schooling options are more financially accessible than ever before thanks to expanding private school-choice programs that enable education dollars to follow students.

Cracking down on chronic absenteeism by adding more layers of coercion ignores the reality that today's mass schooling models are highly undesirable. If you want kids to go to school, invest in the schools where kids want to go and the everyday entrepreneurs who are building them.





FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2024

Compulsory schooling arguably has some benefits, but are they worth the cost?

MICHAEL STRONG

## The Opportunity Cost of Compulsory Schooling

Prior to the rise of compulsory schooling, it was common for young people to take on adult-level responsibilities at puberty. Indeed, in indigenous cultures, a rite of passage around puberty led to a transition to adulthood. Thomas Hine's *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager* documents just how common it was for teens in the US to take on significant responsibilities prior to the rise of compulsory high school. Ben Franklin, Thomas Edison, and Andrew Carnegie are among the many who began their working lives at puberty.

The terms "teen" and "adolescence" were created in the early 20th century. This wasn't even a recognized category before then. John Taylor Gatto's provocative thesis in *The 7-Lesson Schoolteacher*, that schooling trains us to be passive and dependent, is not even controversial for those who know much about the history of young people. Robert Epstein, former editor-in-chief of *Psychology Today*, wrote *The Case Against Adolescence* which makes the case that the infantilization of young people has been tremendously harmful. Human beings should take on significant responsibilities at puberty for healthy, normal development.

### What Costs Might Be Attributed to the Prussian System?

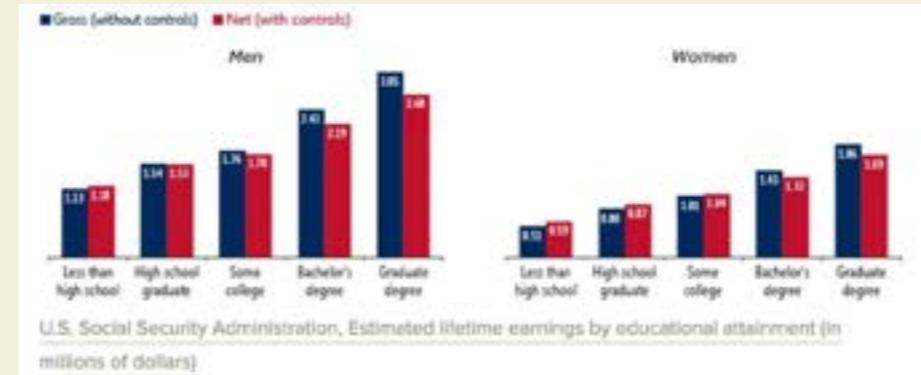
I have made the case that schooling is a damaging evolutionary mismatch that is a causal factor in much of (most of?) adolescent dysfunction and mental illness.

Does anyone believe that paleolithic teens, with young males and females eager to play an adult role in their tribes, exhibited the kinds of behaviors we see today? As behavioral health disorders (functional mental illness and substance abuse) surpass physical disorders as the largest causes of disability, it appears as though the opportunity cost of government schooling is quite high and getting higher. A 2024 study puts the annual cost of mental illness at \$280 billion. A 2008 study puts the annual cost of substance abuse at \$510 billion, which, with inflation alone, not assuming that the annual cost increased, would be \$750 billion. Together we are at roughly \$1 trillion.

Thomas Jefferson's original vision for "public education" in the US consisted of tuition-financed local schooling with state subsidies for low-income students for three years. The cost of that would be a negligible fraction of our current \$1 trillion annual education spending.

We don't know how much of the \$1 trillion in behavioral health costs would not exist if we had evolved healthier institutions, organizations, work, and other opportunities for young people, but if we take the evolutionary mismatch theory seriously along with Epstein's *The Case Against Adolescence*, the amount is significant. We might be paying \$1 trillion per year to cause \$1 trillion in damage.

But doesn't education add significant human capital? Evidence that more educated people earn more is solidly established:



This sort of evidence is usually taken as confirmation that governments should pay for education. Of course, the counterargument, as provided by economist Bryan Caplan, is that 80% of the wage premium for post-secondary education consists of signaling rather than human capital improvements. In addition, if one corrects for mathematical ability, the education

premium drops by 40–50% for men and 30–40% for women. Jason Collins argues that if you control for math, reading, vocabulary, and "the kitchen sink," it comes down to 50% generally. While there is no doubt some positive remainder for actual human capital development through education, it is likely a much smaller percentage of earnings increases than is represented in data as in the table above.

The reason why a Franklin, Carnegie, or Edison can be a leader without formal education is that people with sufficient motivation and ability can learn what they need to learn without schooling. The late Cole Summers (Kevin Cooper) showed that it is just as possible today (read his autobiography to the age of 14 to see how he learned without any schooling at all). Laura Deming, unschooled by her father, got into MIT at 14. Cliff Spradlin is a self-taught software developer who dropped out of high school and has been a software engineer at Tesla, SpaceX, and Waymo. Mikkel Thorup left school after middle school and has developed a highly successful business relocating expats. I've known hundreds of people with little formal schooling who have been highly successful in the 21st century. In careers open to merit, rather than credentialing, motivated people can learn what they need without formal education.

Ivan Illich became convinced in the 1970s that institutionalized education led to a loss of independence and initiative. Given that most of the value currently attributed to formal education is due to signaling, and that the human capital element (skills learned) can be learned without formal schooling (or with much less), then the net gains from formal schooling are much smaller than typically believed. Moreover, insofar as our counterfactual hypothesis for evaluating the opportunity costs of government schooling is NOT no schooling at all, but rather a voluntary market including home education, tutoring, private and religious schools, and apprenticeships, there would be abundant opportunities for acquiring the human capital component currently attributed to public schools. With the march of technology, from books to radio to films to TV to computers to the Internet to AI, skill development through some combination of human transmission, technological assistance, and personal initiative is easier than ever.

But what about the squashed entrepreneurial initiative from learning to be passive and dependent? And what about the anti-capitalist and victimhood ideologies taught in schools? And the negative habits many (most) students learn in public schools? Are the net outcomes from these characteristics more debilitating in a coerced K-12 system than the marginal value of human capital additions through government schooling over voluntary schooling?

While much harder to quantify, government schooling's active efforts to undermine value creation while imposing the debilitating attitude of victimhood and developing bad habits surely have negative value. No parent (or vanishingly few) would choose schools or other learning experiences with these negative consequences in a voluntary educational system.

Separately, many of those who are not on the college track experience schooling as some combination of daily boredom and humiliation, some of which develops into the public-school-to-prison pipeline. A couple of studies have shown a dramatic difference in arrest and incarceration rates among those who went to private or charter schools rather than public schools. A voluntary, pluralistic system of education that did not damage young people in this way would save a significant amount of money, with roughly \$100 billion annually being spent on incarceration (not to mention the damage to families).

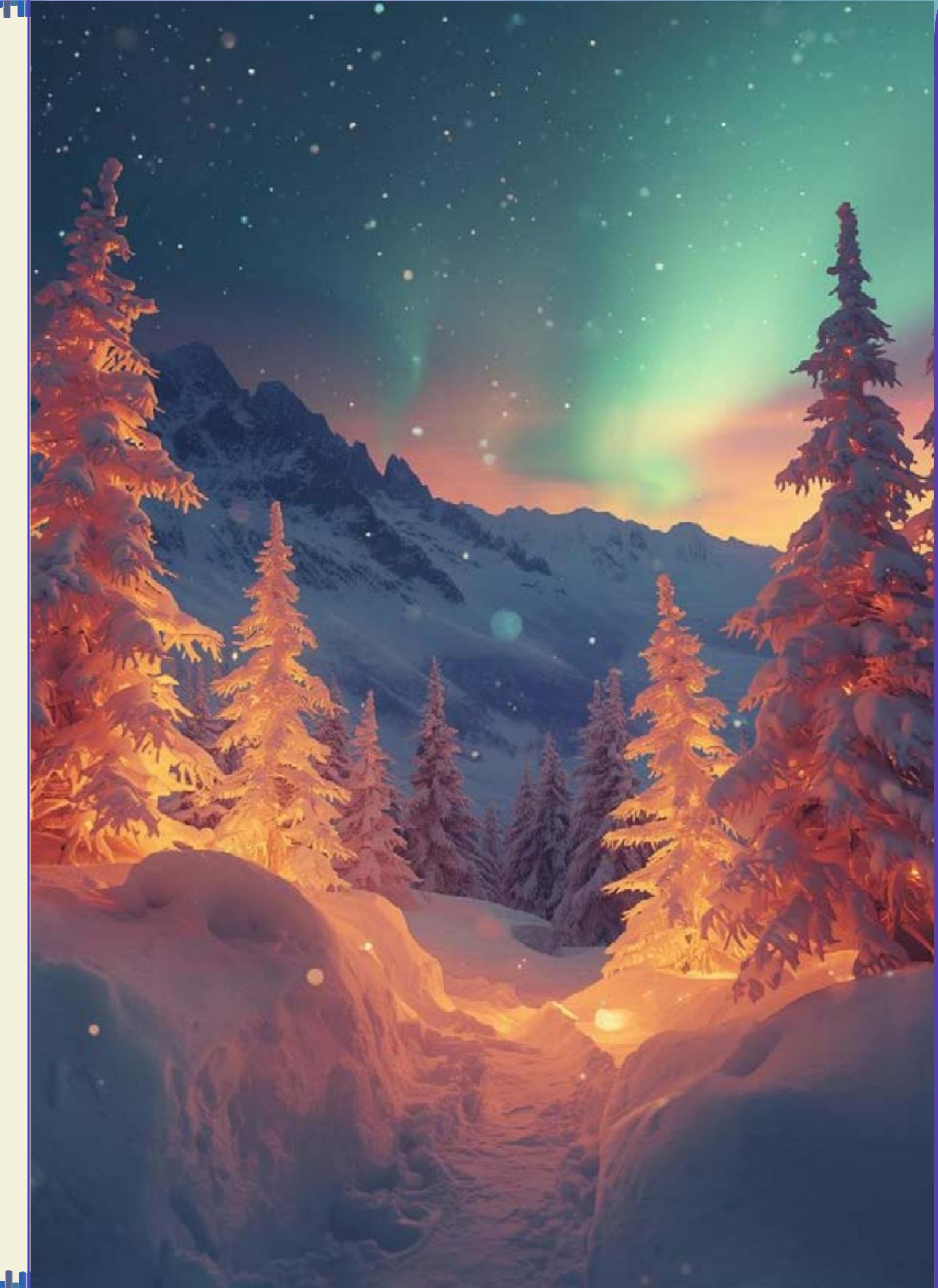
Of course, these figures don't include the tragedies of teen suicide, which increase about 30% during the school year, and the untold years of human misery from depression, anxiety, substance abuse, passivity, dependence, and victimhood rather than lives of agency, meaning, and purpose.

Let's generously call the tradeoff between some human capital increase due to compulsory public education and the various harms it causes a wash, and leave the net cost at \$1 trillion in direct costs and another \$1 trillion in behavioral health costs annually due to compulsory public schooling.

When viewed in this light, compulsory public schooling doesn't seem nearly as great as we are led to believe.

Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)

<https://fee.org/>





MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2025

NICOLE JAMES

## Australia's Schrödinger's Super Tax

Let's start with the basics. In Australia, superannuation, or super, is not the pension. It is not some generous government handout that allows you to stop working at 60, drink wine before midday, and collect a lovely weekly cheque just for surviving this long. No, that fantasy is reserved for the Age Pension, which is only available if you've somehow managed to make it to 67 and own roughly two pairs of socks and a toaster, and not much else.

Superannuation, on the other hand, is your own money. Sort of. It's money that your boss legally has to put aside, currently 11.5% of your wages, into a special account that you can't touch until you're 60(ish). You can add in extra cash yourself, but it's like saving for retirement with your hands tied behind your back, while someone else chooses the piggy bank, its color, and the interest rate.

Super was made compulsory in 1992 by then-Prime Minister Paul Keating (of Zegna suits, antique clocks, and insults so sharp they could julienne a carrot). The idea was that super would give people dignity in retirement. A noble pursuit. But fast-forward to now, and unless you've been earning CEO money since the year dot or had the foresight to start salary sacrificing before you could legally vote, your super balance probably isn't going to buy you much more than a second-hand recliner and a few tins of tuna.

Now, about the pension. In order to get the full Age Pension from the government, you have to be 67 and basically living like a hermit on a budget. The current maximum is about \$1,149 a fortnight for singles, which might sound fine until you realize that a Felafel Roll these days is around \$15 and that electricity costs more than some studio apartments.

Even worse, you don't even qualify for the full pension unless you earn under \$5,668 a year and have very few assets. That's not modest living. That's quiet desperation with a Woolies supermarket rewards card.

So to be crystal clear, super is intended to stop you needing the pension. It's a DIY retirement fund where you invest your own money (with a bit of employer help) and cross your fingers that you'll live long enough to spend it on something other than medication and arthritis chairs. And if you've played by the rules, well done! You've skipped the cocktails, side-eyed the Zara sales, and diligently funneled your money into superannuation like a responsible grown-up with dreams of Pilates at sunrise and cruises that involve more champagne than stress. Then just when you thought you'd earned a peaceful retirement, the Australian government casually announces, "By the way, we'll be taxing you on your super's imaginary earnings, the ones you haven't actually received." Pardon?

Welcome to Australia's Schrödinger's Super Tax, a legislative proposal that's both alive and dead in Parliament, just like the unfortunate metaphorical cat. Officially, it's called the Treasury Laws Amendment (Better Targeted Superannuation Concessions and Other Measures) Bill 2023, which sounds like something you'd avoid at a dinner party. And trust me, the debate around it is just as awkward.

### Rich People Loopholes

The Albanese government, being all "fairness and reform" this, "rich people loopholes" that, has proposed adding an extra 15% tax on super earnings for balances over \$3 million, including the unrealized gains, aka the money you haven't even touched yet. It's like being taxed for owning a house because it might go up in value. Do you feel taxed just reading that? Same.

So now your super fund has become a metaphysical mystery. Is it rich? Is it poor? Is it taxed if it hasn't even made a profit yet? Yes. Yes, it is.

### Who's Applauding, Who's Fainting?

Treasurer Jim Chalmers is leading the charge, insisting it's all about "fairness" and only affects the top 0.5% of super holders, about 80,000 of Australia's wealthiest souls.

But the critics? Oh, they are legion. There's the Coalition, obviously. Then there are accountants (who are finally having their moment), farmers, small business owners, and that rare breed of humans who say "Self-Managed Super Fund" without blinking. James Chirnside from Dart Mining is horrified. Philip Lowe, former governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia, and Ken Henry, economist and former secretary of the Department of Treasury, have both raised eyebrows. Even Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand called the bill flawed, which in accountant-speak is the equivalent of flinging your calculator across the room.

### So, What Exactly Is the Tax?

Technically, it's Division 296 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. Romantically, it's where super goes to have its soul crushed. From July 1, 2025, anyone with a balance over \$3 million will pay 30% total tax on their earnings, including unrealized capital gains.

You don't have to sell your assets for this tax to apply. If your property portfolio looks a bit plump on paper, the ATO comes knocking with its calculator and says, "That'll be 15% extra, thanks." Whether you actually have the cash is your problem. Think of it like getting charged rent for a holiday house you merely drove past once in 1997.

Oh, and the tax is applied to you personally, not the fund. So there's no hiding behind the retirement couch.

### When's It Happening? Maybe Never. Maybe Soon. Maybe Yesterday?

The bill was introduced in November 2023, limped through the House of Representatives, and promptly tripped over its own shoelaces in the Senate by February 13, 2025, just before the election was called. So now it's stuck in legislative limbo, sipping a cocktail called "Maybe Later."

If passed post-election (because let's face it, stranger things have happened), it'll kick in nationwide from July 2025. The ATO will start issuing bills a year later. Possibly in glitter. Possibly not.

### Why the Massive Drama?

The government says the bill is about making sure super is used for actual retirement, not hoarding wealth like a cartoon dragon. They reckon it'll raise \$2.3 billion by 2027-28 and help pay for, I don't know, hospitals or hovercrafts.

But opponents say it's unfair, unrealistic, and—most damning of all—un-Australian. Farmers in Toowoomba are freaking out because their super is mostly their land, which isn't exactly something you can just slice up and sell like a Sara Lee cake.

And since the \$3 million threshold isn't indexed to inflation (rude), more and more middle-class savers will sneak over that line just for having a moderately decent financial plan.

Venture capitalists and mining investors are also alarmed, with some (like Wilson Asset Management founder, Geoff Wilson) suggesting it could dry up funding for startups and kill off innovation faster than you can say, "Shark Tank rejection."

And don't get people started on the defined benefit schemes—you know, the kind that conveniently cover politicians and public servants? They get a "deferral option." That translates to "not our problem just yet."

### And the Schrödinger's Bit?

Ah yes. You're taxed on gains you haven't made. And if you do pay tax and your asset value drops later? Too bad. No refunds. The tax is real even if the money was never there to begin with.

The only consolation is that you can carry the losses forward, like emotional baggage, into the next financial year. Charming.

### Progressive Policy or Political Pandora's Box?

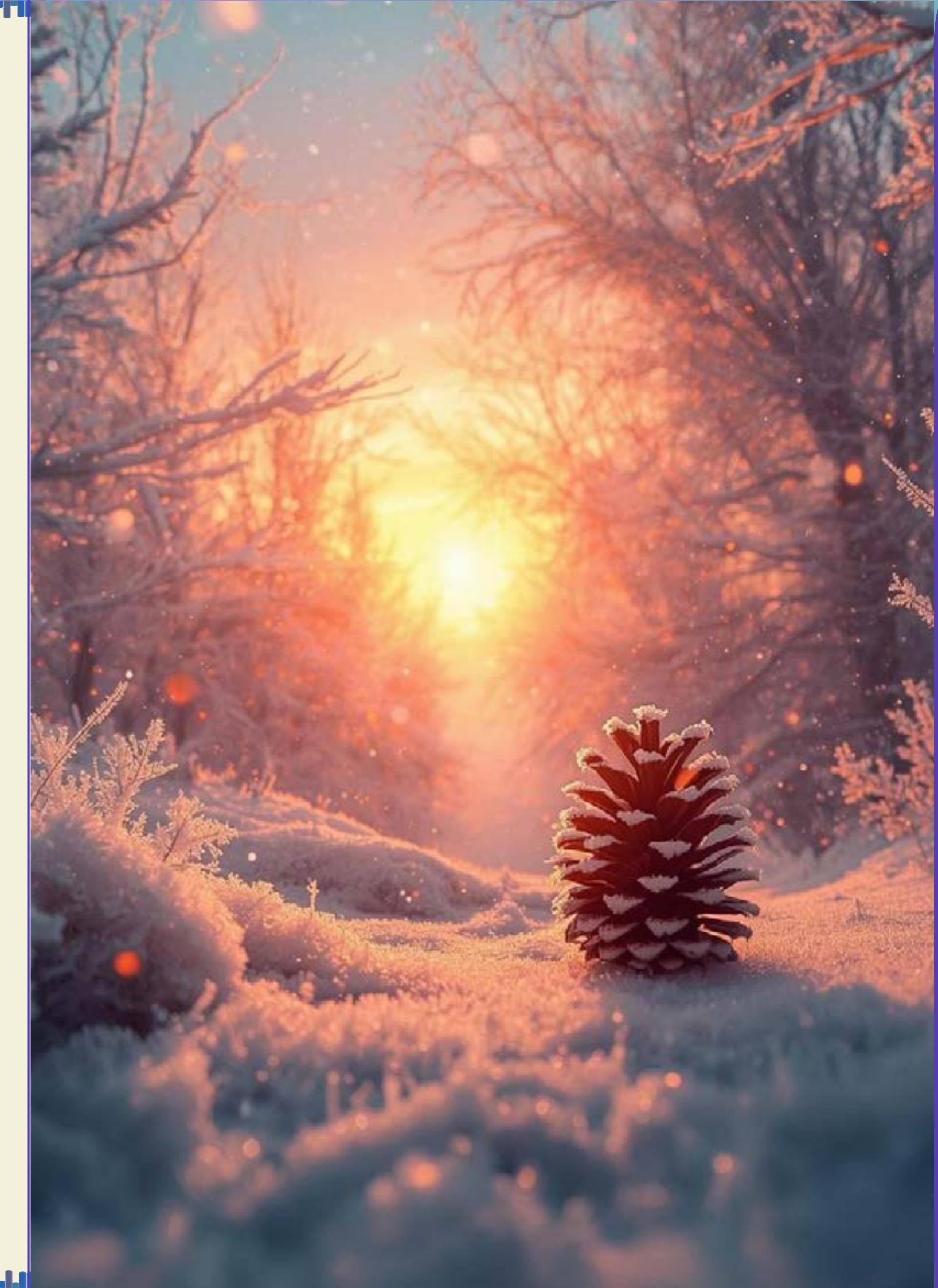
This tax could either be the great leveler Australia needs, or the retirement apocalypse disguised in Treasury letterhead. It's paused but not forgotten. Like an ex with your Netflix password. With the election behind us, you can bet this drama will rise again, probably at a press conference disguised as a budget update.

In the meantime, keep an eye on the Senate, a hand on your wallet, and maybe send your accountant a nice cheese hamper. They're going to need it.

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Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)

<https://fee.org/>





SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 2018 Attending college is the most pervasive religious act today.

ISAAC M. MOREHOUSE

## Belief in College Has Become Religious

Imagine a town. Maybe an early New England village.

There is a dominant belief in this town that one must attend church every Sunday if they want to live a prosperous life.

Because the belief is pervasive, those who want to be prosperous attend in high numbers. Those who don't care about being prosperous attend less. Since those who care more about prosperity choose church more than those who care less, if you were to look at data on the prosperity level of the townspeople, you'd find that those who attended church were more prosperous than those who didn't on average.

This would provide further fuel to the idea that prosperity requires church. It would be considered a must, not even worth questioning. Even skeptics would say things like, "It's not the only or main cause of prosperity, but you'd better attend just to be safe and decrease the odds that you don't succeed."

That is the world we live in now.

### The Church of School

The religious belief is that ambitious people have to attend college or they will be losers, or at least fail to realize their potential. No one knows what actually happens in college or why it's supposed to make you

more successful. Since the belief that college is needed for ambitious people is pervasive, ambitious people go more than less ambitious people. When employment or pay data are analyzed, they show that college goers do better on average than those who don't. Of course. Because more ambitious people go to college more. You might object that the market would not allow such an inefficiency to survive. But we've seen towns like the above in real life. People's beliefs shape their actions, and their beliefs are not always those that lead to material prosperity. People make themselves materially worse off all the time in service of beliefs, even crazy superstitions in some cases.

The psychological benefit of going along with the dominant belief, gaining the prestige it entails, and not risking being seen as a non-believer motivates all kinds of actions detrimental to a person's individual goals and aspirations.

Attending college is the most pervasive religious act today.

### Why Do They Really Go?

Most ambitious people do it. And the reason they do has nothing to do with causal connection between attendance and achievement of their individual goals (most of the time they don't have any so it would be impossible to help them achieve it.) The reason most ambitious people go to college is this: they believe that if they don't, God won't love them.

"God" is whatever aspects of the dominant cultural narrative most impact them. Prestige. Parental love and approval. Being normal.

If it were really about careers, it would only take a few minutes of solid reflection to realize that specific employers want nothing more than specific value creation, proven in specific ways. A degree is one of the weakest, least common denominator efforts to doing this and is easy to surpass. College persists for the ambitious—and thus the self-reinforcing data about successful people having degrees—because of a religious-like belief in its necessity. But it's not necessary at all.

OK sure, if you know what you want, you can get it more directly. But most students don't know what they want for their career. That's normal and good in most cases. You can't know until you're several years into working and trying stuff (and maybe not even then). But that doesn't mean entering the five-year, six-figure black box will help you move towards a question mark any more than it helps you move toward a specific goal.

In fact, the sooner you can grapple with and solve specific problems for specific people and create specific value provable in specific ways, the sooner you open up your ability to translate that into self-knowledge about what you do want, and transfer it to other activities and narrow down your search for a career fit.

### Why It's So Tempting to Go Anyway

College is a complete waste of time and money for ambitious people.

Most know it in their gut. But they're there because they are afraid to be and do something specific. They fear becoming a solid, concrete, autonomous individual, and all the effort and responsibility it requires. College is the only way to defer becoming a fully differentiated person while mom and dad pay the tab without judgment.

I get it. But it comes at a cost. Every minute you live off others, delay becoming a specific individual and languish in a murky sea of imaginary "options", you reduce the potential of what you can become. The longer you live in limbo, the lower your ceiling when you emerge into the world of concretes.

### Don't Worry, This is Good News for You!

This isn't bleak, bad news. This is the greatest news ever!

To use a different religious analogy that my friend Michael Gibson likes to use (Michael and his partner Danielle's VC fund invests in college opt-outs and dropouts, check them out), it's like Luther's 95 thesis. It's the revelation that you were lied to. You don't need to buy indulgences to have a chance at heaven. You have agency, and you can determine your own fate without appealing to some bloated bureaucratic institution for an official stamp of approval.

Break out the champagne, and get busy doing real stuff in the real world. Don't live your life by averages and aggregate data that reflect little more than the superstitions of the day.

### Further Reading:

- [Employers Don't Care About Degrees \(the stats are misleading\)](#)
- [Forget the Degree, Build a Better Signal](#)
- [College is Dead](#)
- [Projects are the New Resume](#)
- [Most People Go to College to Feel Normal](#)
- [Imagine if We Taught Bike Riding Like We Teach Careers](#)
- [Options Are Blinding You to Opportunities](#)



**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2021** A good example of someone in the 'important but overlooked' category is Richard Henry Lee, whose birthday is January 20.

## Richard Henry Lee: Remembering Fundamentals from the Federal Farmer

With the reach of the federal government vastly expanded in recent years and an incoming administration promising to use that reach more actively to dictate Americans' choices, the limits on federal power are once again a central political issue for those who love liberty.

Unfortunately, however, despite the fact that those who led our move to independence and shaped our Constitution left us an extensive and invaluable record of their views on that precise issue, modern ignorance of our history severely impoverishes current discussions.

A good example of someone in the "important but overlooked" category is Richard Henry Lee, whose birthday is January 20.

Lee is best known for the June 7, 1776 motion calling for the colonies' independence from Great Britain, which led to the Declaration of Independence. He was also, along with Patrick Henry and Samuel Adams, a leader in the Continental Congresses, including serving as President. After the Constitution's adoption, he was elected Senator from Virginia, and served as one of its first presidents, *pro tempore*, despite his opposition to the Constitution's ratification, because it needed "bottoming the new constitution on a better bill of rights."

Particularly important is Lee's Letters from the Federal Farmer, which were not only widely published in newspapers, but also sold thousands of copies as a pamphlet, providing an important impetus to the Bill of Rights.

Today, when what the federal government is to be allowed to do is again a central issue, his words merit serious reconsideration.

- I can consent to no government...not calculated equally to preserve the rights of all orders of men in the community.
- A free and enlightened people...will not resign all their rights to those who govern, and they will fix limits to their legislators and rulers...and the latter will know they cannot be passed.
- Inquire...where and how the essential powers shall be lodged...to secure true liberty.
- [Hope] cannot justify the impropriety of giving powers, the exercise of which prudent men will not attempt, and imprudent men will...exercise only in a manner destructive of free government.
- Why in laying the foundation of the social system, need we unnecessarily leave a door open to improper regulations?
- We cannot form a general government in which all power can be safely lodged...either for the purposes of government or the preservation of liberty...there will be an unreasonable accumulation of powers in the general government.

- Should the general government...look for a support in a system of influence, the government will take every occasion to multiply laws... considering these as so many necessary props for its own support.
  - When I recollect how...people contended in the cause of liberty, and carefully weighed the importance of taxation, I can scarcely believe we are serious in proposing to vest vast powers of laying and collecting internal taxes...the power would be improperly lodged in congress, and...might be abused by imprudent and designing men.
  - We ought not to lodge [government powers] as evidently to give one order of men in the community undue advantages over others; or commit the many to the mercy, prudence, and moderation of the few.
  - National laws ought to yield to inalienable or fundamental rights—and national laws, made by a few men, should extend only to a few national objects. This will not be the case with the laws of congress.
  - Men who govern will...construe laws and constitutions most favorably for increasing their own powers; all wise and prudent people...have drawn the line, and carefully described the powers parted with and the powers reserved... what rights are established as fundamental, and must not be infringed upon.
  - [With] all important powers collecting in one center...a few men will possess them almost at discretion.
  - Our countrymen are entitled to an honest and faithful government; to a government of laws and not of men...if the constitution or social compact be vague and unguarded, then we depend wholly on the prudence, wisdom and moderation of those who manage the affairs of government... uncertain and precarious.
  - Fortunate it is for the...people, if they can continue attentive to their liberties...and constitutional barriers for their permanent security.
  - Liberty, in its genuine sense, is security to enjoy the effects of our honest industry and labors, in a free and mild government.
  - The people have a right to hold and enjoy their property according to known standing laws, and which cannot be taken from them without their consent.
  - In free governments, the people...follow their own private pursuits, and enjoy the fruits of their labor with very small deductions for the public use.
  - Our true object is to give full efficacy to one principle...to render force as little necessary as possible.
  - As long as the people are free they will preserve free governments...when they shall become tired of freedom, arbitrary government must take place.
  - [We have given] many general undefined powers to congress, in the constitutional exercise of which the rights in question may be affected.
  - The powers delegated to the government must...clearly be of such extent as that, by no reasonable construction, they can be made to invade the rights and prerogatives intended to be left in the people.
  - We must consider this constitution, when adopted, as the supreme act of the people, and in construing it hereafter, we and our posterity must strictly adhere to the letter and spirit of it, and in no instance depart from them.
  - [It is not] necessary or expedient for the man entrusted with the common defense and general tranquility to possess unlimitedly the powers in question, or even in any considerable degree.
  - The federal head will possess...almost every species of power that can, in its exercise...endanger liberty.
- According to Forrest McDonald, Richard Henry Lee believed that "men are born with certain rights, whether they are honored in a particular society or not," and was therefore "imbued with an abiding love of liberty and a concomitant wholesome distrust of government."

And when the founding generation's consideration of the proper, narrow limits to be imposed on federal power has so extensively eroded, his insights are particularly important. Lee knew that the "first maxim of a man who loves liberty should be never to grant to rulers an atom of power that is not most clearly and indispensably necessary for the safety and well-being of society," and that "It must never be forgotten...that the liberties of the people are not so safe under the gracious manner of government as by the limitation of power."

Modern Americans need to re-learn those same lessons.



SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 2025

Survivors of the American Revolution who lived to see the Civil War.

LAWRENCE W. REED

## Centenarians for Liberty

On the morning of April 19, 1775, British troops marched into Lexington, Massachusetts, on their way to confiscate weapons in the nearby town of Concord and to apprehend the colonial firebrands Samuel Adams and John Hancock. When a shot was fired—no one knows by whom—a skirmish erupted. As the smoke cleared, eight American patriots were dead. The American Revolution had begun. It was 250 years ago today.

Eighty-nine years later, as another war was nearing its end, only seven veterans of the Revolution were still alive. Ranging in age from 101 to 106, they had been teenagers when they took up arms against Britain.

Suppose you had been alive in 1864 when those seven veterans still lived. Wouldn't it be a thrill to visit each of them, take a photo or two, and pry loose their memories of those momentous days so long before?!

Reverend E. B. Hillard set out to meet all of the men in the summer of that last full year of the Civil War. He reached six of them at their homes in New York, Maine, and Ohio. The seventh, in Missouri, was beyond his reach. He interviewed five of the six (one was too ill to speak), took a photo of each man and his house, and then wrote a remarkable book titled *The Last Men of the Revolution*. I recently bought a 2013 facsimile reproduction of it—bound in genuine goat leather, no less—but for a few bucks less you can get an inexpensive

copy on Amazon.

Hillard fully understood the historical significance of his project, as his Introduction reveals:

*The present is the last generation that will be connected by living link with the great period in which our national independence was achieved. Our own are the last eyes that will look on men who looked on Washington; our ears the last that will hear the living voices of those who heard his words. Henceforth the American Revolution will be known among men by the silent record of history alone.*

The first of the six Hillard met and profiled in the book was 102-year-old Samuel Downing of Edinburgh, New York. He was living in the house he built some 70 years before, and everybody for miles around knew exactly who he was. They regarded him with "respect and affection." Only the day before, the old man had walked five miles (round trip) to a shoemaker's shop to have his boots spiffed up. Of the six surviving veterans, Hillard says Downing was "the most vigorous in body and mind." The Reverend writes:

*Indeed, judging from his bearing and conversation, you would not take him to be over seventy years of age... [H]e is strong, hearty, enthusiastic, cheery: the most sociable of men and the very best of company. He eats his full meal, rests well at night, labors upon the farm, hoes corn and potatoes, and works just as well as anybody. His voice is strong and clear, his mind unclouded, and he seems, as one of his neighbors said of him, "as good for ten years longer as he ever was."*

Not bad in 1864 for someone born in 1761!



Downing regaled Hillard with stories the Reverend found riveting. Downing's first duty in the war was "to guard wagons from Exeter to Springfield." He and fellow patriots once ambushed British carriages transporting rum and enjoyed a good party that night.

The old man knew the infamous Benedict Arnold and served under him in the Mohawk Valley before Arnold turned traitor. "A stern-looking man but kind to his soldiers," said Downing, but "he ought to have been true" to the American cause.

From "right opposite Washington's headquarters," Downing watched Lafayette prepare the ground just before the pivotal Battle of Yorktown. Of Washington, Downing said, "I saw him every day." Hillard inquired, "Was he [Washington] as fine a looking man as he is reported to have been?" Downing replied in the affirmative, adding, "But you never got a smile out of him. He was a nice man. We loved him. They [the troops] would sell their lives for him."

Downing recalled, "When peace was declared, we burnt thirteen candles in every hut, one for each State." After their "delightful" conversation, Hillard departed, his heart "swelled afresh with gratitude to the men who had

rescued their land from the tyrant."

Rev. Hillard's next stop was Syracuse, New York, to see a veteran named Daniel Waldo, just two months shy of his 102nd birthday. Sadly, because of a fall just days before, Waldo lay mostly unconscious on his deathbed. "To see him, even without knowing him, was to love him," wrote Hillard.

Despite the situation, Hillard assembled a fascinating profile of Waldo from friends and family and the many articles written about the man when he was in better shape. Waldo had been a preacher who commanded immense adoration. Hillard quotes a close friend of Waldo's, who said, "At the close of a life of more than a hundred years, there is no passage in his history which those who loved him would wish to have erased."

The stories revealed to Hillard by the remaining four—Lemuel Cook, Alexander Milliner, William Hutchings, and Adam Link—are all poignant and memorable. I couldn't help but wonder if God granted these men long lives so they could reveal to E. B. Hillard how blessed the country was to have them. I hope you'll want to pick up a copy of the book and read about them for yourself.

I don't know about you, but I would give anything to spend even a moment with centenarians who fought for America's liberty. Thank you, Rev. E. B. Hillard, for doing that very thing so long ago.

### Additional Reading:

[The Last Men of the Revolution](#) by E. B. Hillard

[The Revolution's Last Men: The Soldiers Behind the Photographs](#) by Don N. Hagist

['Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death,' 250 Years Later](#) by Lawrence W. Reed

[Get Ready for 2026!](#) by Lawrence W. Reed

[Remembering the Ides of March \(in 1783\)](#) by Lawrence W. Reed

[How Sound Money Won the Battle of Yorktown—and Saved the American Revolution](#) by Lawrence W. Reed

Source: *The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)*

<https://fee.org/>



THURSDAY, AUGUST 29, 2024 For Sumay and Aila Lu, learning has been anything but conventional.

NASIYAH ISRA-UL

## How Two Homeschooled Sisters are Getting an Early Start to Entrepreneurship

Youth innovation is a growing trend in the US, especially since the pandemic. In fact, Generation Alpha, or those born since 2010, is on track to be the most innovative and technologically-savvy generation yet. This trend, combined with the rising number of students enrolled in non-traditional K-12 learning options, is creating an environment ripe for the next generation of innovation and entrepreneurship. Two siblings in particular, Sumay and Aila Lu, are making the most of this golden era of entrepreneurial opportunity to support other learners and edupreneurs. Sumay and Aila are the creators of the WEquil App educational platform and its virtual school, WEquil School.

WEquil is an ed-tech company working to provide a digital platform to help edupreneurs and their learners leverage social technology for educational purposes. From payment processing to classroom management, WEquil's platform offers an unparalleled technological infrastructure to support the operations of homeschool groups, microschools, and virtual educators, making it easy for anyone to start a learning community online.

For Sumay and Aila, ages 15 and 12 respectively, creating a virtual school, and later the wider community platform, was inspired by their journey into unconventional education during the pandemic. "We never really thought about homeschooling as an option before the pandemic," said Sumay. Both siblings originally attended public school prior to the pandemic. Aila added, "We never even mentioned the term 'homeschooling' but more than four

times before the pandemic."

Transitioning to virtual learning during the pandemic was challenging, and both sisters realized that there was something better for them in the world of homeschooling. They credit their switch to home education as providing them with time to pursue an entrepreneurial pathway they would have otherwise missed out on. The online microschool they created, which eventually led to the development of the WEquil App, has served over 600 students since opening.

Yet, even being homeschooled, the sisters make it clear that they are not limited to the traditional sense of the term. "Homeschooling is just a legal term used to describe any type of education that happens outside of traditional schooling," Aila stated. Sumay explained that her and her sister's homeschooling experience was leveraged to understand better how they liked to learn and to discover the problems that students like them faced in accessing tailored educational options, so that they might try and solve them. They succeeded.

Since creating WEquil during the pandemic, WEquil's platform has amassed users from across the globe. Currently, the WEquil App has more than 2,400 registered users on the platform. Sumay says that WEquil's platform aims to help leverage specialized skillsets from their users to help the community thrive collectively, connecting learners and parents with educational providers who can help them achieve their goals.

and receive a personalized educational experience. Sumay explained, "Someone may be really good at teaching one thing in particular, so we help them connect with people looking for that specific service and provide the foundational tools needed to provide that service to others."

Some challenges come with leading a business of any kind at such a young age, but Aila and Sumay see these as opportunities for growth and learning. "We've had plenty of failures over the years, but failure is a part of learning," Aila said. This attitude is definitely paying off. The sisters have been invited to numerous education and entrepreneurial events over the past few months, and Sumay was even a main stage speaker at VELACon, a national convening of hundreds of innovative educators hosted by the VELA Education Fund, in Washington, DC, this past June. They now have their own podcast covering anything from educational methods to recent trends in unconventional education.

It is important to both sisters that the future of education is determined by youth and adults collaboratively, and they are both proponents of project-based education so that young people can ask questions and discover the world with adult mentorship. This method of education helped them create a pathway to success, and both sisters agree, it's an amazing way to make discoveries and create new solutions. When asked what the ideal future of education would look like in one word, they answered, "Personalized."

These sisters' journey is just one of many examples of homeschoolers and other students who learn outside of traditional classrooms using their extra time to build businesses, discover new ways to approach old problems, and expand their knowledge of the world around them through innovation and entrepreneurial pursuits. Unconventional education is changing the way youth engage with the world, creating more opportunities for children and teens to create solutions and develop their own companies. Young entrepreneurs like Sumay and Aila are creating solutions to usher in the future of education from a learner perspective. It's an exciting time, as unconventional education paves the way for youth innovation to become easier and more normative than ever before.

### VIDEO

[Two Young Sisters Share Why They Founded WEquil School](#)

Source: *The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)*

<https://fee.org/>



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2024

Because children need human connection.

MICHAEL STRONG

## Betting on Homeschooling and Microschooling

I have spent the past thirty-five years creating small, highly-personalized schools where students flourish. I have, if you will, bet my life on the value of these schools—microschools before they became a thing. Over the course of that time, I've seen hundreds of children who were anxious, depressed—sometimes even suicidal—become happy and well within weeks or months of switching from a large, impersonal public school to a small learning environment which offered a closely-connected community.

Based on that experience, for the past decade I've been looking at research showing the various ways in which small, high-touch learning environments may be more beneficial for student mental health than are large, impersonal public schools.

In the meantime, most school choice debates have centered around test score outcomes. When parents choose schools, are test scores generally higher or lower? Choice advocates cite studies showing that choice results in higher scores, while choice opponents cite studies showing the opposite.

But having worked on the front lines for so long, I know that much graver issues are at stake. The statistics above are from a rigorous study showing that pediatric suicides are much higher during the school year than they are in the summer. This seasonal pattern of suicides stops at age 18, showing a distinct association with schooling. The

obvious spike on Mondays is another signal that going to school is associated with dying by suicide.

While there are many variables associated with suicide, from a policy perspective one of the most relevant is the role of school connectedness. In a systematic meta-analysis of school connectedness and suicide, the following features of "school connectedness" include:

*(1) social affiliations: positive school relationships, feeling cared about and/or respected by adults at school, perceiving availability to interact with adults at school; (2) school belonging: feeling part of the school, feeling safe in school, feeling happy at school; (3) attitude about school importance: caring about school, trying to do one's best at school; and (4) supportive learning environment: clear and appropriate expectations, perceived fairness.*

Based on this description, wouldn't you expect that most microschools (and of course most homeschooling environments) provide much greater "school connectedness" than do large public schools?

Well, from the research literature, not surprisingly it turns out that school connectedness consistently reduces suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. While family connectedness and peer connectedness are also important for adolescent mental health, school connectedness is especially important. In a study on social connectedness and adolescent suicide risk, they find:

*School connectedness was the only specific connectedness domain related to fewer suicide attempts. School connectedness is critical to healthy adolescent development and has been linked to health risk and health-promoting behaviors, including reduced substance use, increased physical activity, and more productive coping.*

In light of this obvious importance, one would expect a major public health initiative related to school connectedness.

Indeed, such initiatives exist. In a brief by EdResearch for Action titled "Strengthening School Connectedness to Increase School Success," the advice seems both banal and strangely bureaucratic:

*Students feel more connected to school when teachers use explicit strategies to show that they care about them, know them as individuals, and are willing to respond to their distinct needs.*

Teachers need to be told to "use explicit strategies to show that they care about them." How many moms need to be told to "use explicit strategies to show that they care"?

Under "Practices to Avoid," the aforementioned brief has the good sense to note that caring cannot be mandated:

*School connectedness can't be mandated or coerced.*

If so, perhaps we should allow families to choose learning environments where children DO feel connected? But no, in the literature on "school connectedness," which is entirely focused on public school interventions, I never see any awareness that school choice, including homeschooling and microschools, might just address the entire issue.

Consider the single-item question from the school connectedness literature: "Do you feel like you belong at this school?" In a homeschooling environment, the answer is almost always going to be "Yes." And in a chosen learning pod or microschool, the answer is almost always going to be "Yes." We are not yet at the stage where we have good data on "school connectedness" in homeschooling and microschooling environments, but we do consistently see greater parental and student satisfaction with private schools over public schools.

It turns out, smaller schools are MUCH safer than larger schools. In an article on "How Smaller Schools Prevent Violence," we find:

*—large schools (those with more than 1,000 students) are eight times more likely to report a serious violent incident than small schools (those with fewer than 300 students).*

This should surprise no one. Several broad literature reviews support a wide range of beneficial outcomes in smaller schools (see here and here).

Typically the research on "small schools" specifies schools under 300-500. Thus the current crop of microschools are MUCH smaller than that, with the largest definition of microschool usually being 100 students, and most are much smaller than that. Homeschooling, of course, provides an even more high-touch environment.

Finally, choice makes all the difference in the world. If a child is being bullied at a small school, if that school has been chosen, they can leave and find another, safer option.

Personally, I'm willing to bet that students enrolled at smaller, chosen schools will have better mental health, including a lower probability of suicide, than is the case with students at large public schools.

I've proposed this as a prediction to Michigan State University education professor and school choice opponent Joshua Cowen:

He then blocked me.

I also offered this as a prediction to Justin Baeder, an education consultant who also argues against school choice:

As we measure emotional engagement and safety in different learning environments, I predict that small, personalized environments will do better than large public schools. I expect that emotional engagement and safety will be correlated with school connectedness. At some point, we will be able to predict rates of clinical depression and suicide in different learning environments. The tech will alert us in advance of which environments are safer for children and which are more dangerous.

As to scale, an estimated 7% of students are now homeschooled. We are at scale on that front.

Again, I predict that as we have direct tech measures of emotional engagement and psychological safety, those will correlate with the outcomes currently associated with school connectedness. Some learning environments will turn out to be much safer places for children. In 5-10 years we will have hard physiological evidence of this based on classroom tech. We will be able to predict in advance higher rates of anxiety, depression, and suicide in some learning environments. I predict that public schools with more than 1,000 students will turn out to be worse for adolescent mental health than chosen learning environments with fewer than 100 students. Do you predict otherwise?

3:55 PM · Nov 26, 2024 · 17 Views

He then blocked me.

Sometimes they first argue that it would be impossible to determine whether microschooling and homeschooling would be better or not due to selection effects. I then counter that proposal by suggesting that we measure psychological safety and emotional engagement directly in different environments via technology (one option is Immersion Neuro, which measures heart rate variability). Once they realize they can't escape the bet by claiming that it is impossible to tell due to selection effects, they block me.

Dr. Joshua Cowen and Dr. Justin Baeder, I'd be happy to bet either of you the following:

*As we are able to gather adequate data on school connectedness in homeschool and microschool environments (chosen schools with fewer than 100 students), those students will experience higher levels of school connectedness than do students at public schools with more than 1,000 students enrolled.*

Why do you think they are unwilling to bet on homeschooling and microschooling? Do they know they would lose? Do they know that children are less safe in large public schools than in homeschooling and microschooling environments?

Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE) <https://fee.org/>





**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2023** "So many of the kids I was encountering when teaching Intro to Philosophy felt a little rudderless to me," said Alexi Burgess, founder of Alcove Learning.

## In Los Angeles, a Tiny School Lets Young People Direct Their Own Education

From the outside, the headquarters of Alcove Learning looks like any small home in the largely Latino Boyle Heights section of Los Angeles. Flanked by similar houses and located among varied storefronts and restaurants, this self-directed learning center for teens and tweens offers young people the freedom to direct their own education. It is part of an expanding ecosystem of alternative educational models throughout the U.S. focused on individualized learning.

Alcove was co-founded in January 2020 by Alexis Burgess, a former philosophy professor who taught courses at Stanford University, University of California, Los Angeles, and Claremont McKenna College before turning his attention to alternative education.

"So many of the kids I was encountering when teaching Intro to Philosophy felt a little rudderless to me," Burgess told me in a recent interview. "They didn't really know why they were at college at all... I think it's a failure of the system. I think one of my Alcove kids recently described it as a 'people mover.'"

Burgess began thinking more critically about his own "people mover" educational experience and that of his college students, while considering what he wanted for his own children's education. He started reading about

creative learning models and discovered North Star, a self-directed learning center in Massachusetts founded in 1996 by former public school teacher Kenneth Danford.

Burgess was hooked. He connected with Danford, and launched Alcove as part of the Liberated Learners microschool network that Danford and his colleague Joel Hammon created in 2013 to scale the North Star model, which prioritizes non-coercive, self-directed education.

At Alcove and other Liberated Learner-affiliated microschools across the country, young people attend optional classes throughout the week, choosing from part-time and full-time enrollment offerings. Most Alcove learners are legally considered homeschoolers, although some students enrolled in California virtual charter schools also attend Alcove as a complement to their learning programs.

Tuition is typically a fraction of the cost of traditional private schools, making it more financially accessible to more families. Alcove uses a "pay-what-you-can" tuition model, with some families paying nothing while others pay the full \$1,600 monthly rate. The average Alcove family pays between \$500 and \$600 a month.



Burgess describes his microschool as an "unschool," referring to an educational philosophy that jettisons adult-imposed curriculum and traditional schooling practices in favor of emergent, bottom-up, out-of-system learning tied to a young person's curiosity and interests.

"There is no set curriculum," Burgess said. "You can pursue your strengths at Alcove. You can pursue your weaknesses or growth areas. You can do whatever it is that you feel like doing. We're going to make it up as we go along every semester."

Class offerings this semester include math, French, political science, magic, psychology, debate, art, and more. It's "education as improv," Burgess said.

While programs similar to Alcove have been around for decades, interest in these models has accelerated in recent years, as families look for the personalization in education that they enjoy in other areas of their lives.

"When we started North Star in 1996, there were a few

pioneering homeschoolers and unschoolers, and there was the Sudbury Valley School," Danford said. "Now, I am meeting people every day who are interested in creating alternatives to conventional schooling, and these people sometimes show up with partners, teams and resources."

With the expansion of school choice policies enabling education funding to go directly to families rather than school systems, self-directed schooling alternatives are poised for further growth. Nine states have adopted universal school choice programs, including Arizona, Florida, Utah, and West Virginia, which have implemented flexible education savings account programs that include schooling alternatives like Alcove.

Danford is focusing his attention on finding and facilitating founders in these choice-friendly states.

"I have become very interested in exploring public funding for educational alternatives, and am deeply engaged with how we can identify and support these founders and their interested families to build sustainable programs," he said.

He is currently broadening the training and development services that Liberated Learners offers to prospective founders. He's also growing his team to provide greater support to these entrepreneurs — many of whom are former public school teachers.

"For the most part, the people I meet are not businesspeople seeking a clever way to make money; in fact, most are willing to work for lower wages than they could earn in public schools," Danford said. "These people have initiative, vision, and a need to find a different way to work with youth."

Even in states like California that don't have robust school choice policies, entrepreneurial parents and teachers are working to offer low-cost, learner-centered education options.

Not far from Alcove Learning, former teacher and school librarian Lizette Valles founded Ellemercito Academy in 2021 as an independent microschool with a focus on experiential learning and trauma-informed education. Just outside of Los Angeles, Danelle Foltz-Smith runs Acton Academy Venice Beach, part of the fast-growing Acton Academy network that now includes over 300 learner-driven microschools.

There is a groundswell of demand for new and different educational options, and entrepreneurial parents and educators everywhere are stepping up to create them. Philanthropic nonprofits like the VELA Education Fund provide grant funding and community support to many of these everyday entrepreneurs to help catalyze and cultivate their efforts.

"I think it's beautiful what's happening," Burgess said, noting that Alcove's little yellow house is now at capacity with 30 learners. He's wondering about the possibility of leasing the house next door to meet continuing demand, and is optimistic about the growth of decentralized educational models both in Los Angeles and across the country.

"We're seeing a large scale reorientation away from a top down, federal organization of schooling in the country to something much more bottom up, that was expedited by COVID and by the failures of No Child Left Behind," Burgess said, referring to federal education policy that has shaped American education for the past two decades.

"We need something better," he added. "The kids need something better urgently. And so I'm not ashamed anymore to be offering an alternative to the public system. I think we need microschools."

Source: The Foundation for Economic Education (FEE)

<https://fee.org/>



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