From long-shot to US Senator

One bright spot for conservatives this year was the election of Ted Cruz (R-TX) to the United States Senate. Cruz, who has served as a Leadership Institute volunteer faculty member, announced his Senate bid in January 2011 and hired a number of talented conservatives to his campaign, including at least eight Leadership Institute-trained graduates.

In the span of just a few short months, Cruz, a conservative lawyer, went from a long-shot in the Republican primary to the newly-elected Senator of the state of Texas.

While Tea Party-backed Cruz won the endorsements of individuals like Senators Jim DeMint and Rand Paul, former Senator Rick Santorum, Congressman Ron Paul, and former Governor Sarah Palin, he had to overcome the name recognition and establishment advantages of his opponent in order to erase an 11 point deficit and win the primary runoff election by an astounding 14 points. Cruz then defeated Democrat opponent Paul Sadler 57% to 40%.

LI faculty Cruz hires LI alumni

Endorsements alone do not win races, and Cruz had to implement an effective campaign at all levels to ensure victory. No one knew this more than Cruz himself, who served as a volunteer faculty instructor at the Leadership Institute (LI) in 2002, when he taught a course at LI’s Campaign Management School.

Cruz chose Leadership Institute graduate Nick Dyer as his Youth Coordinator, whose job was to identify and organize conservative leaders on campuses throughout the state. “I worked with them to facilitate projects that I learned about in LI’s Youth Leadership School. We built a network of volunteers that were integral to the success of the campaign,” said Dyer.

Leadership Institute-trained activists propel him to victory

Ted Cruz’s Senate campaign hired a number of talented conservatives, including eight Leadership Institute-trained graduates. Volunteers that were integral to the success of the campaign,” said Dyer.

Later promoted to Regional Director and Field Director, Nick notes that the strategies he learned at the Leadership Institute were essential to his organizing efforts. “LI’s training has given me an invaluable foundation for political action. Whether it is techniques for Get Out The Vote, messaging, volunteer recruitment, or youth outreach, I use something I have learned from LI every day.”

Boots on the ground meet digital strategy

Much of the campaign’s success was due to the work done by the boots on the ground, according to Dyer. “Our field program was absolutely vital – it was basically the face of the campaign. We recruited, activated, and motivated thousands of volunteers.”

Leadership Institute faculty member Vincent Harris managed Cruz’s digital strategy and online presence. “Social media was critical to Ted’s win,” he said. “The Cruz campaign ran the most integrated statewide digital strategy in the history of American politics.”

Vincent taught as a faculty member at seven LI trainings, including the Comprehensive Internet Activism School, LI’s Blogging Workshop, and the Future Candidate School. “I volunteer at LI because I believe in the conservative movement,” he said. “By giving trainings, I was able to sharpen my skills as a digital strategist and meet fantastic current and future leaders of the movement.”

Because of the generous support of Leadership Institute’s donors, conservatives like Ted Cruz can depend on highly-trained activists to run their campaigns and identify and mobilize the conservative support needed to win elections.
Many Leadership Institute-trained candidates won races in state and local elections across the country. Candidates, campaign managers, activists, and grassroots organizers succeeded by turning their Leadership Institute training into victory.

**Kelly Fajardo, State Rep, NM**

Businesswoman Kelly Fajardo won her election to the New Mexico House of Representatives. Kelly has taken six LI trainings since 2010, including the Campaign Management School and Youth Leadership School, and successfully applied those trainings to her campaign.

"The information, training, and skills I learned through the Leadership Institute gave me the confidence to know that I could run a successful campaign," she said. Kelly notes that going door-to-door "is still the best way to get your name out there and meet potential voters. They want to know who you are and that you care. I know that many times I have received a vote just because I showed up at the door."

This was Kelly’s first attempt for public office and she won the election over a two-term representative. She stated, "I had never run for political office in my life, had absolutely no name identification, ran as a Republican in a Democratic-leaning district, in a Presidential election year, was out-raised and out-spent by my opponent, and endured countless attack ads on radio and in mailers. Everything was against us, but we defied the pundits and the statewide and national trends. The entire campaign was an uphill battle, but we did it!"

**Zachary Holder, Circuit Clerk, IL**

LI graduate and former employee Zachary Holder won a 51%-49% election to the office of Circuit Clerk in his home county of Richland, Illinois. The 28-year-old ran and won as a conservative Republican in a county that had not elected a GOP circuit clerk in 44 years.
LI’s Voting Is Not Enough (VINE) Project
2012 trainings in North Carolina yield success in swing state

This fall, the Leadership Institute (LI) partnered with the Faith and Freedom Coalition to launch a series of Get-Out-The-Vote workshops across the country, and particular focus in North Carolina yielded dramatic results. Called LI’s “Voting Is Not Enough” (VINE) Project, LI held comprehensive training workshops in 14 states to mobilize conservatives for victory on Election Day.

Founded in 2009 by LI alum and conservative leader Ralph Reed, the Faith and Freedom Coalition commits to “influence public policy and enact legislation that strengthens families, promote time-honored values, protect the dignity of life and marriage, lower the tax burden on small businesses and families, and require government to tighten its belt and live within its means.”

LI holds Get-Out-The-Vote trainings

As a testament to the Leadership Institute’s long-standing success and effectiveness in training the next generation of conservative activists and candidates, Reed chose the Leadership Institute to provide the training for his initiative.

LI held campaign-focused workshops that included such topics as voter registration drives, door-to-door and phone banking strategies, and new media tactics for getting out the vote.

Forty-one Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) trainings occurred across 14 states. More than half (21) of the trainings were held in North Carolina. The remaining 20 trainings were held throughout the other 13 states. Of the 1,017 conservative activists and leaders trained across the country, 476 were in North Carolina.

North Carolina sees conservative gains

North Carolina conservatives held six Congressional seats and gained three more, and the citizens elected their first Republican governor since 1993.

North Carolina was also the only “swing” state that flipped from President Obama to Mitt Romney.

LI grad gets out the vote for state rep

LI graduate Ashton Godwin served as campaign manager for Brian Brown during his Republican primary victory to the North Carolina House of Representatives. “The methods I learned in the Leadership Institute’s Get-Out-The-Vote workshop were the most important and proved decisive in our primary victory. We were able to organize a group of volunteers who allowed us to extend our reach and presence throughout our district as well as on Election Day.”

Godwin used the tactics and strategies he learned from the Leadership Institute to propel Brown to victory in the primary election, and ultimately, over a seven-term liberal incumbent.

Over the course of 90 days, the VINE program trained 1,017 conservative activists, with an additional 422 trained online, who then helped conservative candidates at the local, state, and national levels throughout the country.

Well-trained key leaders make a big difference. With the support of generous donors, LI provided the necessary training to ensure conservative candidates were victorious.
UNIVERSITY CENSORS CHRISTIAN CROSS

Leadership Institute confronts LSU on doctored photo

This past October, Louisiana State University (LSU) administrators altered a photo of students to promote their football program. In an official email sent by the university, a group of students in body paint were featured, but with Christian crosses digitally removed by campus censors. After the Leadership Institute's CampusReform.org website published an article exposing the alteration, national news coverage and widespread complaints led the university to admit its role and apologize for its actions.

The four students in the photo are part of the “Painted Posse,” a group of Christian students and football fans who apply purple and gold body paint to themselves to rally students and fans in support of LSU during games.

Their body paint includes a Christian cross painted on each student’s upper-left chest. University censors sent a marketing email with the photo digitally altered to remove the crosses.

University attempts to erase iconic group’s identity

For almost ten years, the Painted Posse has been an iconic staple at LSU football games. As both members of campus ministries and fans of football, the group’s members state their desire to “know Christ and make him known through a passion for LSU football.”

Painted Posse member Cameron Cooke was puzzled by the university’s censorship, telling the Leadership Institute that the group is often featured in photos published by the university, but “the cross had never been edited before.”

Officials back down after LI sparks national outcry

On October 19, the Leadership Institute exposed the university’s doctored photo. In an interview, LSU’s Vice Chancellor for Communications Herb Vincent acknowledged the school altered the image to prevent other students from being offended. “LSU Athletics attempts not to imply any particular religious or political message in any of its correspondence with fans,” said Vincent. “Thus the crosses were edited out of the photos.”

But one week later, after Fox News, The Washington Times, The Daily Mail, Huffington Post, and hundreds of local and online news sources published the Leadership Institute’s story, public outrage caused university administrators to issue a formal apology to the four students in the photo.

LI fights religious intolerance and leftist abuses … and wins

However, the administrators’ apology highlights a greater underlying problem of religious intolerance, as they said they will avoid using similar photos (containing religious symbols) in the future to avoid controversy. In other words, the university will stifle freedom of expression and beliefs. This policy ultimately promotes only a rigid secular humanism over a plurality of religious beliefs on campus.

The Leadership Institute’s (LI) campus programs combat anti-religious and liberal bias on college campuses with a “one-two punch.”

LI’s CampusReform.org website is often the spark that ignites the tinderbox. It brings to light leftist abuses on campus and rallies conservatives to challenge the leftists and win quickly, as in the LSU controversy. In 2012, CampusReform.org has received more than 1.7 million unique visitors, more than 34 times the number in 2011.

The website is also another way the Leadership Institute informs and builds the conservative movement. Karen Landon of Smithville, TX became an LI donor after reading the LSU story and discovering the Leadership Institute for the first time. She, and others like her, know their ongoing support of the Leadership Institute campus programs help students fight against the intolerance and bias of political correctness by university officials.
As Shakespeare wrote, something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

"Many who are fighting socialism in the United States, very frankly, don’t have a clear or systematic understanding of what socialism actually does to a country."

With these words, Morton Blackwell, president of the Leadership Institute, launched a week-long speaking tour and introduced Lars Seier Christensen to an audience at the Heritage Foundation in Washington, D.C. Mr. Christensen spoke to audiences eager to hear vivid, first-hand illustrations of socialist policies and their effects in Denmark.

Dane warns Americans about socialist danger

Christensen, founder and co-CEO of Saxo Bank in Denmark, embarked on a five-day speaking and media tour October 15-19 organized by the Leadership Institute across three states and Washington D.C. The tour included lectures at the University of North Carolina, Liberty University, and the Heritage Foundation, and several interviews, including the Wall Street Journal, Fox Business News, and Glenn Beck TV.

After meeting Christensen in September, Morton was impressed by his presentation on European socialism and quickly organized this important tour because “America stands at a crossroads between capitalism and prosperity or European-style socialism and economic decline. Mr. Christensen’s message could neither be more timely nor more important.”

Denmark: people addicted to handouts

Christensen used his homeland of Denmark to teach what America will become if its current course is not changed. Since Denmark is so far down the road of socialism, it is almost impossible to change the hearts and minds of its citizens who are addicted to government handouts and entitlements.

To pay for these handouts, the government levies a tax burden on each middle-class citizen of 80-85%. This rate is higher than in Cuba or other dictatorships.

With a political spectrum further to the left than the US, only one party in Denmark can be considered opposed to socialism, and its push for lower taxes, limited government, and reduced public sector expenditures now garners only 5% of the vote. The conservative message is marginalized and distrusted because of its association with capitalism. Most Danes believe private sector financial success can only be achieved at the expense of others or by bending or breaking the law.

Socialists create the illusion of tax reform by shifting money from one pocket to the other. Socialism destroys the will to work, and the state sponsors it

Christensen shared with his audiences an example of the outrageous state-sponsored abuse of entitlement benefits.

In Denmark, a dispute arose between two politicians. The socialist argued for more entitlements to help the “poor.” The conservative challenged the socialist to find a poor person in Denmark. The best example the socialist could find was a woman, later called “Carina the Pauper” by the media.

Carina, a 36-year old able-bodied woman who never worked a day in her life, receives a $2,600-a-month government stipend. After expenses of housing, utilities, internet, big-screen cable TV, pet food, cigarettes, and her son’s soccer lessons, she is still left with $1,000 per month. Many Danish citizens were shocked to learn about Carina, who appeared ungrateful even after receiving more income from tax-derived handouts than the working class earns.

It is almost impossible to change the hearts and minds of citizens who are addicted to government handouts and entitlements.

Snoopers for the nanny state

To maintain this welfare state, the government has set up telephone hotlines for citizens to report neighbors who may be cheating the social welfare programs or not paying their taxes properly. The Danish tax authorities can walk into a person’s home on suspicion, whereas permission to search for a suspected terrorist is much more difficult.

Lars Christensen’s lectures opened the eyes of many thousands of students and citizens. Americans would do well to heed Christensen as a prophet who has seen the future of socialism and what a country is dragged down when the incentives to work and produce are destroyed.

By Mitchell Nezka
DONALD RUMSFELD VISITS LI
Speaks to donors on national security and the national debt

In September, former United States Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld traveled to the Leadership Institute’s Arlington, VA headquarters to speak at LI’s monthly Wednesday Wake-Up Club Breakfast. A long-time LI donor, Secretary Rumsfeld also met with other LI donors and granted an exclusive interview to the Leadership Institute, posted on its CampusReform.org website.

“Let me just thank the Leadership Institute for all you folks do, for those of you who support it, and those who participate with it. It’s a terrific organization and what it’s doing is enormously important. It’s something that deserves recognition.”

Secretary Rumsfeld, who served as Secretary of Defense to two presidents – Gerald Ford and George W. Bush – opened his remarks with praise for LI. “Let me just thank the Leadership Institute for all you folks do, for those of you who support it, and those who participate with it,” he said. “It’s a terrific organization and what it’s doing is enormously important. It’s something that deserves recognition.”

The Secretary then went on to discuss current affairs and his thoughts on national security measures. “I worry about the fact that we live in a dangerous and difficult world and there are a number of closed societies. It’s very difficult to have a good grip on what’s taking place in the world. It’s even more worrisome that weapons have become increasingly lethal and the proliferation of highly lethal weapons has increased.” He continued, “What worries me most is American weakness.”

$16 trillion in debt and counting

Secretary Rumsfeld also focused part of his speech on America’s increasing national debt and how it affects American foreign policy. “You cannot accumulate and incur $16 trillion of debt and not place an almost impossible burden on the next generation. We have demonstrated to the world that we as a nation are not behaving in a responsible way from the management of our economy. And that signal goes out across the globe and it’s registered in people’s heads and it gives them the freedom to know they can do things that they otherwise wouldn’t be able to do.”

Secretary Rumsfeld noted the urgent need for conservatives to become active and fight for their principles. “If there’s ever been a time in my 80 years where good people need to get out of their chairs and push that pendulum back, this is it. And it is particularly important for the coming generations that we do not leave them a country where youngsters coming along will have to look forward to a future that was not as bright and not as optimistic as it has been for each of us in this room.”

To attend future Wednesday Wake-Up Club Breakfasts, call 703-247-2000 or visit www.leadershipinstitute.org/breakfast for schedule and speakers.
“Never, never, never give up.” These words, spoken by Sir Winston Churchill shortly after Germany bombarded the United Kingdom during the Blitz of World War II, have great meaning to Leadership Institute (LI) supporters William and Ardath Underwood. They believe LI-trained activists need to take that advice to heart when fighting for their conservative beliefs.

Underwoods name Leadership Institute as trust beneficiary

A long-time resident of Georgia, Mr. Underwood attended Georgia Tech while his wife, Ardath, attended the University of Georgia. “But we still get along,” he says with a laugh. Now retired from the reinsurance business, Mr. Underwood has secured part of his retirement savings in a Charitable Remainder Unitrust Account (also known as a CRUT), and has named the Leadership Institute as one of the account’s beneficiaries. “I was raised in a conservative environment for most of my life, and I strongly believe in what the Leadership Institute does. It’s effective,” he says.

The CRUT allows them to draw a percentage of the trust tax-free to live on while setting aside a remainder to be distributed to previously designated organizations. “One great benefit of the trust is that we can withdraw 7%, tax-free, of the value of the trust at the end of each year.”

“We are able to support the organizations important to us and preserve our assets to pass along to our children with minimal tax consequences,” Mr. Underwood said. He also stated his belief that the death tax is “totally unfair” and he desires to avoid it as much as possible. “Anything we can do to mitigate the confiscatory nature of that tax is definitely something worth doing.”

LI trains the next generation of activists

Mrs. Underwood said deciding to name the Leadership Institute as a beneficiary was an easy decision. She notes that LI’s training and education workshops for conservative youth are extremely important to the conservative cause. “We all start out from birth knowing nothing, and we need help finding out what life is all about and what we’re supposed to do.”

William praises the Leadership Institute’s unique training programs and sees them give youth “a solid foundation in how to be more effective in the public policy process.” Faithful donors since 1988, Mr. and Mrs. Underwood have dealt with many conservative organizations but, “the Leadership Institute is the gold standard. It gets results. It’s cost-effective.”

LI builds the conservative movement by sharing its most valuable resource

“We especially like knowing that our support of the Institute helps to support every other conservative organization,” referring to the Leadership Institute’s sharing of its most valuable asset with other conservative groups at no cost whatsoever. LI shares its list of trained conservative students and unique national network of conservative student groups. “I think it’s laudable. Many organizations are closed-mouth, but LI shares its work and builds the greater conservative movement.”

The Leadership Institute appreciates and thanks Mr. and Mrs. Underwood and conservatives like them for their ongoing support for the Leadership Institute. For information on providing a legacy gift of any amount to the Leadership Institute, whether through bequests, stocks, trusts, and more, contact LI at 703-247-2000 and ask for Christopher Vari.

By Tarah Goulding

With generosity from LI supporters receiving this newsletter, the Leadership Institute has trained over 115,000 conservative activists, and continues to help them communicate messages like Mr. Underwood’s through its 41 different types of schools and workshops.
From the Desk of
Morton Blackwell

Dear Friend of the Institute,

The election season is over and 2012 is coming to a close, but your Leadership Institute is already laying the groundwork for conservative victories in 2013 and beyond.

While the national media continue to portray the 2012 elections as a “status quo” event, conservatives have good reason to cheer. Ted Cruz (featured on page 1), a Tea Party and grassroots-supported conservative from Texas, won election to the United States Senate. His campaign was led by at least eight LI graduates – many of whom worked at senior levels within the campaign. LI-trained conservatives also won victories in state and local races around the country (featured on pages 2-3).

Further proving that an effective get-out-the-vote operation makes all the difference between winning and losing a close election, LI conducted 21 trainings in the critical swing state of North Carolina. The Voting Is Not Enough campaign (featured on page 3) provided conservative activists with the practical knowledge they needed to win on election day.

Your Leadership Institute continues to promote conservative principles not only with its top-notch trainings and workshops, but also through experienced and knowledgeable speakers. LI organized a lecture series featuring Danish banker Lars Christensen, who spoke on the effects of European-style socialism (featured on page 5). Former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld spoke at the Leadership Institute in September and commented on matters of national security and the dangers of an ever-increasing national debt (featured on page 6).

LI’s CampusReform.org uncovered anti-Christian bias on the LSU campus this fall (featured on page 4), and continues to expose leftist abuses on college campuses around the country.

Of course, none of this important work would be possible without the support of donors like you. Your continued generosity ensures the next generation of conservative leaders are equipped and prepared to handle the challenges and opportunities they will face in 2013 and beyond.

Remember, it’s a long ballgame, and you and I are in it to win.

Cordially,

Morton C. Blackwell, President