



## **Chapter Presidents Zoom Call** September 8, 2021 | 2 pm EST

**Chapters Represented** – Broward County, Chattanooga, Dallas, Greater Cincinnati, Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Diego, Tri-State Southeastern, and Tucson

**Special Guest** - Sarah Rasmussen, Director of Communications

### **Welcome**

Carolyn thanked everyone who was able to join in on the call. We know there were some conflicts. We appreciate you taking the time.

Carolyn introduced Sarah Rasmussen, Director of Communications. Sarah is just finishing up her first week. Sarah addressed the group. She is excited to work with all the chapters. Carolyn gave a fun fact about Sarah – her aunt was a Leavey Award Recipient.

Carolyn noted that later this fall she wants to have a meeting with chapters and Sarah beyond the regular Presidents Zoom to talk about communications. Talk about your needs, social media, website, press release, and how to get us all more visible. Look for an invitation later this fall.

There was a roll call with participants introducing themselves.

### **Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge Updates from Headquarters – COVID Policy**

Carolyn gave the update on the Foundation's COVID policy and protocol. Due to the introduction of the delta variant and an increase in hospitalizations across the country, the national board and staff created an updated COVID policy that will go into effect immediately. This is the policy moving forward until further notice. All participants participating in our overnight programs - all adults and students 12 and over – must be fully vaccinated and are required to provide proof of vaccination to attend the program through our registration process.

Johnny Castro from Broward County asked about guidelines for school districts in Pennsylvania regarding the vaccine. Carolyn replied all districts have their own policy there is not one policy for all. But no matter the school policy this is a Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge policy that was put in place to keep our participants, staff and speakers safe.

Johnny followed up with concerns for younger students attending in October. Carolyn informed Johnny that was handled with Abiud Montes.

The entire policy will be shared and posted on our website.

Carolyn will be mailing brochures and COVID guidelines.

Question asked if this is for the foreseeable future? The answer is yes, but we will update when we can. Our main goal is to continue to have our programs on campus and in person.

**Freedoms Foundation Gala and Auction** – Both the Gala and Board Meeting scheduled for September 21<sup>st</sup> are now going virtual. The virtual gala will take place on the 21<sup>st</sup> at 8pm ET. We are still working out details, but most likely it will be on Zoom. We will send out a link for everyone to join us.

The auction will still be taking place and bids will run up to the conclusion of the virtual gala. We have some amazing items this year including...

- ★ Admission and a private tour for 4 people to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, CA. Tour includes Reagan's Private Quarters which is not open to the public. An afternoon wine tasting break on site is also included.
- ★ A private tour of the George W. Bush Presidential Library for a family of 4 including lunch
- ★ A wine tasting at Casino Mine Ranch which is an estate vineyard located in the Sierra Foothills of Amador County. The winery - a century old ranch that was once mined for gold
- ★ Round of Golf at Country Club of Darien: Winning bid will have 3 guests hosted for lunch, a round of golf, and dinner at one of Connecticut's premier private clubs.
- ★ Fine Art paintings of local Valley Forge
- ★ Meet Thomas Jefferson – Steve Edenbo

We will be promoting the gala out to all chapter members who are in Constant Contact with instructions on how to view auction items and register to bid. Please advise your members that if they wish to bid on an item and need assistance with registration and technology please contact me. We will be able to help with the bidding process.

Question from Phil John in Dallas....

Is the gala going to be taped? The answer is yes and will be available to all.

Carolyn asked Phil John of Dallas to talk about the item the Dallas Chapter donated to the auction a book from President George W. Bush. It's a book of portraits of immigrants. President Bush will sign the book with a personalized message.

**Staffing Updates** – Gene Halus has moved on to return to the classroom. We are excited for him. He is at a high school with students who can attend our programs. He will help coordinate students and teachers to attend. In regards to his role in education, our new hire Kate McAndrew and senior staff member Maureen Troutman will be running the education office. Jason Raia will also support them. Jason was previously in the education department. David Harmer will step in to help cover Gene's role with campus and facilities including overseeing the ongoing sewer project.

Another new hire for the team is Jack Wyman. Jack was brought on as a Major Gifts Officer. He is based in Dallas, Texas. He will help with our fundraising and development efforts.

A lot of new and fresh faces on our team and we are very excited.

Johnny Castro of Broward County asked about when the contact page on the website will be updated. Carolyn stated we are always trying to update the website promptly. Now with Sarah on board we should be better in those efforts

### **Education Updates**

**Summer Review** – We had a really good summer. It was nice to have everyone back. We had 6 teacher programs with a total of 244 Teachers.

We ran 3 students programs: Sea Cadets with 49 participants, SLiPP (Service Learning in Public Policy) with 50 participants including 2 from San Diego and National Sojourners with a traditional Spirit of America program at 45 participants.

As part of our teacher programs we run a Joshua Chamberlain League. We invite all participants to join the Joshua Chamberlain League(JCL). Membership into the league is a way for teachers to pay it forward as all membership donations are applied to teacher scholarships for the following summer. We had 190 teachers join the JCL, representing 78% of all participants. Together the teachers raised \$20,341 for future scholarships. Thank you teachers!

While the teacher were here, Larry Brasher, former president of the Sacramento Chapter and current national board member was on campus to observe the programs. He was impressed with the JCL program and is working to incorporate the JCL program on the chapter level.

**2021 Fall Spirit of America Dates** – We are still moving forward with our fall programs. The September 30-October 3 program is looking good, but the AMVETS program scheduled for November 4-7 has been cancelled. AMVETS did not feel comfortable that they would be able to get the students for this year, but plan to return in 2022. *Please note since our Zoom meeting the fall calendar has been updated. There will be one Spirit of America program taking place on November 4-7, 2021. This program is open to all chapters and partners. All students registered to attend the September 30-October 3 and October 21-24 program have been switched to the November date.*

**2022 Spirit of America Dates** – The reservations are coming in strong for the spring. Our local Rotary is back for their RYLA program and our partner Military Order of the World

The tri-fold brochures and memo for the spring dates are heading to you now. The members of your board handling student programs will also be getting brochures. If you need more than you were mailed, please let us know and we will send more.

In the packets we will confirm your reservations. If you haven't made your reservations you can do so at any time.

Phil John of Dallas asked about the COVID policy being sent out and Carolyn stated she will email that policy to everyone right after the meeting.

### **Awards Update**

The National Awards are currently being reviewed. Chapter presidents and awards vice presidents will be notified of 2021 recipients the week of October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Results will be

emailed to you and letters to your recipients will be mailed shortly after you have been notified. Updated lists including 2020 and 2021 recipient will be sent.

We have the 2022 Youth Essay topic. It is based on the sixth responsibility in the **Bill of Responsibilities**: *To share with others our appreciation of the benefits and obligations of freedom.* The 2022 topic is **“Discuss one freedom that you enjoy as an American and the responsibilities that come with that freedom.”**

Johnny Castro of Broward County asked about the deadline and being extended. Carolyn stated it was extended from June 1<sup>st</sup>. September 1<sup>st</sup> is the latest we are able to extend due to chapters holding ceremonies in November.

### **Other News and Notes**

Thank you to all the chapters working on updating your bylaws and standing rules. We have several revised documents on file. Just a reminder that the revised documents are due to headquarters by September 30.

We have a new one page flyer featuring the 5 easy steps to start a new chapter. We hope it will attract new potential organizers. If you know anyone, we will be happy to send a flyer. The flyer went to all teacher alumni from this summer.

The next edition of the Chapter E-Newsletter is being prepared for October. If you have any events you would like to report on, please send a small write up and pictures. We love to share with others the great work going on in our chapters.

### **Chapter Input – Open Floor**

Question from Emily Matthews in Sacramento on the deadline for submissions for the e-newsletter. The deadline for submissions is October 8<sup>th</sup>.

Question from Becky Reid in San Diego on approval of the submitted by-laws. Carolyn stated they will be reviewed after the deadline of September 30<sup>th</sup>. But she has reviewed all that came in and did not see any concerns.

Carolyn reminded everyone to reach out with any concerns especially with the new COVID policy. She concluded with expressing her thanks to all.

### **Meeting Link -**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/SpeRAs2ZH2vR8BE7CNeoQrpe2Dm7gUxiFAL3W9sCvzX-soYxDKdD-1pIM-ZTdBty.9hPWiqDroqR4TqO9>

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**The next Zoom meeting will be on Wednesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at 2PM EST**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84461943564?pwd=endyNG1meHMvRndvcU1CMFFmSVFLZz09>

Meeting ID: 844 6194 3564

Passcode: FFVF1601