



The Freedom Institute®

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2025-26

Soaring Higher, Together

The Freedom Institute

2706



★ Thank you, Freedom Family!

Message from the CEO:



Dear Freedom Friends,

I write this year's Annual Giving Report with a heart full of gratitude, amazement, and honestly, a little bit of awe.

In just three short years, Freedom has grown from a bold idea into a thriving community of students, families, educators, donors, partners, and friends who believe high school can and should be different. More personal. More practical. More patriotic. More connected to real life. More focused on each student's future.

Our vision is **Economic Freedom through Learning**, and every day we get to watch that vision come alive in our student Eagles. This year, your support showed up in three powerful ways.

You gave treasure, supporting scholarships, programs, campus growth, AI innovation, field trips, student experiences, and the expansion of a model families are clearly asking for.

You gave talent, coming into classrooms, opening your offices, sharing your careers, hosting field trips, mentoring students, introducing opportunities, and helping our students see what their futures could look like.

You gave time. Our PTO, parents, volunteers, board members, staff, partners, and friends poured themselves into Freedom in ways no report could ever fully capture.

Because of you, Freedom served 142 students this year. Because of you, 34 graduates are stepping into college, career, entrepreneurship, trade, military-aligned, and workforce pathways with direction and confidence. Because of you, Freedom AI is growing, students are earning future-ready skills, and our second campus in Ave Maria is preparing to open this August.

We are not just adding seats. **We are building pathways**. We are not just growing a program. **We are proving a model**. We are not here to change the old system. **We are building something better for students and families who are ready to soar**.

Thank you for believing in Freedom, investing in our students, and helping us build a place where young people are known, challenged, loved, guided, and prepared for lives of purpose, work, citizenship, and economic freedom.

And the best part, we are still just getting started.

With sincere gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Marker".

Chris Marker, CEO, Chief Learning Officer, Co-Founder

The Freedom Institute

Founded



2023

Vision



Economic freedom through learning.

Mission



The Freedom Institute will develop our students' critical thinking skills, ensuring their financial freedom and patriotic American citizenship upon graduation.

Board



Tom Grady – Co-Founder, Chairman
Ed Morton – Co-Founder, Trustee

Tad Dekko – Co-Founder, Trustee
William Barker - Trustee

The Freedom Institute offers a **100% personalized high school education** pathway tailored to each student's strengths and aspirations. We focus on **college and career readiness, civic engagement, leadership, family empowerment, and financial freedom**. Our model fosters **innovation, advances parent choice, leads in AI integration, and ensures all students - regardless of background - gain access to high-quality education.**

Program Highlights

THE **C⁵**
CURRICULUM

Core, Character, Career
Consumerism, Civics



AI High School
& AI Certifications



100% Personalized
Education Paths



Financial Literacy
Programs

- ✓ College Dual Enrollment and CLEP Pathways
- ✓ Career & College Success Planning
- ✓ Internships, Mentorships, and Paid Work
- ✓ American Dream Conversations at Freedom
- ✓ Field Trips, Monthly Career Speakers, and Real-World Experiences

Honored for Innovation



The Yass Prize
2024 Semifinalist



Edison Awards
2026 Nominee



SWFL Inc 2026
Innovation Award Winner



Global Recognition Awards
2026 Winner



Everglades Champion School
2026

2025-26 By The Numbers

Freedom's third year was a year of proof.
The model is working, families are responding, and students are soaring.



\$1 Million Matching Grant
from the Dekko Foundation



142 Students



5 Success Coaches



34 graduates



Students eligible for
FL State Scholarship
Funding



Post-Graduation Placement into
College, Career, Entrepreneurship,
Trade, Military-Aligned, or
Workforce Pathways



Upperclassmen spend weekly
in employment, internships,
varsity sports, volunteering, or
other professional activities



Average
Class Size



Success Coach-
to-Student Ratio



Student
Return Rate



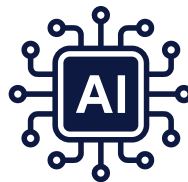
Student & Family
Satisfaction



6 career speakers



4 career field trips



19 Freedom AI High
pilot students



350 AI certificates
completed by
students



34 college dual
enrollment students



50 students
4 graduates
Freedom Naples



110 students
18 graduates
Freedom Naples



142 students
34 graduates
Freedom Naples
Freedom AI



200+ students
40+ graduates
Freedom Naples
Freedom Ave Maria
Freedom AI & Anywhere



The Impact of **GIVING**

The Freedom Institute celebrates the generosity of every donor, volunteer, partner, parent, and friend who supported our students this year with treasure, talent, or time.

2025-26

Monetary gifts:

\$1,020,030

In-kind donations (value):

\$563,699

Total Contributions: \$1,583,699

Your giving is not simply keeping a program running.

It is helping build a new model for high school, one that prepares students for real life, real careers, responsible citizenship, and economic freedom.

Because of donor support, Freedom was able to:

- Support **scholarship access** and **gap funding** for families
- Invest in student-centered **spaces**, including **college and career readiness resources**
- Expand **AI-integrated learning** and future-ready credentials
- Offer real-world **field trips, career speakers**, and **student leadership opportunities**
- Prepare for **Freedom Ave Maria**, our second campus opening August 2026
- Strengthen **Freedom Naples** while demand continues to grow
- Build **partnerships** that connect students directly to **college, career, trades, entrepreneurship, service**, and **workforce opportunities**

Three Pillars of Giving

TREASURES



Gifts, grants, matching gifts, scholarships, in-kind donations, program underwriting, and campus investments.



TALENT

Speakers, mentors, career hosts, internship partners, coaches, business leaders, educators, and community experts.



TIME

PTO leadership, parent volunteers, event support, campus help, student support, and community advocacy.

The Freedom Institute, Inc. (EIN: 65-0232400), is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Student Impact:

There is no single Freedom student story. That is exactly the point.

At Freedom, students do not fit into our system. We build the system around each student. Their strengths, goals, work ethic, career interests, family priorities, college plans, athletic commitments, service opportunities, and dreams all matter.

Freedom Fair: Student Service with Real Impact

Freedom's **Chick-fil-A Leader Academy** students brought leadership to life through the Freedom Fair, a student-led event that **raised \$4,300 and hundreds of toy donations for Golisano Children's Hospital.**

Led by sophomores Grayce Wilder and Lauren Sharp, students planned and hosted a campus carnival with games, music, food, community partners, and toy donations for young hospital patients.

This was Freedom in action: character, kindness, teamwork, entrepreneurship, service, and real-world problem-solving. When students are trusted to lead, they do more than complete assignments. They create impact.



From Launch to Leaf

Freedom students Alexander and Conner Brown placed first at the **Collier County Regional Science Engineering Fair** for their project, "From Launch to Leaf: Do G-Forces Affect Plant Growth?"

Their success reflected what Freedom works to build in every student: curiosity, critical thinking, hard work, and confidence. With strong mentorship and hands-on learning, students are encouraged to pursue questions that matter, test ideas, and grow through real achievement.

At Freedom, science is not just content. It is discovery, discipline, and preparation for future opportunity.



When Education Becomes

PERSONAL

Freedom Students Honored at the State Board of Education Meeting

Freedom was honored to host the Florida State Board of Education meeting, where students Erik Aspegren and Eire Layton were recognized as exemplar students.

Their stories show **two different Freedom pathways, both built around student strengths**. Erik is accelerating through dual enrollment, working in a paid internship with Rick Hendrick Chevrolet, and exploring technical and trade pathways. Eire balanced elite athletics, a 4.0 GPA, college coursework, and her commitment to the University of Colorado Boulder.

This is **Freedom's model at work**: personalized education, parent choice, Success Coach guidance, real-world experience, and students prepared for life beyond high school.



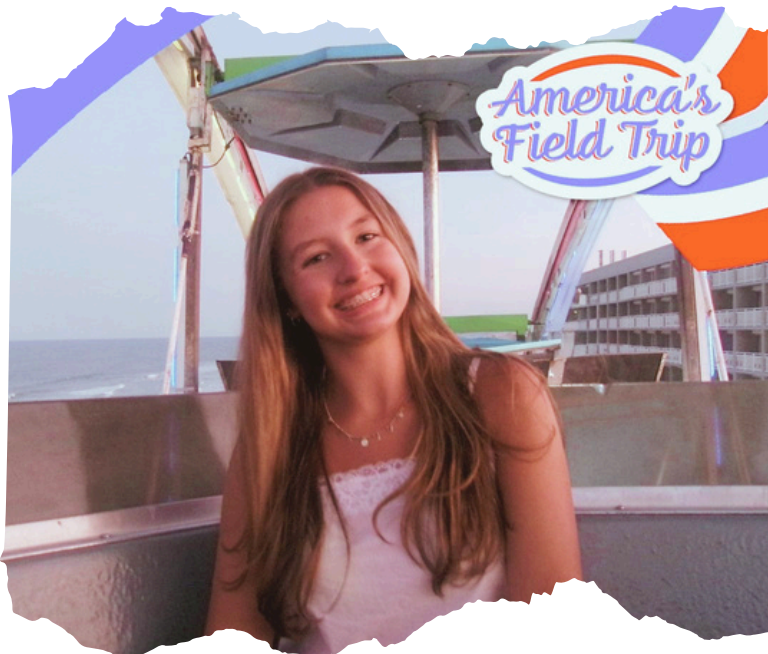
Freedom Eagle Honored by America250

Freedom student Lauren Sharp was **named one of only 250 student awardees** nationwide in America250's 2026 America's Field Trip contest.

Students answered, **"What does America mean to you?"** through original writing or artwork. Lauren's poetry earned her a trip to New York City in honor of America's 250th anniversary.

This recognition reflects Freedom's focus on **thoughtful citizenship, patriotism, creativity, courage, and student voice**. It reminds us that civics is not just something students study. It is something they live, express, and carry forward.

We are so proud of Lauren for representing Freedom, Florida, and the next generation of American citizens.



With Gratitude to Our 2025-26 Donors

*We are deeply grateful for every supporter who invested in Freedom this year.
Your partnership gives our students access to unmatched personalized educational opportunities that help launch them into successful futures with confidence, skills, purpose, and direction.*



Freedom Founders - \$250,000+ Dekko Foundation



Liberty Leaders - \$25,000–\$49,999

Alexandra & Parker Conrad
Erica Dekko
Kuester Family

Patriots' Alliance - \$10,000–\$24,999

Anonymous
Rick Hendrick Chevrolet
Wasmer Family*

Freedom Builders - \$5,000–\$9,999

Bozarth Family*
Matt Cannarsa
Collier Community Foundation
Deborah Gregory

Soaring Eagles - \$1,000–\$4,999

Lauren Maxwell & Dan Kowal
Kinahan Family* / WorldCat of Naples
Devin Perfumo / MFT Media
State Insurance USA / State Insurance Cares
Viar Family*

Freedom Friends - \$500–\$999

Richard Ballew*
Betulia Family*
Mary Brandt*
Chick-fil-A Leader Academy
Lisa Resch* / Carolina Catering Co.
Seligman Family*
Silverio & Hall, PA / Silverio Family*

Other Supporters - Up to \$499

Kevin Aspegren*	Tiffany Hanright*
Ann Marie Bray*	Jeanette Hartley*
Katherine Brooks*	Theresa Lorenc*
Heather Brown*	Nancy Christopher*
Marcia Buchanan*	Bridget Nunez*
Sean & Nicole Burke*	Teri Pence*
Virginia Caron*	Doreen Shanahan*
Trisha Corrao*	Jay Sharp*
Dawn Csogi*	Viktoria Smith*
Iryna Danyleyko	Cammeron Solomon*
Everglades Foundation	Nicole Williams*
Adriana Falcon*	Elaine-Maria Zafar*
Wendy Fielder*	
Debora Gilmore*	

* Denotes Freedom Family / Alumni Family

The Freedom Institute, Inc. (EIN: 65-0232400), is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Thank You to Our Partners

Foundational & Growth Partners



Special thank you to the Dekko Foundation for their foundational and growth support of The Freedom Institute, Freedom AI, Freedom Ave Maria and all Freedom programs!



Thank you to all donors helping Freedom unlock our \$1 million matching grant opportunity. **Every dollar given toward this match doubles the impact** for students, families, Freedom Naples, Freedom Ave Maria, scholarships, AI innovation, and future expansion.



Freedom was a 2024 Yass Prize Semifinalist for STOP Education: Sustainable. Transformational. Outstanding. Permissionless. We are grateful for the \$200,000 award and ongoing support of the Center for Education Reform and the Yass Prize Alumni Network.

Thank You,

to the People Who Opened the World to Our Students

Freedom's model works because students are not learning in isolation. They are learning in relationship with families, Success Coaches, business leaders, civic leaders, colleges, nonprofits, employers, mentors, volunteers, and community partners who help them see what is possible. Every speaker, field trip, internship, partnership, and in-kind gift matters. These experiences help students connect education to life.

American Dream Conversations at Freedom Guests



Congressman Byron Donalds
Parker Conrad | Rippling CEO & Founder

Career Speakers



Dr. Chris Lee
Collier County Commissioner Dan Kowal
Naples City Police Department
U.S. Army Naples

Educational Partners

Florida SouthWestern State College
Florida Gulf Coast University
Keiser University
Revs Institute
Rick Hendrick Chevrolet Naples
RexAir
Naples Community Hospital (NCH)
David Lawrence Centers
Chick-fil-A Leader Academy
Young America's Foundation
Everglades Foundation
NextGen Speaker Series
Step Up For Students
Yass Prize / Center for Education Reform
Collier County Public Schools
Big Brothers Big Sisters America

Thank you, Freedom PTO!



*...for so generously giving your time,
creativity, dedication, talents and love to
our students, parents and staff!*

2025-26 PTO Officers

Debora Gilmore, President
Kathleen Dougherty, Vice President
Sue Kramer, Secretary
Kelly Minucci, Communications
Eva Aspegren, Treasurer



Community Partners

Barron Collier Companies
Ave Maria Development
Ave Maria Master Association
Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce
Immokalee Eastern Chamber of Commerce
SWFL Inc.
Rotary Club of Naples
Rotary Club of Ave Maria
Naples City Police Department
Collier County Sheriff's Office
Tulia Italian Steak / Bar Tulia
Chick-fil-A Leader Academy
Golisano Children's Hospital
Everglades Foundation
Collier Community Foundation
Collaboratory
Rita's Italian Ice
Taylor Rentals
DJ Sage
Pure Florida
Airport Donuts
Seed to Table
Andrea B Massage
WorldCat of Naples
State Insurance USA / State Insurance Cares
Hotel Escalante

Media Partners

Ave Maria Sun
Biz Mindz Podcast
Driven Success Podcast
eBella Magazine
Innovation in Action Newsletter by CER
Naples2Night
Southwest Florida Family Magazine



Soaring Into 26-27

Freedom Naples | Freedom Ave Maria | Freedom Anywhere

If 2025-26 was a year of proof, **2026-27 will be a year of expansion.**

This August, we **open Freedom Ave Maria**, our second campus, in one of Southwest Florida's fastest-growing communities. We are getting the building ready, the team ready, and most importantly, the students ready. Even empty, the campus already feels like Freedom. Soon it will be filled with students, questions, laughter, hard work, learning, and red, white, and blue.

Freedom Naples will keep strengthening the model that started this journey. **Freedom AI** and **Freedom Anywhere** will help us reach more students while keeping the human Success Coach relationship at the center.

We are also working to meet our **\$1 million matching grant** challenge by December 31, 2026. **Every dollar can be doubled** to help launch Ave Maria, strengthen Naples, grow scholarships, expand AI programs, and prepare for the next community that needs Freedom.

Our students are ready. Families are asking. The community is noticing. Thank you for helping us build what comes next.

2026-27 Investment Priorities:

- Launch and stabilize Freedom Ave Maria
- Strengthen and grow Freedom Naples
- Expand scholarship and gap funding for families
- Grow Freedom Anywhere
- Support AI certificates, AI career pathways, and student credentials
- Build more workforce, internship, mentorship, and college partnerships
- Develop future expansion opportunities

VALUES

HARD WORK

RESPECT

PATRIOTISM

KINDNESS

Double Your Impact - Invest in Freedom

Join the Freedom Institute \$1Million Match Challenge 
...where every dollar given before December 31, 2026 **gets doubled**



Contact Us to Learn More

Eva Aspegren, Director of Growth - eva.aspegren@freedominstitute.net

2026-2027



The **Freedom** Institute®

**A HIGH MORE THAN
SCHOOL**®

Freedom Institute

2706 Horseshoe Dr. S
Naples, FL 34104

239-427-1776

freedominstitute.net

info@freedominstitute.net

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