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Protect freedom of assembly.
freespeech.center



FREE SPEECH
CENTER
at Middle Tennessee State University

MIDDLE
TENNESSEE
STATE UNIVERSITY

Kane Brown

“STILL GOT SOME WORK, BUT WE STILL GOT A DREAM...”

Let's use our freedoms of speech, press and assembly
to build understanding and mutual respect. The dream
is within our reach. Learn more at www.1forall.today

1
for
all



FREE SPEECH
CENTER
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MIDDLE
TENNESSEE
STATE UNIVERSITY

Photo: Matthew Berinato



FREE SPEECH CENTER

at Middle Tennessee
State University

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

USE YOUR VOICE.

Protect freedom of speech.
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RELIABLE INFORMATION WHEN WE NEED IT MOST.

Protect freedom of the press.
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**FREE SPEECH
CENTER** at Middle Tennessee
State University

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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INTRODUCTION

BY KEN PAULSON

A good high school or university strives to educate students for the future, preparing them for life as professionals, but also as citizens. It's the latter that proves to be the true challenge.

Too many students move into adulthood with only a limited sense of how our country works and a lack of appreciation for the rich experience that living in a democracy provides. That's troubling because the next generation is in the best position to help us break the pattern of partisanship and rancor that now plagues our nation.

The Free Speech Center is a nonpartisan public-policy center at Middle Tennessee State University that works to build understanding of the First Amendment and Bill of Rights through education, information and engagement.

We emphasize:

- The need to stay truly informed by selecting reliable and trustworthy news sources.
- The importance of engaging in society, encouraging constructive change through the exercise of core freedoms.
- Recognizing that free speech is a universal value in our society, and that it is most beneficial when coupled with a willingness to listen in a civil and respectful exchange of ideas.

To that end, the Free Speech Center:

- Provides daily news and insights into free expression, <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/> and offers a comprehensive repository of First Amendment history and law in its First Amendment Encyclopedia. <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/encyclopedia>
- Publishes books, teacher's guides <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/page/in-the-classroom> and white papers on the Bill of Rights and free expression through its First Amendment Press.
- Underwrites and supports programs and events <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/page/2018-19projects> on dozens of U.S. campuses each year, all encouraging the free and respectful exchange of ideas.
- Manages extensive social media outreach that incorporates celebrities, pop culture, film and music, all with an eye toward conveying core constitutional principles in an informal, accessible and intriguing way.

Thank you for your support.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

2020 marked the first full year of operation of the Free Speech Center at Middle Tennessee State University, and although the pandemic took a toll, the Center was able to maintain a vibrant schedule of programs and educational outreach, including:

The 1 for All campaign, <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/page/about-1-for-all> a nationwide effort to build awareness of the First Amendment, received pledges of support from press associations and press clubs in all 50 states. <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/page/supporters>

These campaigns offer a range of ads, including:

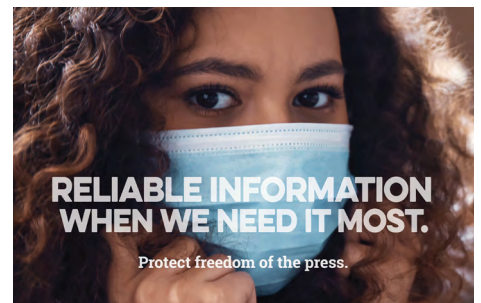


- Print and web ads featuring celebrities talking about their favorite First Amendment freedom. <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/page/voices> For example, country star Brad Paisley talks about freedom of the press. Doonesbury cartoonist Garry Trudeau speaks up for petition, and music legend Loretta Lynn takes a stand for freedom of speech.

- **COVID-themed ads** remind readers to reject fraudulent messages and posts on social media in favor of “reliable information when we need it most.”

- **Other ongoing ads** help Americans understand all five freedoms of the

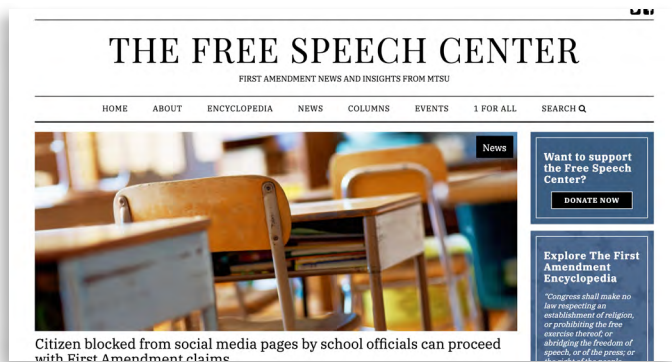
First Amendment by focusing on one freedom at a time, succinctly explaining its role in a free society.



- The Free Speech Center also distributed **videos** promoting the five freedoms and partnered with TV news stations for spots showing newsroom members reciting the 45 words of the First Amendment. <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/page/voices>

These ads are published free of charge by The Associated Press, USA Today and news organizations across the country. All 50 state press associations have endorsed the campaign, and overall the 1 for All initiative generates about 2 million impressions a month.

News and insights



The Free Speech Center's website has had a dramatically growing audience built around our daily news coverage, columns and First Amendment Encyclopedia (managed in partnership with the John Seigenthaler Chair for Excellence in First Amendment Studies). In addition to our staff-written material, the site now includes daily reports from The Associated Press. In 2020, the site drew more than 2.4 million users with more than 3.9 million page views.

Campus outreach

The Knight Foundation funded the Free Speech Center's unique outreach campaign to 25 college campuses. The campaign partners with public-relations professors to enlist students to launch on-campus campaigns to build awareness about the First Amendment. These typically take place during class time and are part of students' grades. We completed that project in 2020. The complete roster includes colleges from coast to coast. <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/page/2018-19projects>

The Great Bill of Rights Quiz

On Dec. 15, 2021, the 229th anniversary of the Bill of Rights, the Free Speech Center launched and distributed an interactive Bill of Rights quiz. <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/page/2018-19projects>

Public participation was very encouraging, and the Free Speech Center will launch a number of new quizzes in 2021. It's a great way to reach audiences that would otherwise not visit our website.

Free Speech Center YouTube Channel

Free Speech Center launched its YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-2jlsqkIEC0uhf3ygPw3xag> which includes "On Freedom" videos from Center events and interviews. It also features "quick take" videos designed to answer frequently asked questions like "Do students have free-speech rights?" or "Why can Facebook take down my posts?" These are tailor-made for search engines, providing quick and easily digested answers to commonly asked questions.

Programming highlights

Talk is Cheap, but Also Priceless: Free Speech Center Director Ken Paulson spoke about the role the First Amendment plays on America's campuses at the Academic and Student Affairs Virtual Summit for the University of Tennessee system.

The Untold Story of the U.S. Flag: In this programming partnership with the Frist Museum of Art, Free Speech Center Director Ken Paulson spoke about how the United States' collective passion for a symbol for freedom has inspired generations but also led to conflict, controversy, jail terms, and Supreme Court cases. The talk was presented in conjunction with the exhibition Mel Ziegler: Flag Exchange at the Frist.

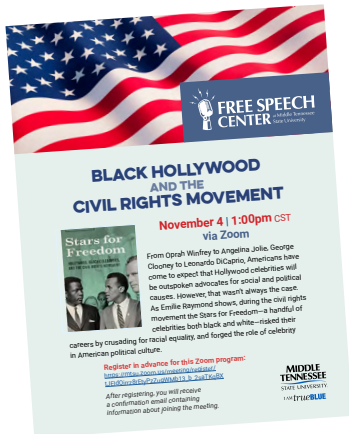


When Truth Mattered:

An exploration of the shootings at Kent State 50 years on with Bob Giles, former curator of the Nieman Foundation in Journalism at Harvard University and the editor who led the Pulitzer Prize-winning coverage of the tragedy by the Akron (Ohio) Beacon-Journal.

Black Hollywood and the Civil Rights Movement:

A presentation by Emilie Raymond, author of *Stars for Freedom* on the role black artists played in the fight for civil rights in the '50s and '60s.



Racial Justice Protests and the First Amendment:

This panel discussion, organized in partnership with the John Seigenthaler Center of Excellence in First Amendment Studies,

featured Ashley Howard, an assistant professor of African-American history at the University of Iowa, Ryan Haas, news editor with Oregon Public Broadcasting, Ken Paulson, director of the Free Speech Center at MTSU, and Keonte Coleman, assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Strategic Media at MTSU.

Inside the First Amendment: Ken Paulson presented the keynote at a student conference organized by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education.

Social Justice and the Five Freedoms:

Director Ken Paulson spoke virtually to students and faculty at Southern Adventist University's School of Journalism and Communication about the role the First Amendment has played in social progress in America.

First Amendment Newsletter

The Free Speech Center now publishes a timely and engaging newsletter <https://mtsu.us4.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=7ee514ff234e7ed-7769f76655&id=c7a609bd5d> on contemporary First Amendment issues. The newsletter, written by noted Chicago journalist Charles Meyerson, has built a readership of more than 1,000 in its first few months of operation.

PRESS COVERAGE

A major component of the Free Speech Center's mission is to convey accurate information about the First Amendment to the press and public. To that end, we offer a hotline for journalists reporting about these issues and we distribute regular guest columns. In 2020, the Free Speech Center was cited in media outlets in 31 states and 143 individual outlets, including:

Agence France-Presse (France)
Alamogordo Daily News (NM)
Albany Democrat-Herald (NY)
Appleton Post Crescent (WI)
Arizona Daily Sun, Flagstaff (AZ)
Asbury Park Press (NJ)
Associated Press
Atlanta Journal-Constitution (GA)
Battle Creek Enquirer (MI)

Baxter Bulletin (AK)
Beatrice Daily Sun (NE)
Beaumont Enterprise (TX)
Billings Gazette (MT)
Bismarck Tribune (ND)
Bloomberg News (NY)
Bloomington Herald Times (IN)
Bloomington Pentagraph (IN)
Boston Globe (MA)

Brown County Democrat (IN)
Butte Standard (MT)
Caledonian Record (VT)
Camden Courier-Post (NJ)
Charlotte Observer (NC)
Chattanooga Times (TN)
Chillicothe Gazette (OH)
Chippewa Herald (WI)
Christian Science Monitor
Cincinnati Enquirer (OH)
Clay Center Dispatch (KS)
CNN.com
Columbus Telegram (OH)
Commercial Appeal (TN)
Corvallis Gazette-Times (OR)
Decatur Herald & Review (IL)

Press Coverage continued

Des Moines Register (IA)
Detroit Free Press (MI)
Detroit Observer (MI)
Dothan Eagle (AL)
Elizabethton Star Online (TN)
Elko Daily Free Press (NV)
Evansville Courier & Press (IN)
Farmer's Advance (MI, IN, OH)
Farmington Daily Times (NM)
Fort Collins Coloradoan (CO)
Fort Myers News-Press (FL)
Fox 17 in Nashville (TN)
Fremont Tribune (NE)
Gilmer Mirror (TX)
Glens Falls (NY)
Globe Gazette (Iowa)
Grand Rapids Herald-Review (MI)
Greenville Sun (TN)
Hanover Evening Sun (PA)
Hattiesburg American (MS)
Helena Independent Record (MT)
Herald Bulletin (IN)
Herald Times (IN)
Houston Chronicle (TX)
Indianapolis Star (IN)
Iowa City Press Citizen (IA)
Iowa State Daily (IA)
Ithaca Journal (NY)
Journal News (IN)
Journal Review (IN)
Knox News (TN)
Knoxville News Sentinel (TN)
La Crosse Tribune (WI)
Lancaster Eagle-Gazette (OH)
Lansing State Journal (MI)
Lebanon Express (TN)
Lincoln Journal Star (NE)
Louisiana Record (LA)
Manitowoc Herald Times (WI)
Marco Island Eagle (FL)
Marion Star (OH)
Maryville Daily Times (TN)
Mattoon Journal-Gazette (IL)
Middletown Press (CT)
Missoulain (MT)
Moline Dispatch (IL)
Murfreesboro Daily News Journal (TN)
Muscatine Journal (IA)
Music Row (TN)
Napa Valley Register (CA)
Naples Daily News (FL)
Nashville Ledger (TN)
New Era (OR)
New Haven Register (CT)
Newcastle News Journal (WY)
Newswise
Orangeburg Times and Democrat (SC)
Park Hills Daily Journal (MO)
Post-Star (NY)
Press of Atlantic City (NJ)
Quad City Times (IL and IA)
Racine Journal Times (WI)
Rapid City Journal (SD)
Roanoke Times (VA)
Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (NY)
Salisbury Daily Times (MD)
San Saba News (TX)
Science News Net
Sentinel Online, Carlisle (PA)
SFGate (CA)
Sheboygan Press (WI)
Somerville Courier News (TN)
Somerville Home News (TN)
Argus Leader (SD)
Southern Illinoisan (IL)
Springfield News-Leader (MO)
St. Cloud Times (MN)
Standard, Cape May (NJ)
Statesville Record (NC)
Staunton News Leader (VA)
Stevens Point Journal (WI)
Tallahassee Democrat (FL)
Tennessean
Tennessee Press Association
Tennessee Star
Torrington Register Citizen (CT)
Twin Falls Times-News (ID)
U.S. News and World Report
USA Today
Valley Journal (MT)
Village Soup (TN)
Visalia Times-Delta (CA)
Voice of America
VTCNG (VT)
Washington Post
Washington Times (DC)
Waterloo Courier (IA)
WGNS Radio
Wichita Falls Times-Record (TX)
Winona Daily News (MN)
Winston-Salem Journal (NC)
Wisconsin Public Radio
Wisconsin State Farmer
WKRN-TV Online
Wyoming Press Association
Yahoo Canada Sports
York Daily Record (PA)

1 FOR ALL AD GALLERY

Thanks to the support of hundreds of news organizations across the country, these public service ads have helped build awareness of First Amendment freedoms.



Scott Hamilton

MY FREEDOM OF FAITH.

“My faith is the driving force in my life every single day. Thanks to the First Amendment, what I believe, say and write is protected by this amazing one-of-a-kind nation. Five freedoms of expression. Protect one. Protect them all.”

Learn more at www.1forall.today.

1all FREE SPEECH CENTER MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY



Aubrie Sellers

MY FREE PRESS.

“Freedom of press protects my right to read and engage with diverse viewpoints, not only those I agree with, just as freedom of speech protects my ability to write and express myself through music without restraints. The First Amendment allows us to be who we are, freely.”

Learn more at www.1forall.today.

1all FREE SPEECH CENTER MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY



Garry Trudeau
Creator of Doonesbury

MY FREEDOM TO PETITION.

“It’s the least known of our First Amendment freedoms—the right to petition our government for redress of grievances—but it’s as essential as our freedoms of speech, religion, assembly and press, and I wasn’t even aware of its existence until days before I exercised it. I was too young to vote, so it was my introduction to civic life.”

Learn more at www.1forall.today.

1all FREE SPEECH CENTER MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Photo: Gasper Tingle



Darius Rucker

MY FREE SPEECH.

“As a songwriter and singer, I have the privilege of sharing my thoughts and words through music. That honor comes from having freedom of speech, a promise made to everyone in the United States which we must continue to uphold.”

Learn more at www.1forall.today.

1all FREE SPEECH CENTER MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

1 FOR ALL AD GALLERY



1 FOR ALL SUPPORTERS

National

The Associated Press
Charles Koch Foundation
Craig Newmark Philanthropies
Foundation for Individual Rights
in Education (FIRE)
Free Speech Center at MTSU
Freedom Forum Institute
Gannett Co., Inc.
John Seigenthaler Chair of
Excellence in First Amendment
Studies
Journalism Education Association
Knight Foundation
National Newspaper Association
National Scholastic Press Assoc.
News Leaders Association
Wesner Publications

Alabama

Alabama Press Association

Arizona

Arizona Newspapers Association

Arkansas

Arkansas Press Association

California

California News Publishers Assoc.

Colorado

Colorado Press Association

Connecticut

New England Newspaper &
Press Association

Delaware

Delaware Press Association

Florida

Florida Press Association

Georgia

Georgia Press Association

Hawaii

Hawaii Publishers Association

Idaho

Idaho Press Club

Illinois

Chicago Public Square
Illinois Press Association

Indiana

Hoosier State Press Association

Iowa

Iowa Newspaper Association

Kansas

Coffeyville Journal
Good News Press, Independence
Independence Daily Reporter
Kansas Press Association

Kentucky

Kentucky Press Association

Louisiana

Louisiana Press Association

Maine

Maine Press Association

Maryland

MDDC Press Association

Massachusetts

New England Newspaper & Press
Association

Michigan

Michigan Press Association

Minnesota

Minnesota Newspaper Association
Star Tribune, Minneapolis-St. Paul
Tri-County News, Kimball

Mississippi

Mississippi Press Association

Missouri

Missouri Press Association

Montana

Montana Newspaper Association

Nebraska

Gothenburg Times
Nebraska Press Association
Tri-City Tribune, Cozad

Nevada

Nevada Press Association

New Hampshire

New England Newspaper &
Press Association

New Jersey

New Jersey Press Association

New Mexico

Cibola Citizen, Grants
New Mexico Press Association

New York

New York Press Association

North Carolina

North Carolina Press Association

North Dakota

North Dakota Newspaper Assoc.

1 for All Supporters continued

Ohio

Ohio News Media Association

Oklahoma

Bristow News

The Cordell Beacon

Elk City News

The Geary Star

The Hinton Record

Lincoln County News, Chandler

The Madill Record

Oklahoma Press Association

Ponca City News

Tonkawa News

Tri-County Herald, Meeker

Stroud American

The Walters Herald

Watonga Republican

Oregon

Oregon Newspaper Publishers
Association

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania NewsMedia Assoc.

The Sentinel, Lewistown

Rhode Island

New England Newspaper &
Press Association

South Carolina

South Carolina Press Association

South Dakota

Black Hills Pioneer, Spearfish

Sanborn Weekly Journal

Sisseton Courier

South Dakota Newspaper Assoc.

South Dakota News Watch

Tennessee

The Commercial Appeal, Memphis

The Connection, Robertson County

Dickson Post

The Exchange, Cheatham County

FW Publishing

Gallatin News

Guestbooker.com

Hendersonville Standard

Knoxville News-Sentinel

Main Street Media of Tennessee

Marbaloo Marketing

Middle Tennessee State University

Murfreesboro Post

Nashville Scene

Portland Sun

Spotland Productions

The Standard Bearer, Jefferson City

Tennessee Association of
Broadcasters

Tennessee Press Association

The Tennessean, Nashville

The Wilson Post

Texas

Blanco County News

Castro County News, Dimmitt

Dalhart Texan

The Dublin Citizen

Horseshoe Bay Beacon

Johnson City Record Courier

The Lamb County Leader-News,
Littlefield

The Llano News

Mason County News

San Saba (Texas) News & Star

Texas Press Association

Utah

Utah Press Association

Vermont

Vermont Press Association

Virginia

Virginia Press Association

Washington

Washington Newspaper
Publishers Association

West Virginia

West Virginia Press Association

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Newspaper Association

Wyoming

Wyoming Press Association



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