

# How to Host a Breakthrough



## *Conservative Speaking Event*





# How to Host a Breakthrough Conservative Speaking Event

If you want to change your campus, hosting a prominent conservative is how to make that change.

This is your opportunity to:

1. **Promote conservatism on campus.**
2. **Change the dialogue at your school.**
3. **Be a part of YAF's nationwide free speech movement.**
4. **Learn how to organize a great event.**
5. **Gain fundraising experience.**
6. **Work with a prominent conservative leader.**
7. **Build your resume.**
8. **Make new friends and network.**
9. **Strengthen your organizational skills.**
10. **Promote freedom!**

Young America's Foundation is the only organization that specializes in sending the biggest names of the Conservative Movement to college and high school campuses across the country.

We can help your club create an amazing experience for your school!

Foundation speakers are on the front lines, pushing back against many of the politically correct efforts at our nation's schools. *Time* magazine emphasized that the Foundation's campus lecture program is sponsoring hundreds of lectures by conservative leaders each year, and "these speeches have become the biggest event of the semester."

The Foundation introduced the idea of using speakers with a national reputation as a means to ensure a large audience. These are speakers that students, the local community, and even professors want to hear. Students want to hear from policy makers, celebrities, and newsmakers, rather than obscure professors. The large



audiences these speakers generate show campus communities that students are eager to hear conservative ideas. They give our cause a sense of excitement!

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“I wanted to send a note of appreciation for the enormous support that Young America’s Foundation has been to my work over the past year. It is one thing to back a speaker after he has gained recognition, but you helped me promulgate the ideas in *Illiberal Education* long before they were fashionable or in any sense hot. In fact, your help in getting me to innumerable campuses contributed a good deal to the eventual success and bestseller status of *Illiberal Education*.”

— DINESH D’SOUZA

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Dinesh D’Souza signs his book, *Stealing America*, after a lecture at Gonzaga University.



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As a conservative campus activist, you have one of the most rewarding life experiences waiting for you, if you take action. Many students miss out on this unique opportunity because they mistakenly feel the process is too difficult or not worth the time. Unfortunately, they fail to reach the broadest possible audience with their ideas.

You have a once-in-a-lifetime chance to bring one (or more!) of the Conservative Movement's strongest leaders before a large audience of your peers. Prominent conservative leaders, including Senator Rick Santorum, Katie Pavlich, and Ben Shapiro, frequently speak through Young America's Foundation's lecture program. In fact, Young America's Foundation is the only organization that specializes in helping young people organize breakthrough speaking events on their campuses.

Those who host conservative speakers receive benefits and rewards not achieved by other students and activists. Not only will you benefit, but your club can also achieve greater recognition. In the process, you may challenge campus leftists, stir debate, help complete your classmates' education, attract more students to your cause, and add an accomplishment to your resume.



*Senator Rick Santorum speaks at Vanderbilt University.*

## An Activist Success Story

If you want to change your campus, hosting a prominent conservative is how to make that change.

Mark Kahanding was a lone conservative on a hostile campus who wanted to bring more conservative ideas to his campus, California State University, Los Angeles. He decided to start a Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) chapter, the chapter affiliate of Young America's Foundation. Mark could have stuck with building his club through the usual means by using only recruitment tables, flyering, social media posts, and other standard approaches.

Instead, Mark took the bold step of working with Young America's Foundation to bring Ben Shapiro to speak at his campus—a campus that is more than 69% Hispanic and only 4% Caucasian. Along the way, he faced many obstacles, including threats from the faculty and administration. The president of his school even cancelled the event for a few days. However, Mark persevered by working closely with the Foundation, and despite mass protests, Shapiro spoke and the live stream of the lecture reached more than one million people!

Some students who questioned whether Shapiro should speak on campus saw the intolerance on display by faculty and liberal agitators, and decided to join Mark's YAF chapter. Following the success of the Shapiro lecture, Mark brought many other conservative speakers to campus, including Christina Hoff Sommers, Senator Rick Santorum, Star Parker, and Rachel Campos-Duffy. His chapter also held numerous other activism events.

Because of Mark's bold efforts in coordinating a successful event, his YAF chapter is now one of the largest in the nation.

You can have the same impact!

The next few pages will guide you through the steps you can take to organize a powerful speaking event on your campus.

## STEP #1: Learn How Your School's Bureaucracy Works

To be successful as a campus activist, you must learn how your school's bureaucracy works. This initial step takes a bit of time, but the benefits will be worth it. Knowing your school's bureaucracy is essential, not only for hosting speakers but also for other activities you would like to pursue. For example, how do you reserve space for recruitment tables or reserve a room for your weekly meetings? What is the process for doing so?

In regards to hosting speakers, there are several items you need to learn up front. Most speakers ask for an honorarium for their time traveling to your school and speaking on your campus. Some speakers cost as little as \$1,000; others can charge as much as \$20,000. However, most college campuses have funds set aside to pay for lectures. You must be aggressive in pursuing these funds. The Left has made concerted efforts to monopolize these funds for their programs. You must ask for your fair share of the funding.



*Steve Forbes fills the arena at Liberty University with 13,000 attendees.*

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“Bringing a speaker was a defining moment of our chapter’s activism. We had around 1,000 students attend the event and another 1,000 outside waiting to hear from the first conservative speaker in almost five years at the University of Florida. The number of students who thanked our chapter showed how incredible it is to bring a speaker. If you want to directly change the Left’s campus culture and give a voice to conservative students, bringing a speaker through Young America’s Foundation is by far the best way!”

— DANNY WELDON, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

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## 8 How to Host a Breakthrough Conservative Speaking Event

Approach your student activities office and ask how they fund student-organized events. For example, does your student funding committee distribute all of its funding during the fall semester, or does it fund organizations throughout the course of the year? How does it fund student groups? At some schools, student organizations receive a lump sum of money that must last the entire year. At others, groups receive funding on a per-event basis.



*Katie Pavlich meets with activists after a lecture at the University at Buffalo.*

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“Thank you so much for your support and generosity in getting Mr. Forbes... He was a great speaker, and he had the audience laughing, thinking, and ready to take action. Thank you, again.”

— CAMERON KHANSARINIA, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

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## STEP #2: Selecting an Appropriate Speaker

Once you understand how to get funding, you must choose a speaker. Young America's Foundation can help you select a speaker based on the estimated amount of funds you hope to receive and your topic preference.

Regardless of how popular or famous your speaker is, you must select a speaker who talks on issues that are relevant to students. Always ask, "What topics matter to students, and what topic or speaker will make them attend our event?" On most campuses, relevant topics include issues such as racial preferences, jobs, the economy, multiculturalism, speech codes, political correctness, and feminism.

Also, observe other programs and controversies that are occurring on campus. If you can market your event so it ties in with current



*Dinesh D'Souza debates Bill Ayers at the University of Michigan.*



*Students attend a lecture by Ben Shapiro at California State University, Los Angeles.*

events or programs, you will draw a larger crowd to your lecture. In the spring semester, most colleges and universities recognize Black History Month in February and Women's History Month in March. Colleges will typically host a parade of left-wing speakers and schedule many other events focused on these themes. If you can schedule a conservative during this period, your event will be more successful.

Get together with your club or at least the officers and select several speakers you are interested in hosting. Then, contact Young America's Foundation to learn the honoraria of the speakers you have selected. Once you have this information, discuss with the officers or the entire club which speaker is best suited for your campus. This is important to do, since it will solidify your team behind the plan. If, for some reason, your first choice as speaker is not available, you can always select another speaker from your abbreviated list.



## STEP #3: Soliciting Your School for Funds

A majority of schools will at least partially fund lectures organized by student groups. Typically, you will need to put together a budget to submit to the school's allocation committee and/or student government. First, it is wise to talk with those on the committee and learn how much other groups receive. In your request, you should include this list of past allocations to prove that your request is not outrageous. In fact, many conservative speakers cost a fraction of what most liberals charge.



*Lt. Col. Allen West speaks at Gonzaga University.*



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When you are writing your budget, estimate every expense. Often students focus on just the speaker's honorarium but forget to account for advertising, travel, accommodations, audio-visual expenses, and even costs to rent a lecture hall.

Often you will not have to raise funds for the lecture hall because you can hold the event in a large classroom on campus.

However, if you host a prominent speaker such as Ben Shapiro or Dinesh D'Souza, you will need a larger venue. Speakers who are very popular can draw more than one thousand people, so reserving a special site may be necessary. Your school may charge you to rent the auditorium, and the fees are usually substantial. Therefore, it is important to include such costs when you submit your budget.

Attend the university's allocation committee meeting so you can answer any questions regarding your event and speaker. This will also allow you to defend your allocation. If the committee turns you down, contact Young America's Foundation for assistance! Expose the inequality in the disbursement of funds on campus. Present your case as one of discrimination based on your conservative philosophy. Equal disbursement of funds is essentially a freedom of speech issue, since students are denied the right to hear diverse points-of-view. Approached in this manner, even liberal publications may sympathize with you. Provide local media outlets with facts and quotes to make your story easy to write. With the spotlight on you and the controversy in the air, the student government will most likely change its tune.

In addition to your student government or the allocation committee, don't overlook alternate sources of campus funds. Academic departments, such as the history or political science departments, will often have funds set aside for speakers. Approach any and all relevant departments and ask for assistance. For example, if you are hosting a noted conservative journalist, approach the journalism or communications department for help. To find funding for your speaker, you must be persistent! Chances are you will eventually receive funding. Young America's Foundation will also assist with the costs. Contact us for details.

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“Hosting Ben Shapiro kick-started my Young Americans for Freedom chapter at UW-Madison. We grew from six members to more than fifty in three months—and membership continued to grow into the next semester. My chapter’s dramatic growth made us the most active conservative organization at my university and attracted the attention of conservative students at nearby schools who were inspired to start their own YAF chapters. Professors, organizations, and students now recognize our chapter and understand our mission: to strengthen the conservative voice at UW-Madison. YAF chapters around the country can rely on speaking events to boost their name around campus and gain new members. It worked for us!”

— KARA BELL, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – MADISON

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*Steve Forbes speaks at UCLA.*

## STEP #4: Structure Your Program

After you have your funding allocated and before you submit your speaker invitation, discuss as a group how your program will be structured and what you would like to do with the speaker during their visit.

For example, most events include a dinner or reception with select members of your club or key donors prior to the lecture. The pre-event dinner is a great opportunity to meet with the speaker and get to know him or her. The dinner does not have to be a drain on your group's resources. To keep the costs low, you can ask everyone who attends to pay for their own meal. The only cost your group has to cover is the speaker's meal. A club supporter may choose to underwrite the meal if he or she is included. These functions can be held at the hotel where the speaker is staying or in a private room at a restaurant in town. It is generally most convenient to hold the program at the hotel where the speaker is staying. Many hotels have private rooms which you can reserve for your meal. When it is time for the meal, you simply meet your speaker in the lobby and escort him to the dinner.

When selecting the lecture venue, consider the number of students you estimate will attend. **Do not book an event space which can hold 1,000 people if you only anticipate 100!** It is always better to choose a smaller room that will look packed. Selecting a hall that is too large will make your group look like it did a poor job planning and organizing, and the school will feel that students are not interested in hearing conservative ideas. The audience size will depend upon the speaker's popularity amongst the student body.

At any program you sponsor, reserve a literature table displaying brochures and materials about your organization. If your speaker is prominent enough and you have extra resources, hand out event programs. If you are hosting a noted author, arrange a book signing following the event with books for sale from the campus bookstore.

A speaking event is a great way to increase membership in your



club. A well-known speaker and a strong publicity campaign can draw hundreds, if not thousands, of students to your program.

Lastly, some student groups conclude the evening with an open reception either on campus or at the hotel. Again, this gives your organization and other students an opportunity to meet the speaker.

You may be wondering if your event should be open to the public or if you should charge admission to your event. The goal of Young America's Foundation is to reach the broadest possible audience. For many students, a Foundation-sponsored program may be the only opportunity they have to hear a conservative perspective. Charging admission, even if it is only five dollars, will inhibit some students from attending your program. You have gone to great efforts to sponsor this event. Don't create any needless barriers for people who might attend your program.

Also, don't worry if everyone does not agree with your speaker. If a liberal student challenges your speaker, the audience will want to hear how your speaker responds. Give the speaker a chance to deal with any unanswered questions. Also, Foundation speakers have heard every left-wing question imaginable and already know an effective response even before the student has finished his question. A demonstration by opposing students may serve to reinforce to the rest of the student body that many radicals are concerned with only freedom of speech for their ideas.



*A student asks a question at a lecture at Yale University.*

## STEP #5: Inviting Your Speaker

Once you have secured your funding and you know how your event will be structured, you will need to submit an invitation to Young America's Foundation. Please note that speakers will not confirm a date on their calendar unless you have the funding confirmed first. Also, when inviting a speaker and promoting the event, you do not want the added stress of worrying about raising funds.

When you are drafting your invitation to Young America's Foundation, here are some items to include:

- Information on your group and which speaker you are inviting to speak.
- What you are offering the speaker for an honorarium and how much financial assistance you are requesting from Young America's Foundation.
- Six or seven potential event dates.
- Expected attendance along with a brief description of your publicity strategies.
- A tentative schedule for the speaker outlining the requested times and events (lecture, dinner, reception).



*Steve Forbes speaks at Iowa State University.*



The dates you select should not compete with other campus programs. Most schools have listings of social and sporting events, so check your school's calendar. Also, be sure you work around the midterm and final examination schedules.

Include all of your contact information in the invitation. If you schedule a speaker through Young America's Foundation, we will book the speaker for you and then issue contracts.

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“I want to extend my sincere gratitude to YAF for making the effort to bring Mr. Santorum to our campus. The speech infused some much needed, but seldom seen, intellectual diversity into our campus life. I plead that you continue to work [to] bring conservative voices to our campus...Your work is supremely worthwhile.”

— CORNELL STUDENT

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## **STEP #6: Maximize Your Impact!**

Once your event is scheduled, your organization should plan out each step of your event, so nothing is left to chance. Your goal is to have a lasting impact on your campus. Include all specifics and put together a detailed event itinerary.

As you prepare for your program, try to involve every member of your group and give each member a responsibility. Most students join your organization because they want to get involved. Of course, some students have a heavy class load but at least ask them to help with promotion. This will give them ownership in the event and make them care about its success.

There are a couple of points to consider in regards to publicity and attracting an audience. You have to sell your event to the community. You should determine how you are going to market your speaker and the lecture in a way that will make people want to attend.

Students are faced with a lot of options to occupy their free time. It is up to you to make them feel like your event is something they can't possibly miss! Focus your publicity efforts on selling your speaker's importance and also be sure to cast his theme in terms that are current and relevant to students.

As the event approaches, keep in mind the following:

- Arrive at the program early and set up your literature table. Be sure to include sign-up sheets! Check to be sure the room is arranged as you requested. For example, be sure the microphones, water for the speaker, and other requested items are present. Of course, you should have indicated to the proper officials well in advance what kind of arrangements you want.
- Arrange to pick up the speaker at the airport. Please go inside the airport and wait in baggage claim for the speaker. The Foundation will arrange the speaker's travel for you, but be sure you double check the arrival time and airline



information. You may also want to assign a member to escort the speaker during the entire visit. This student should always be within earshot if the speaker has any questions regarding the event, timeline, etc.

- Assign someone who can properly introduce the speaker and talk about your organization. Take advantage of the time prior to the introduction. This is a great opportunity to address your group's concerns with the audience. Encourage students to join your organization or become involved with a campaign to bring more conservative speakers to your campus.



Speaker Newt Gingrich speaks at Cornell University.

## STEP #7: Follow-up on Your Event

Following your program, there are still several ways you can further maximize your success.

First, have your members write blogs or letters to the student newspaper stating that the lecture was a refreshing change from the steady procession of leftist speakers on campus, and the good turnout indicates that students want to hear from conservative speakers.

If negative articles appear online or on social media, respond immediately and in numbers. Ask each member to write a response. You may even want to hold a special meeting where you all draft your responses together.

Immediately after the program, ask the school president and appropriate committees for additional funding for more speakers.



*Lt. Col. Allen West (right) debates former Obama spokesman Jay Carney (left) at The George*

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“ Bay Buchanan was the most engaging speaker I had ever listened to at Davidson College. She was gutsy, fiery, and energetic. Her talk on free speech and political correctness roused the crowd and gained our YAF chapter many new followers. YAF did everything it could to make this event successful and expand our influence, and Bay’s speech at Davidson certainly accomplished those goals—and so much more.”

— KENNY XU, DAVIDSON COLLEGE

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Washington University.



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Take advantage of your success as soon as possible. Thank any donors who contributed to the program by sending them a report on the event.

If your event is successful, there will undoubtedly be students who are interested in joining your group. Following the lecture, you may consider having a well-publicized “new member” meeting. Hold this no more than a week after your program. It is important that this is a very well-run meeting. You must provide a plan of your group’s future events to prospective members and make them feel that their time will be well spent by becoming involved with your group.

If you organize a successful program, you will increase your fellow students’ knowledge on conservative issues, your group will gain prestige, your relationship with the university community will be stronger, and Young America’s Foundation will be happy to help you set up another program.



*Christina Hoff Sommers and Ben Shapiro speak near DePaul University.*



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“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

— PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT

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# Conservative Speakers Available Through Young America's Foundation



*Speaker Newt Gingrich*



*Senator Rick Santorum*



*Lt. Col. Allen West*



*Katie Pavlich*



*John Stossel*



*Ben Shapiro*



*Steve Forbes*



*Dinesh D'Souza*



*Bay Buchanan*



*Rachel Campos-Duffy*



*Herman Cain*

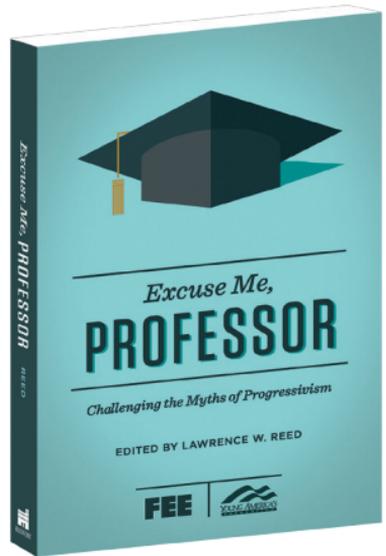


*Christina Hoff Sommers*

*And many more!*

**Get Further Training** — You can discover even more secrets to organizing a successful event by attending a YAF training seminar. Visit [yaf.org](http://yaf.org) or contact Patrick Coyle at Young America's Foundation at [pcoyle@yaf.org](mailto:pcoyle@yaf.org) or 1-800-USA-1776.

# Now You Can Debate Your Own Professor on Free Market Ideas!



Have you been frustrated sitting in a classroom, or just engaged in a conversation with someone, and not known quite how to respond to a typical progressive put-down of free market principles? For example, are you not sure how to respond when a professor says that the free market spoils the environment, that increasing the minimum wage helps the poor, or that free markets exploit women?

Now, Young America's Foundation and the Foundation for Economic Education, in conjunction with Regnery Publishing, have teamed up to provide you with answers to 52 common progressive free market clichés in the new book, *Excuse Me Professor, Debunking the Myths of Progressivism*.

**Get your copy today!**



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

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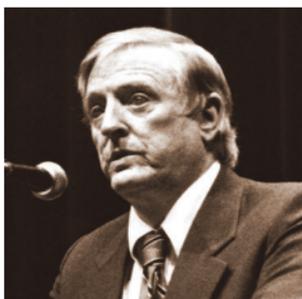


## Young Americans for Freedom

*“Where leaders are forged”*

**Start your Young Americans for  
Freedom chapter today!**

For more information, visit [yaf.org](http://yaf.org) or call 800-USA-1776.



“On the matter of your lecture series, these are experiences of infinite importance. As recently as last night, a 42-year-old affluent influential conservative told an audience of 400 people that his orientation came from hearing such a talk (yes, by me) at Cornell when he was a sophomore. So I do hope that your important Foundation will be able to continue to support such appearances in the years ahead.”

— WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR.



*www.yaf.org*

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