



GWARTNEY INSTITUTE
FREEDOM • JUSTICE • FLOURISHING

2018-2019 Annual Report

Prepared by

Dr. Russ McCullough, Director

Dr. Levi Russell, Economic Education and Research

Personnel Changes

Director/Founder

Dr. Russ McCullough began operations of the Institute in January 2018.

Graduate Assistants

Jacob Maichel and Jacyn Dawes accepted assistant positions while they pursue their MBAs at Ottawa University.

Professor of Economic Education and Research

Dr. Levi Russell joined the Gwartney Institute in August 2018.

Undergraduate Student Engagement

Liberty-Fund-Style Discussion

Two day-long discussions were offered in the Spring and Fall semesters of 2018 and one in the Spring of 2019. Thirty-one undergraduate students attended.

Each semester next year, we will host more Liberty-Fund-style discussions.

Weekend Conferences/Workshops

“Prudent Charity: The Economics and Ethics of Giving” seminar, hosted by the Institute for Humane Studies, the John W. Hammond Institute for Free Enterprise, and the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty. Three students and Dr. McCullough attended this event in Spring 2018.

“Humanomics: What it Means to be Human” seminar, hosted by the Institute for Economic Inquiry at Creighton University. Four students, Dr. McCullough, and Dr. Russell attended this event in Spring 2019.

Documentary Screenings

On September 19, 2018, 130 students attended a viewing of the “Poverty, Inc.” documentary. This included free snacks and a panel discussion. Students reported an 88% increase in knowledge of foreign aid and a 66% increase in knowledge about private poverty alleviation in developing countries.

On February 6, 2019, 93 students attended a screening of AEI's new documentary "The Pursuit." This included free snacks and drinks. Students reported a 47% increase in knowledge of the role of capitalism in human prosperity and a 40% increase in knowledge of the social effects of welfare programs.

Each semester next year, we will host documentary screenings or other events that we expect will draw a 100+ OU students.

Social Change: Understanding the Impact to Human Flourishing

On October 11, 2018, the Gwartney Institute co-sponsored an event for students, alumni, and the Ottawa community on the OU campus. Speakers included Dr. Jim Gwartney, Hugh Whelchel of the Institute for Faith, Work, and Economics, Mark DeYmaz of the Mosaic Church of Central Arkansas, and David Owen, co-founder of the Owen Leadership Institute at Ottawa University. Lunch was provided for 85 attendees and Dr. Russ McCullough served as the emcee.

Collaborations with the Owen Leadership Institute and other initiatives at the University are planned for next year.

Transportation to Other Events

September 18, 2018 – Women's Economic Rights in History – Koch Center for Leadership and Ethics, Emporia State University

September 24, 2018 – The Case for Free Range Parenting – Kansas Policy Institute – Johnson County Community College

November 13, 2018 – The Little Pink House Screening – Kansas Policy Institute – Overland Park, KS Theatre

February 4, 2019 – Why the Left and Right are Wrong About Income Inequality – Koch Center for Leadership and Ethics, Emporia State University

February 28, 2019 – Bitcoin at Baker – Baker University

We will continue to take advantage of events like this in the coming year that are sponsored by other organizations.

High School Student Engagement

DECA Conference Recruiting Event –Trade Game

September 17, Dr. McCullough did mini-trade game with high school students during a recruiting event with Ottawa University

Next year we are planning classroom visits to high schools to do the trade game or other engaging events to get students thinking about Ottawa University as a great place for economic education.

Teacher Engagement

Next year the Institute will host a Liberty-Fund-style event for social studies teachers in the area. Participants will earn continuing education credits.

Community Engagement

United Way STEM Mentoring Program

July 16, 2018 Ottawa, KS Summer Program -Dr. McCullough worked with 30 youth elementary to middle school age doing the trade game

July 18, 2018 Wellsville, KS Library -Dr. McCullough worked with 20 youth elementary to middle school age doing the trade game

Screening of "Poverty, Inc." Documentary

Sunday afternoon, November 18, Institute faculty and graduate students hosted a viewing of the "Poverty, Inc." documentary. This included free snacks and a panel discussion. About 20 community members attended this event.

Local Newspaper Column

In November 2018, Dr. Russell began writing a biweekly column on local economic and policy issues for the local newspaper.

Monthly Short Talks, TED Style

In March of 2019, the Gwartney Institute began sponsoring a monthly speaker series at a local business. Initial topics included the state of the local economy, ethics, and Bitcoin. Other faculty, community members and graduate students from Ottawa University will speak at future events.

Institute Development

Building University Centers to Advance Liberty and Prosperity

Dr. McCullough attended the Building University Centers to Advance Liberty and Prosperity conference at the Hammond Institute at Lindenwood University on September 14th and 15th. Dr. McCullough chose the “Markets and Morality” discussion group, which meshes well with the Gwartney Institute’s weekly podcast, Faith and Economics.

Website

Upon arrival in August, Dr. Russell began development of the Gwartney Institute’s website, hosted at Ottawa.edu. He purchased www.GwartneyInstitute.org and 123PovertySucks.org to redirect to the site. The site includes information about events, Dr. Gwartney, Institute faculty, our blog, our weekly podcast and a link to our online store.

Podcast

In October, Drs. McCullough and Russell along with our two Graduate Assistants posted our “Faith and Economics” podcast on all major podcast apps. We post a new episode weekly at podcast.gwartneyinstitute.org. Currently we have 35 regular listeners and episodes have been downloaded over 1,300 times.

Social Media

The Institute maintains posts regularly on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. The posts are related to the mission of the institute. Some of the posts are original writing adapted from our blog posts and others are recycled and repurposed from other work.

Research

Much More than Peanuts: Corporate Welfare in the Peanut Industry

Dr. Russell has secured funding from the Center for Growth and Opportunity and has begun work on a policy paper addressing agricultural policy and the peanut industry.