



GEORGE W. BUSH
PRESIDENTIAL CENTER

STRONG & STEADFAST: *The cause we serve*

THE 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



“We now move forward with
confidence and faith.
Our nation is strong and steadfast.
The cause we serve is right, because it is
the cause of all mankind.”

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

2004 State of the Union Address

At the Bush Center, we remain laser-focused on our mission to combine policy initiatives and public programming to ensure opportunity for all, strengthen our democracy, and advance free societies around the world.

Our country and our world are changing, but our solutions-oriented, constructive approach to the challenges we face has not. The Bush Institute tackled issues last year including how to support Ukraine in its war with Russia, reform U.S. immigration policy, ensuring Americans are ready for jobs that support themselves and their families, supporting the lifesaving work of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and exposing Taliban abuses.

Throughout 2024, the Bush Center urged America's leaders to practice acceptance and respect for others. Our *Pluralism Challenge* series, for example, advocates for civility and compassion when dealing with our fellow citizens.

One of our great successes in bringing diverse voices together continues to be our outstanding leadership programs. It's exciting to watch the rising leaders in our Stand-To Veteran Leadership Program and the Presidential Leadership Scholars mobilize their networks to address today's challenges.

We were hugely successful last year in increasing awareness for Check-In, powered by our Veteran Wellness Alliance, which connects veterans and their family members to no-cost, high-quality, compassionate mental and brain health care. Over Veterans Day weekend, a billboard in New York's Times Square and various media outlets included Check-In in their coverage of President Bush's annual Veterans Day warrior mountain bike ride at Prairie Chapel Ranch. CBS Sports

also covered the program during the Dallas Cowboys vs. Philadelphia Eagles broadcast that weekend.

Our *Engage at the Bush Center* series presented by NexPoint had an exciting year of unique content, and the Bush Museum hosted visitors from all over the world.

Finally, we're in strong fiscal shape and well positioned to take on future challenges. Our top-notch team is focused every day on supporting the values of freedom, opportunity, accountability, and compassion – values deeply rooted in the philosophies of President and Mrs. Bush.

It has been the honor and privilege of a lifetime to lead this incredible group of people who are so focused on making the world a better place. Although it is bittersweet, I am thrilled to hand the baton to Dr. Shilo Brooks, the Bush Center's next President and CEO. He is a brilliant scholar on civil discourse, civic literacy, and American political thought. I look forward to seeing all the great work continue and being able to support the team in a new way. Given my vantage point, I am hugely optimistic about the future.

Thank you for your trust and for supporting this amazing organization. We could not do it without you.



KH

KEN HERSH
President and CEO
George W. Bush Presidential Center



President Bush shared insights with Presidential Leadership Scholars in Dallas during an interview with Kelley Jiou, Director of Leadership and Programming at the Bush Institute.



We hosted our seventh annual Forum on Leadership in April, spotlighting freedom around the world and why U.S. global leadership remains vital. Indra Nooyi, former Chairman and CEO of PepsiCo, was the 2024 George W. Bush Medal for Distinguished Leadership recipient. CIA Director William J. Burns was our keynote speaker and discussed how the agency assesses challenges facing the United States from Russia and China to the Middle East.



F R E E D O M

O P P O R T U N I T Y

A C C O U N T A B I L I T Y

C O M P A S S I O N

the cause — we — IMPACT

We use our impact to advance free societies by supporting democratic values, advocating for human dignity and human rights, and promoting the health and well-being of people around the world.

IMPACT IN ACTION

Go Further is a partnership created in 2018 by PEPFAR, the Bush Institute, and UNAIDS to end AIDS and cervical cancer in sub-Saharan Africa.

10 MILLION

women have been screened for cervical cancer through *Go Further*, with PEPFAR's support.

26 MILLION

men, women, and children living with HIV have received lifesaving treatment through PEPFAR.

7.8 MILLION

babies have been born HIV-free because of PEPFAR.

Challenging authoritarians is both a moral and strategic imperative, as the Bush Institute has shown in its work to help Ukraine win the war that Russia's Vladimir Putin started. Promoting human dignity continues to be a priority through our *Struggle for Freedom* series highlighting human rights advocates. This includes Russian activist and journalist Vladimir Kara-Murza and his wife Evgenia, who visited the Bush Center in October after his release from a Siberian prison. He was sentenced for speaking out against Putin.



Awarded in scholarships to help 75 North Korean escapees and their children pursue continued education since inception.

IMPACT SPOTLIGHT

CAPTURED STATE SERIES

Taliban leaders live in luxury while innocent Afghans suffer. The Bush Institute spotlighted in its 2024 *Captured State* series how the Taliban have relied on mafia-like behavior to consolidate power in Afghanistan.

The three-report series uncovers the Taliban's immense corruption, the disproportionate impact on Afghan women and children, and the role of foreign enablers like China, Iran, and Russia in supporting the Taliban's human rights abuses.

The *Captured State* series also included the 2025 launch of a Taliban travel tracker detailing the United Nations' approved travel ban exemptions for sanctioned Taliban leaders. The tracker demonstrates that many Taliban leaders travel abroad for medical treatment and meetings with foreign governments while ordinary Afghans suffer from hunger and lack access to basic medical care.

The series, written by Bush Institute Global Policy Director Natalie Gonnella-Platts, Fellow Jessica Ludwig, and Senior Program Manager Albert Torres, provides recommendations for U.S. and international policymakers to put an end to the Taliban's corruption and human rights abuses. The recommendations

include targeted sanctions and support for Afghan civil society.

Captured State was well received by both U.S. and international policymakers. The reports were submitted for the congressional record by U.S. Representative Joe Wilson of South Carolina during a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing on the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in March 2024, and the U.K. Inquiry on Gender Apartheid cited a statement from the Bush Institute based on *Captured State* in its final report that same month. *Captured State* was featured in national and international publications, including *Foreign Policy*, *The Diplomat*, and prominent Afghan outlets Amu TV and *Rukshana Media*.

The Bush Institute continues to share the common-sense policy solutions from *Captured State* with U.S. and international leaders to put an end to the Taliban's corrupt practices and horrific abuse of power.



F R E E D O M

O P P O R T U N I T Y

A C C O U N T A B I L I T Y

C O M P A S S I O N

We promote opportunity for all by valuing everyone in our society, ensuring all young Americans can access a quality education, and helping veterans and their families thrive in civilian life.

PROMOTING OPPORTUNITY IN ACTION

Through our Check-In program, veterans, service members, families, caregivers, and survivors can get connected to no-cost, high-quality mental and brain health care. Since inception:

2,400+

veterans and their family members have spoken to Check-In connectors and more than 1,000 are receiving care.

In 2024, the Check-In website saw a

61%

increase in views compared with 2023.

The Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries (LBF) awarded \$1 million in grants to 200 schools across 40 states in 2024. Since inception:



Received
LBF Grants



Awarded in
LBF Grants

OPPORTUNITY SPOTLIGHT PROMOTING LITERACY

In March 2024, Mrs. Laura Bush visited J.N. Ervin Elementary School in Dallas, a 2024 grant recipient of the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries, to celebrate Read Across America Day.

In collaboration with United Way Reading Day, Mrs. Bush enjoyed reading *Our Great Big Backyard*, which she authored with her daughter, Jenna Bush Hager, to Ms. Wallace's first-grade class.

“By reading to students in your communities, you can inspire a lifelong love of reading. I am grateful that United Way of Metropolitan Dallas is highlighting the importance of early childhood literacy in my home community, and I encourage all Americans to be a part of this special day.”

MRS. LAURA BUSH

Mrs. Bush's passion for literacy is reflected in the Bush Institute's Education and Opportunity work, which focuses on pathways to opportunity, advancing accountability, and accelerating literacy. Mrs. Bush's Summer Reading List for kids is one of our most popular releases every year, with over 76,000 page views on our website in 2024. The list included books following the themes of dog days of summer, Paris 2024, and family and friends. The list, shared by influencers like Bob Goff and highlighted on Fox News, consisted of books for the youngest, elementary, and middle school readers.





the
cause
— we —
LEAD

F R E E D O M • O P P O R T U N I T Y • A C C O U N T A B I L I T Y • C O M P A S S I O N

We strengthen our democracy by developing the next generation of leaders, encouraging pluralism and informed citizens, and promoting civil discourse as a commitment to foundational American ideals.

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

The Bush Institute produced results from our Presidential Leadership Scholars (PLS), a program in partnership with the presidential centers of Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush, and Lyndon B. Johnson that brings together leaders who are committed to facing critical challenges and creating positive change at home and around the world.

95

In 2024, the PLS program received a Net Promoter Score of 95, meaning nearly every individual highly recommends the experience.

96%

reported they have a strong sense of purpose as a leader.

90%

reported that they are more likely to consider diverse perspectives when making decisions due to the PLS program.

Through the *Pluralism Challenge* series, the Bush Institute highlights the importance of promoting social tolerance for individuals or groups who have different backgrounds, beliefs, or views. Pluralism is essential to our democracy, and the series features a wide range of leaders and groups who are practicing pluralism to make a positive impact in their communities – and strengthen our democracy in the process.

“I really do believe that PLS and the four presidential institutions that are behind it are building a nucleus of leaders and moving the country forward.”

DANIELLE RUGOFF
2024 Presidential Leadership Scholar

LEADERSHIP SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHT
STEVE LOPEZ

Imagine calling 911 with an emergency and being told no one was available to help. As the Dallas Fire-Rescue Deputy Chief, Steve Lopez knows how important recruiting qualified mechanics and emergency personnel can be.

Wanting to help others is one of the main reasons Lopez became a firefighter, EMT, and paramedic more than 20 years ago. Now he's focused on making sure others receive that help as quickly as possible.

Lopez, a 2023 Presidential Leadership Scholar who oversees training, professional development, and fleet maintenance for Dallas Fire-Rescue, discovered that a shortage of mechanics was threatening the department's ability to respond to emergency situations. He hoped to solve the issue through his time in the Presidential Leadership Scholars (PLS) program, which brings together a diverse group of leaders who are committed to solving today's pressing problems and are exploring leadership through the lens of the presidential experiences of George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush, and Lyndon B. Johnson.

Lopez, who is responsible for more than 668 pieces of equipment ranging from fire engines and ambulances to staff vehicles, realized that the mechanic shortage was keeping emergency vehicles out of service for longer than they should. Lopez and his Fleet Management Team began working to minimize

the impact on Dallas by overhauling the mechanic recruitment and training process.

“Our goal was to work on the shortage of the mechanics within fleet maintenance,” Lopez said. “It was a total process improvement of the way we train our mechanics, the way we recruit our mechanics, even their job descriptions and the work performed within our fleet maintenance shop.”

The approach was inspired by one of Lopez's PLS colleagues, who recently implemented something similar in her economic development work in Mississippi. Lopez has already made great strides. The department has adjusted job postings and reclassified all mechanic positions, resulting in pay grade increases.

Lopez says the team's successes are an example of how collaboration by PLS's diverse cohort of leaders has become a key component behind the program's success.



A photograph of two wooden beehives in a field of wildflowers. The beehives are made of wood and have a light blue top section with a small entrance. They are surrounded by tall, green wildflowers with yellow centers. The background shows a line of trees and a clear sky. The text "2024 AT A GLANCE" is overlaid in the top right corner.

2024 AT A GLANCE

The Laura W. Bush Native Texas Park was filled with activity in 2024. We offered spring and fall guided tours that attracted guests who experienced wildflower seeding and monarch butterfly tagging. We also started selling honey from the park's very own beehives in the Museum Store as part of our collaboration with Hives for Heroes.



JANUARY 22

The Art of Disagreeing Better

The Art of Disagreeing Better, an *Engage at the Bush Center* event presented by NexPoint, took on a topic that is both a cornerstone of our democracy and was much needed during an election year: how to have passionate, yet civil disagreement and discourse. The conversation featured Utah Governor Spencer Cox, a Republican, and Kansas Governor Laura Kelly, a Democrat, alongside Kryz Boyd, host and Managing Editor of KERA Radio's award-winning national program, *Think*.

MARCH 22

Bush Institute Leadership in Taiwan

Igor Khrestin, the Bradford M. Freeman Managing Director of Global Policy at the Bush Institute, joined the Global Taiwan Institute delegation for a discussion on policy priorities and challenges facing Taiwan's new administration and met with Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen in Taipei.



APRIL 18

Forum on Leadership

At our annual Forum on Leadership, keynote speaker William J. Burns, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, joined David. J. Kramer, Executive Director of the Bush Institute, for a conversation on how the CIA assesses challenges facing the United States from Russia and China to the Middle East.

MAY 14

Welcoming Author Heather Morris

The sixth annual Laura Bush Book Club brought Heather Morris, author of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*, a No. 1 international bestseller, to the Bush Center. At this *Engage at the Bush Center* event presented by NexPoint, with additional support by H-E-B, Morris discussed her book of hope in the midst of tragedy with Anne Wicks, the Don Evans Family Managing Director of Opportunity and Democracy at the Bush Institute.



JULY 11

102-year-old WWII Pilot Visits the Bush Center

The Bush Center hosted a sold-out conversation with WWII pilot John "Lucky" Luckadoo and historian and author Dr. Donald L. Miller, moderated by Jason Galui, Director of Veterans and Military Families at the Bush Institute. A longtime Dallas resident, Lucky recounted flying 25 combat missions in a B-17 over France and Germany.

SEPTEMBER 24

Tackling Challenges With China and Russia

KERA's *Think* host Kryz Boyd moderated the *Engage* NexPoint Lecture with global experts about how the United States can tackle the challenges posed by the growing relationship between China and Russia. Panelists included Dan Schulman, former President and CEO of PayPal; Ellen Bork, Bush Institute Fellow; and John J. Sullivan, former U.S. Ambassador to Russia, former Deputy Secretary of State, and author of *Midnight in Moscow*.



OCTOBER 5

Pups in the Park

We welcomed 85 dogs to our Pups in the Park event in the Laura W. Bush Native Texas Park to kick off the fall. Proud pet parents took photos against a scenic pumpkin backdrop, sipped on lattes provided by a coffee truck, and enjoyed tours of the park.

OCTOBER 16

Immigration Voice of Reason

A CNN article that quoted Laura Collins, Director of the Bush Institute-SMU Economic Growth Initiative, was syndicated to more than 50 news outlets. Collins shared insights and recommendations on the border and legal immigration reform with lawmakers, the media, business leaders, and the public. Other media highlights throughout 2024 included *USA Today*, Bloomberg, *Spectrum News*, and KERA. Senate staffers reached out to her on self-sponsorship and Dreamer legislation, while members of Congress sought information on immigration reform and the border.

NOVEMBER 8

Bike Ride With President Bush

In honor of Veterans Day, President and Mrs. Bush welcomed members of Team 43 to their ranch in Crawford, Texas. This gathering was an opportunity to recognize the veterans' resilience and emphasize that the teamwork they built in the military continues to support them in their lives after service.



MARCH 1

Mrs. Laura Bush's Continued Support for Children's Literacy

Mrs. Laura Bush visited J.N. Ervin Elementary School in Dallas and read to first graders from *Our Great Big Backyard*, the book she wrote with her daughter, Jenna Bush Hager. Mrs. Bush served as honorary chair of United Way Reading Day and was one of more than 1,200 community volunteers who participated to encourage early literacy.



MARCH 26

Promoting Economic Prosperity

We released *Engines of Opportunity: How Eds and Meds Institutions Can Become More Powerful Drivers of Prosperity in America's Cities*. The report by J.H. Cullum Clark, Director of the Bush Institute-SMU Economic Growth Initiative, offers recommendations for policymakers, funders, and leaders of educational and medical institutions. It advocates for stronger engagement between these institutions and their communities to foster innovation, talent development, and prosperity.

MAY 14

Mrs. Laura Bush's Summer Reading List

Mrs. Laura Bush released her 2024 Summer Reading List for Kids with recommendations for young readers ranging from toddlers through middle schoolers. The titles included classics and newer releases, with special collections on pets, family and friends, plus the 2024 Olympic Games.



JUNE 7

President Bush's Paintings on Display at Disney World

The *Portraits of Courage* exhibit, a vibrant collection of oil paintings and stories by President George W. Bush honoring the sacrifice and courage of America's military veterans, debuted inside EPCOT at the Walt Disney World Resort.



SEPTEMBER 13

New Artifact Featured in the *Freedom Matters* Special Exhibit

Before Abraham Lincoln became president – and even before his run for U.S. Senate – he honed his arguments against slavery through handwritten notes called syllogisms. We added one of the most powerful examples from 1854, in which Lincoln logically disassembles arguments supporting slavery, to the *Freedom Matters* special exhibit collection.



OCTOBER 7

The Veteran Landscape: Transforming Lives Beyond the Uniform

The Veterans and Military Families team convened veteran service organization leaders at the Bush Center to inspire a renewed commitment to collaborate and empower veterans and military families to thrive beyond the uniform. Blue Star Families joined the Veteran Wellness Alliance after the convening. The team was also asked to provide public commentary directly to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.



OCTOBER 9

Sharon McMahon's Book Tour Stop at the Bush Center

"America's Government Teacher" Sharon McMahon brought her book tour to the Bush Center with a meet and greet in the replica Oval Office and an entertaining conversation on freedom and democracy. Bush Center President and CEO Ken Hersh joined McMahon on stage at SMU's McFarlin Memorial Auditorium to discuss her latest book, *The Small and the Mighty*.

OCTOBER 21

Political Prisoner Shares His Brave Story

The Bush Center hosted democracy advocates Evgenia and Vladimir Kara-Murza for a discussion on Vladimir Putin's Russia. Kara-Murza shared his brave story as a political prisoner in Russia for two years.



DECEMBER 2

The Pioneer Woman Shares Fun Tips for Holiday Entertaining

Ree Drummond, star of the long-running hit Food Network show, *The Pioneer Woman*, helped us kick off the holiday season in conversation with lifestyle influencer Kimberly Schlegel Whitman. They discussed food, family traditions, and holiday gift giving.



In 2024, our Engage at the Bush Center series presented by NexPoint brought many of the topics that we care about to life on stage via thought-provoking discussions. The series featured a diverse range of events, from January's "The Art of Disagreeing Better" to Savannah Guthrie, TODAY show co-anchor, discussing her book Mostly What God Does with Charlotte Jones, Chief Brand Officer and Co-Owner of the Dallas Cowboys Football Club (featured in this photo). Highlights also included "A Conversation with White House Social Secretaries" in March and "Food, Family, & Holiday Fun: A Conversation with The Pioneer Woman, Ree Drummond" in December.

2024 RESULTS

The Bush Center celebrates the goodness of our nation and pursues with optimism the timeless values of freedom, opportunity, accountability, and compassion. Through policy solutions and public engagement, the Bush Center ensures opportunity for all, strengthens democracy, and advances free societies. We combine ideas and action to improve the lives of people at home and around the world.

MEDIA COVERAGE

In 2024, the Bush Institute was mentioned nearly 5,500 times by media outlets including *Politico*, *FOX Sports*, *NBC*, *The New York Times*, *CNN*, *MSN News*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *The Boston Globe*. The Bush Institute also published over 200 op-eds throughout the year.

PUBLICATIONS

Four editions of *The Catalyst: A Journal of Ideas from the Bush Institute* were published in 2024. The Winter 2024 edition, "The State of American Democracy," was the most successful to date in terms of page views, with over 14,000, well over the previous record of 9,500. President Bush's interview with *Catalyst* Editor-in-Chief Jonathan Tepperman was the most successful article with close to 5,800 page views; the article quickly cracked the Bush Center's top 10 most viewed articles ever.

The Strategerist podcast released 30 new episodes in 2024. Andrew Kaufmann, Director of Communications and Marketing, interviewed guests including Russian human rights activists, veterans, journalists, North Korean escapees, economic experts, Afghan feminists and activists, ambassadors, authors, former White House social secretaries, governors, and a philosopher of happiness.

VOICE OF REASON

Bush Center President and CEO Ken Hersh published a series of five op-eds in *The Dallas Morning News* that aimed to provide hope and guidance to American citizens who, like him, felt "politically homeless" during the 2024 election season. Hersh covered topics ranging from how to be an engaged citizen to why Americans should remain hopeful in the midst of complicated times in our government and politics. "History teaches that our democracy is resilient, but preserving and protecting it takes our collective effort," Hersh wrote.

2024 FINANCIAL REVIEW

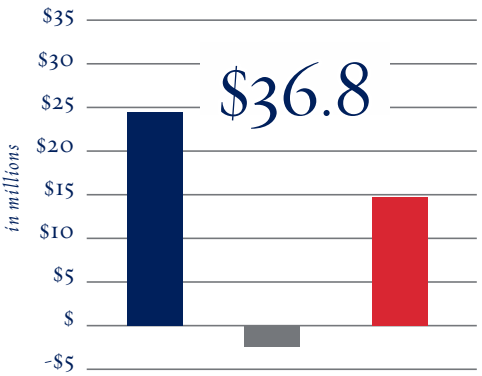
The Bush Center strives to operate in a financially sustainable and responsible manner to ensure that our work will continue long into the future. While successfully managing its expenses, the Bush Center continues to receive tremendous support from individual, corporate, and foundation donors and entered 2025 in a healthy financial condition.

2024 SOURCES

(DOLLARS IN MILLIONS)

- Gifts from Bush Center Supporters, Net of Expenses*
- Bush Center Operations, Net of Expenses**
- Bush Center Endowment Contribution to Operations

* Includes expenses related to membership, online giving and direct mail campaigns.
** Bush Center Operations includes revenue activity from the Bush Museum, public programming, facility rentals, and parking less associated direct expenses and those administrative expenses allocated to these activities.

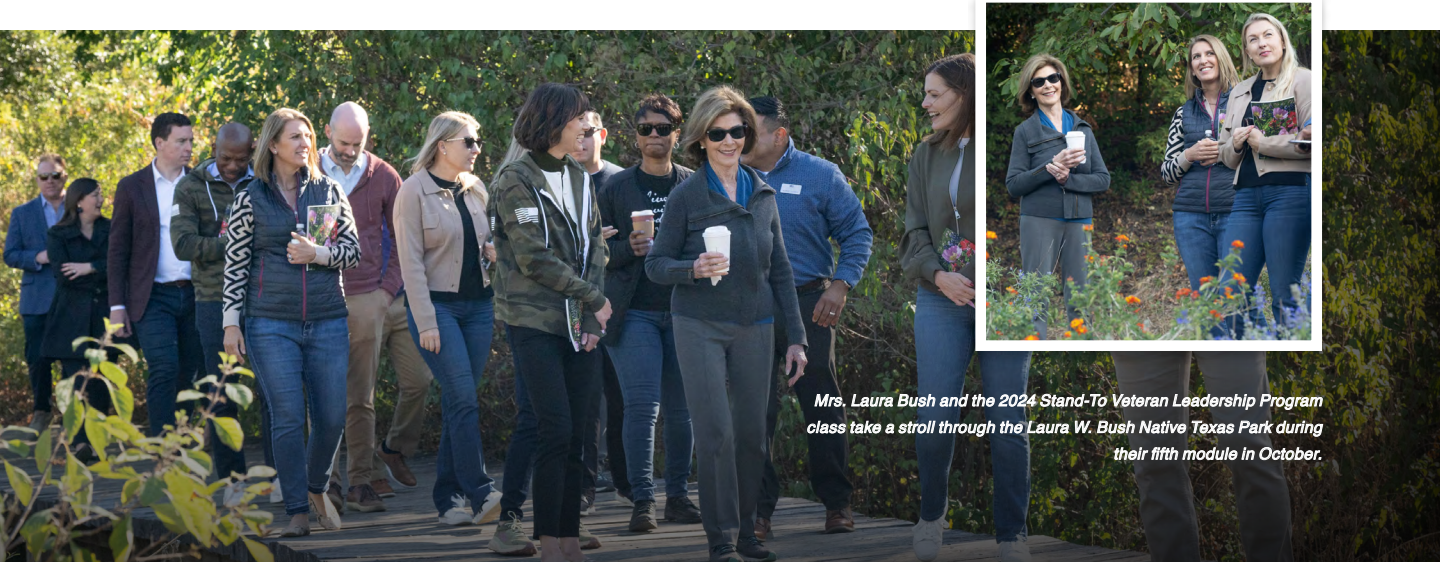
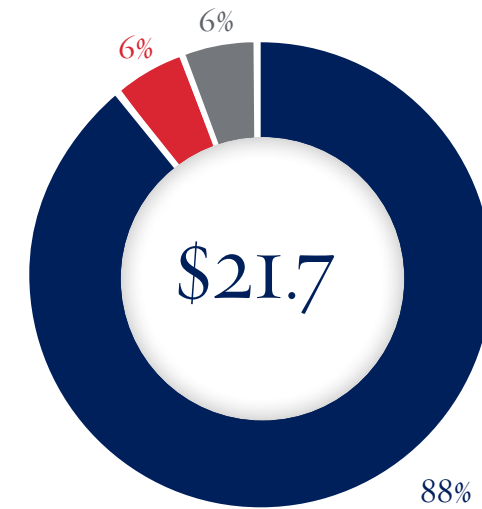


2024 USES *

(DOLLARS IN MILLIONS)

- Program Services**
- Fundraising
- Foundation Administration & Support Operations

* Expenses before depreciation, other non-cash charges, provisions for uncollectible contributions receivable, and distribution of Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries grants. Also excludes all direct expenses and those administrative expenses allocated to Bush Center Operations above.
** Includes the Bush Institute, the Laura W. Bush Native Texas Park, and alumni activities.



Mrs. Laura Bush and the 2024 Stand-To Veteran Leadership Program class take a stroll through the Laura W. Bush Native Texas Park during their fifth module in October.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

GAYLE AND DAN D’ANIELLO

“Gayle and I seek to support organizations where we know our investment will help veterans and their families. When this work can be amplified in measurable ways, such as through the Bush Institute’s collaboration with the D’Aniello Institute, we know our support is making a difference.”

GAYLE AND DAN D’ANIELLO

A cornerstone of the Bush Institute is the relationships and alliances we’ve built that enhance the impact we can make. The Veterans and Military Families program exemplifies how these collaborations can change and save lives.

Gayle and Dan D’Aniello have given generously to the Bush Institute and are valued leaders in our work to support veterans and their families. They have steadfastly supported veterans and military families for decades, going back to Dan’s service in the United States Navy to their transformational gift to the D’Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University, which has served more than 200,000 service members, veterans, and military families. Further, Dan’s strong relationship with the military community and his distinguished service led to him being awarded the designation of Lone Sailor by the U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation.

The D’Aniello Institute plays a vital role in the Bush Institute’s programming, currently providing research and evaluations for the Stand-To Veteran Leadership Program (VLP) and Check-In, an online resource that connects veterans and their families to no-cost, high-quality mental and brain health care. The Bush Institute also partnered with them to co-author a case study on Team 43, a program for wounded veterans that underscores the importance of sports as part of the rehabilitation process.

This partnership has resulted in the Bush Institute equipping more than 240 VLP Scholars from diverse sectors across America to support veterans and their families, ensuring more than 1,000 individuals are receiving the care they need through Check-In and empowering more than 200 Team 43 alumni, including those who participate in President Bush’s bike ride each fall.

“Dan and Gayle’s vision to significantly invest in veterans and their families has resulted in life-changing programs that will impact our communities for decades to come. We couldn’t do this work without their leadership.”

KEN HERSH
PRESIDENT AND CEO, GEORGE W. BUSH
PRESIDENTIAL CENTER

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The George W. Bush Presidential Center extends its deepest appreciation to members of our giving societies as of December 31, 2024.

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*As of May 31, 2025

†Deceased

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