

# Alumni Organize in Defense of College Free Speech

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WASHINGTON, DC, US, October 18, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Millions of college and university alumni are dismayed by the intolerance of unpopular viewpoints at their alma maters, and now some have begun to fight back.

Alumni have organized groups at five of America's most prestigious higher-ed institutions -- Cornell University, Davidson College, Princeton University, the University of Virginia, and Washington & Lee University -- to defend free speech, academic freedom, and viewpoint diversity on college campuses. Today these groups are announcing that they have joined forces under the banner of the Alumni Free Speech Council to launch a national effort to mobilize alumni.

National and school-specific polls show that high percentages of students and many faculty are afraid to express their views on controversial topics. In fact, discouraging numbers of students indicate in polls that free speech is not justified if certain groups find the ideas offensive. The Foundation for Individual Rights (FIRE) found in a survey this year that more than 80% of students report self-censoring their viewpoints at least some of the time, with 21% saying they censor themselves often.

College administrators and boards of trustees are often too timid to push back against the culture of intolerance on their campuses. Alumni have influence with college presidents and board members, who are constantly asking for their involvement and contributions. The five groups comprising the Alumni Free Speech Alliance share the conviction that alumni can create a countervailing force to stand up for free speech. The Alliance will promote the exchange of information and best practices between its member organizations and provide assistance to alumni at other universities who wish to create free-speech organizations and join the Alliance.

"American colleges and universities are entrusted with educating our youth to think critically, to explore all options, and to gain the skills needed for leading productive lives," said John L. Craig, president of the Davidson alumni group. "This can be accomplished only in environments where the search for truth is unfettered. The forces against campus free speech and for ideological indoctrination are entrenched, and things can change only if alumni stakeholders fight back"

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The members of the Alliance are:

Cornell University  
Cornell Free Speech Alliance

Davidson College  
Davidsonians for Freedom of Thought and Discourse

Princeton University  
Princetonians for Free Speech

University of Virginia  
The Jefferson Council

Washington & Lee University  
The Generals Redoubt

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