

# LUCE LADDER

*"Courage is the ladder on which all the other virtues mount."*

– Clare Boothe Luce

From the President

May 2026

## THE LUCE CENTER

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## Mary Margaret Olohan Urges Berkeley Students to Seek Truth and Fact Check the Liberal Media



*Mary Margaret Olohan, White House Correspondent for the Daily Wire, speaks to hundreds of students at UC-Berkeley as part of the Luce Center's Keith Work Speakers Series.*

enforcement, restrictions on transgender procedures for minors, and women's sports policies as examples of the administration's approach. "There are no more men who identify as transgender women in women's sports. That's not allowed anymore," she said. "There are no more transgender procedures happening in hospitals for minors anymore. It's just not allowed." She described the administration's strategy as action-oriented: "They're doing it, they're getting it done, they're owning it, and they're moving forward."

Mary Margaret Olohan, White House Correspondent for the **Daily Wire**, spoke to hundreds of students at **UC-Berkeley** on April 1 as part of the Luce Center's **Keith Work Speakers Series**.

Speaking from her experience covering the Trump and Biden administrations, she described how quickly public perception of the president has changed since his first term. "Donald Trump has gone from being the person who was absolutely persona non grata... and now look where we are...It has become very normal to support the president in Washington, DC," she explained.

That change, she argued, is the result of **President Trump** following through on the agenda he promised to the American people. His administration is "very united, they're very aggressive, and that's on purpose," Olohan said, pointing to immigration



*More than 30 minutes after class ended, students continued crowding around Olohan with questions, extending the impact of her conservative message well beyond her talk.*



*(Left) A young woman talks with Olohan following her remarks. (Middle) A student eagerly asks a question. (Right) Olohan brings intellectual diversity to Berkeley’s campus through her remarks on her experience covering the White House.*

Olohan also spent time discussing the media itself and the responsibility journalists have in shaping public understanding. **“I’m a reporter... I care about the truth,”** she said, explaining that her role is not to guide opinion but to report facts clearly and directly. “If you read my stories, you’ll notice that there aren’t really any adjectives in them... it’s not my job to tell you how to feel about it.”

She argued that many news outlets use language in ways that subtly steer readers toward certain conclusions, especially on controversial issues. Olohan pointed to phrases like “gender affirming care,” which she said can obscure what is actually being discussed.

“The point of that is to make you think a certain way,” she explained. “It shouldn’t be their job to try and manipulate us like that.”

In an era dominated by social media and nonstop information, Olohan encouraged students to approach the news thoughtfully rather than react impulsively. “We are completely equipped to know whether something is true or not,” she said, urging students to slow down, verify information, and seek out original sources. **“Be the person that fact checks it... be the person that goes to the source.”**

She also encouraged students not to let headlines or social media outrage shape their thinking, arguing that many stories are intentionally exaggerated to provoke reaction and drive attention.

More than 30 minutes after class ended, students were still lined up to ask Olohan questions, a reminder that many young people are eager to engage seriously with ideas that challenge the liberal status quo—even on one of the country’s most left-leaning campuses.



*Students wait for more than 30 minutes for continued questions and conversation with Olohan, who received more questions than any other guest speaker in Professor Alan Ross’ class this year.*

# Mary Hasson Warns the Fight Against Gender Ideology Is Far From Over



(Left) **Mary Hasson** speaks to a room full of conservative men and women of all ages, emphasizing the importance of mentorship, formation, and women’s leadership in shaping culture. (Right) Young women hear from Hasson, building community around shared commitments to truth, human flourishing, and a stronger America.

“Trans is over. Gender ideology is done.”

**Mary Hasson** began her April 10 talk at the Luce Center by recalling those words from a friend before explaining why she believes they are dangerously premature.

During the Conservative Network Event, “Rewired: How Gender Ideology is Reshaping American Culture,” Hasson challenged students, members, and guests not to mistake recent public policy victories for lasting cultural change.

Hasson, the Kate O’Beirne Senior Fellow at the **Ethics and Public Policy Center** and co-author of *Get Out Now: Why You Should Pull Your Child from Public School Before It’s Too Late*, brought a sobering but hopeful message to the Luce Center audience.

Throughout her talk, Hasson argued that gender ideology has become deeply embedded in American institutions, from education and medicine to entertainment, law, and corporate culture. Focusing primarily on the policy implications of the movement, she urged attendees to think seriously about the long-term consequences of ideas that reject the significance of biological sex and human nature.

“It’s a belief system,” she said. “It’s a false anthropology... a corrupt vision of the human person.”

## A “False Anthropology”

Hasson carefully walked through the ideology’s underlying assumptions, explaining how it separates identity from the body and treats biological sex as something fluid and self-defined.

Describing what she sees as one of the movement’s most dangerous ideas, Hasson explained that gender ideology “deconstructs the human person by dividing mind and body.” Under that framework, she said, “The mind—what you think, what you feel—that’s what really matters. Whereas your body is simply a tool or a canvas for personal expression.”

Hasson also discussed the growing medicalization of children experiencing gender confusion, warning that minors are increasingly being encouraged to undergo life-altering interventions before they are mature enough to fully understand the consequences.

“Children who are too young to drink, to drive, or to sign a contract,” she said, “are deemed able to consent... to unproven procedures that alter their healthy bodies.”

Tracing the movement’s roots back decades, Hasson argued that gender ideology did not suddenly emerge but instead spread gradually through major cultural institutions.

Calling it “a global movement,” she pointed to schools, social media, gaming, pornography, and healthcare systems as some of the primary channels shaping young people today.

“The primary victims of most ideology are young people,” Hasson said, explaining that lasting cultural change rarely comes from persuading older generations to abandon their beliefs. “It comes by capturing the youth.”

### **Formation, Mentorship, and Leadership**

Rather than calling young people to withdraw from public life, Hasson urged them to pursue formation, truth, and leadership — themes that closely align with the Luce Center’s mission of preparing and promoting conservative women leaders.

She argued that cultural renewal will require serious investment in young people, “in particular, women,” because “women need the formation, they need the truth, they need to see the goodness, the compassion, the kindness that comes with the truth.”

After emphasizing the importance of mentorship and formation, Hasson praised the Luce Center’s work, saying she was “so thrilled with what Clare Boothe Luce is doing” and calling the young women she met through the organization “just outstanding.” She described the Center’s investment in future leaders as exactly what the culture needs more of.

The lasting impact of mentorship and formation was evident in the audience itself, which included 2020 Luce Center intern **Victoria Spiotto**, now a Loudoun County Public School teacher who continues to be involved with the conservative movement. The event gave Spiotto the opportunity to reconnect with **Sandra Scarlatoiu**, who was also a part of the 2020 intern class and now serves as the Luce Center’s productions officer.

### **“The World Needs Good Women”**

During Q&A, one attendee asked Hasson how women should think about using their voices in the world and what advice she would give to young women interested in public policy and cultural leadership.

“The world needs good women,” Hasson responded. She added that “women shape the moral dimension of culture” before reflecting on the responsibility conservative women now face.

“The wrong women have been shaping the culture,” she said, encouraging the young women in the audience not to “stand back” or “stand down,” but to pursue serious intellectual and moral formation.

“We need good women, smart women, capable women to acquire the formation and then follow God’s leading,” she said. “We need leaders like you.”

### **Truth and Compassion**

Another attendee shared that she had lost a close friendship because of disagreements surrounding gender ideology and asked Hasson how young people should navigate those painful situations.

Hasson encouraged the audience to approach those relationships with both honesty and compassion, advising them to “be uniformly kind” and to let friends know “you’re always there, even though you disagree.”

At the same time, she cautioned young people not to compromise the truth in an effort to preserve approval or avoid conflict.

“Don’t let that make you back off from what’s true,” she said.

**“Speak the truth,” she said. “If there’s been one singular change that has been really powerful over the past three or four years, it’s the number of people willing to stand up and say what’s true.”**

She also emphasized that lasting cultural change requires long-term investment in institutions and leadership.

“Culture change rarely happens just through the grassroots,” she said. “Unless we get good people into the institutions who are willing to change things, it’s not going to change.”

Following Hasson’s remarks, guests enjoyed conversation and camaraderie with fellow conservatives committed to advancing a freer, more prosperous America.



# Kimberly Begg Speaks at Benedictine College on Leadership and Human Flourishing



“Leadership,” Luce Center President Kimberly Begg told students at Benedictine College on April 27, is “cooperating with God’s grace.”

Speaking to **Benedictine College** President **Stephen Minnis’s** leadership class, Begg shared stories and insights from her own life, reflecting on the courage required to pursue God’s calling fully.

She explained that cooperating with God’s grace is active, not passive, and demands **honest reflection and a willingness to respond in moments big and small.**



She told students that most people only realize a fraction of their potential for human flourishing, that the reason is not that they don’t have the skills or opportunities to flourish, because God gives us everything we need—our unique skills, interests, temperaments, personalities—to do His will. But that we often **lack the imagination and courage to wonder about our gifts and what more God is calling us to do.**



The discussion prompted thoughtful questions from students and led to a robust conversation about women and work. Begg, who has five children ranging in age from 11 to 19, spoke candidly about the different seasons of her own professional and family life and how her approach to leadership has evolved over time.

She explained that at certain points, she worked remotely to better accommodate the needs of her family. Today, as president of the Luce Center, she sets the staff’s in-office, Monday-through-Friday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. “collaboration hours,” giving employees flexibility to manage work and other responsibilities outside those hours.



Throughout the conversation, Begg encouraged students to approach their lives with honesty, humility, and integrity. She noted that many of them will be called to family life and emphasized that **men and women are intelligent, rational, and creative like their Creator,** and need to support each other in using their gifts consistent with God’s plan for their lives.

Students connected to the Luce Center helped shape the discussion, including 2025 intern **Anastasia Leffas**, who will be joining our team this summer, and incoming 2026 interns **Lucy Carney** and **Alexis Lange**.

*Luce Center President **Kimberly Begg** speaks at **Benedictine College**. During her visit to campus, Begg spent time with President **Stephen Minnis** (third from top) and students, including freshman **Reagan Hinkle** (bottom).*

# Marksmanship Meets Networking at DC-area Day at the Range



Luce Center spring intern **Lucy Evich** took the lead in bringing together college women and young professionals in the DC area for a Day at the Range in **Ashburn, Virginia**. Beyond firearms training and marksmanship practice, the event fostered meaningful connections across our network of conservative women.



The day began in the classroom with hands-on instruction in firearms safety, mechanics, and responsible handling. Before stepping onto the range, the group practiced loading and unloading, proper grip, and shooting stances under the guidance of NRA-certified instructors. Reflecting on the experience she helped organize, Lucy shared:

*Before attending a Day at the Range, I had never once held a gun before. I now feel more confident and secure knowing that I can safely handle a gun. I am incredibly grateful to the Luce Center for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and for the free country I live in where I can exercise my second amendment rights.*



## Thank you for supporting conservative women

Explore sponsorship opportunities to give today's young women the conservative education and mentorship they need to become the strong conservative leaders our country needs\*

Summer Interns	\$15,000	12 Fully Sponsored - <b>Thank you!</b>
Fall Interns	\$7,500	2 needed - please consider



### Washington, DC Summit - 55 needed - please consider

June 26 - Featuring Alex Clark, Reagan Reese, Erika Donalds, and Leah Campos	Full sponsorship	\$1,000
	Half Sponsorship	\$500

### College Women's Summit in San Antonio - 74 needed - please consider

October 16-18 - Featuring Isabel Brown, Mary Margaret Olohan, and more exciting leaders TBA	Full sponsorship	\$1,500
	Half Sponsorship	\$750



# On a Personal NOTE

Dear Fellow Conservative,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Luce Center, I am delighted to share the news that **Clare Luce Abbey was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Board** at our recent annual meeting. As the granddaughter of the woman our organization is named after, Clare is the perfect person to serve as we embark on a new chapter of growth, influence, and impact. (Please see the lovely note from Clare enclosed.)

As readers of *Luce Ladder* know, **the Luce Center has dramatically expanded our programming and outreach over the past two years**, with more events, training, mentoring, education, and engagement than ever before. Our Summits are larger than ever, we have doubled our number of summer interns, and we now offer Young Women's Luncheons, Conservative Network Events, a *Gen Z Unplugged* podcast, and an enhanced online presence at [conservativewomen.com](http://conservativewomen.com) and on social media.

The timing for this expanding footprint is crucial, given the challenges that young women face. **Today's young women are twice as likely to identify as liberal (41%) than conservative (20%)**—and that identification is increasingly associated with more radical views, including support of political violence.

I am also proud to announce the addition of two new board members: **Cathy Ruse** and **Caroline Corazza**, who join existing board members **Kate Obenshain Keeler**, **Marji Ross**, **Camille Hart**, Clare, and myself.

We are excited to build on our momentum of **record-breaking financial strength and interest in our conservative outreach, education and mentorship** of young women. I am honored and grateful to serve alongside Clare and the rest of our talented and enthusiastic board as we pursue our mission to prepare and promote conservative women leaders. I encourage you to reach out to me anytime if you have a question or suggestion for how we can better accomplish our goals. And please be sure to attend one or more of our Conservative Network Events or President's Club retreats in the near future.

We look forward to partnering with you to help young conservative women thrive.

In Friendship & Freedom,



President



*Clare Luce Abbey (right) is the granddaughter of Henry Luce, founder of Time magazine, and Clare Boothe Luce (left), whom our Center is named after. When she was a young woman, Clare had the incredible experience of serving as her grandmother's travel companion; it was a deeply formative experience that helped her become the strong, conservative woman she is today. Clare is a longtime member of our Board of Directors and supports our work in many ways. If you have visited our Center in Virginia, you have seen the many historic items she has gifted us to inspire our young women—including the Presidential Medal of Freedom that President Ronald Reagan awarded her grandmother in 1983. We are tremendously grateful for Clare's support, wise counsel, and friendship.*

P.S. Thank you for helping make this exciting season of growth possible at the Luce Center. Your support is helping young conservative women find the courage, community, and formation they need to lead with confidence.



# THE LUCE CENTER

May 11, 2026

Dear Fellow Conservative,

It is my profound honor to step into the role of chairman for the Clare Boothe Luce Center for Conservative Women. For more than 30 years, the Center has been the leading source of wisdom, guidance, and support for conservative women, particularly young women on college campuses. And our future is even more exciting.

Over the 15 years that I have served on the Luce Center Board, I have met hundreds of these brave, beautiful young women at Luce Center events, and I have been horrified to hear what they endure on campuses across the country. Threats, intimidation, humiliation, physical attacks, emotional abuse, isolation, destruction of their property, failing grades from professors simply because these young women have the courage to voice their conservative values. As we know, the violence and vitriol are only getting worse—which means these young women need us now more than ever.

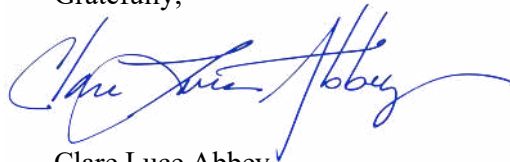
That is why I am so overjoyed to report that the Luce Center is stronger and more vibrant than ever. At our annual board meeting recently, the staff members' presentations were extraordinary. Several young women on our staff, all of them under 30, spoke eloquently, confidently, and passionately about the work they are doing at the Center. From hosting events to launching new initiatives to welcoming new donors, these young women give me confidence that the future of our country is bright, despite what the mainstream media would have you believe.

I am especially impressed by our president, Kimberly Begg. Her creative insight, her thoughtful stewardship, and her intense commitment to our mission are inspiring. I have never seen a leader work harder or more effectively, both building a remarkable staff and dramatically upgrading our programs, our communication, our social media, our diversified fund-raising, and our connection with young women.

I am thrilled to be part of this organization, named after my indomitable and incomparable grandmother, Clare Boothe Luce. I can say with confidence that our work, our mission, and our team would make her proud.

Thank you for your support. I look forward to meeting with you, talking with you, and working with you in the months and years ahead.

Gratefully,



Clare Luce Abbey  
Chairman