DENVER SEMINARY



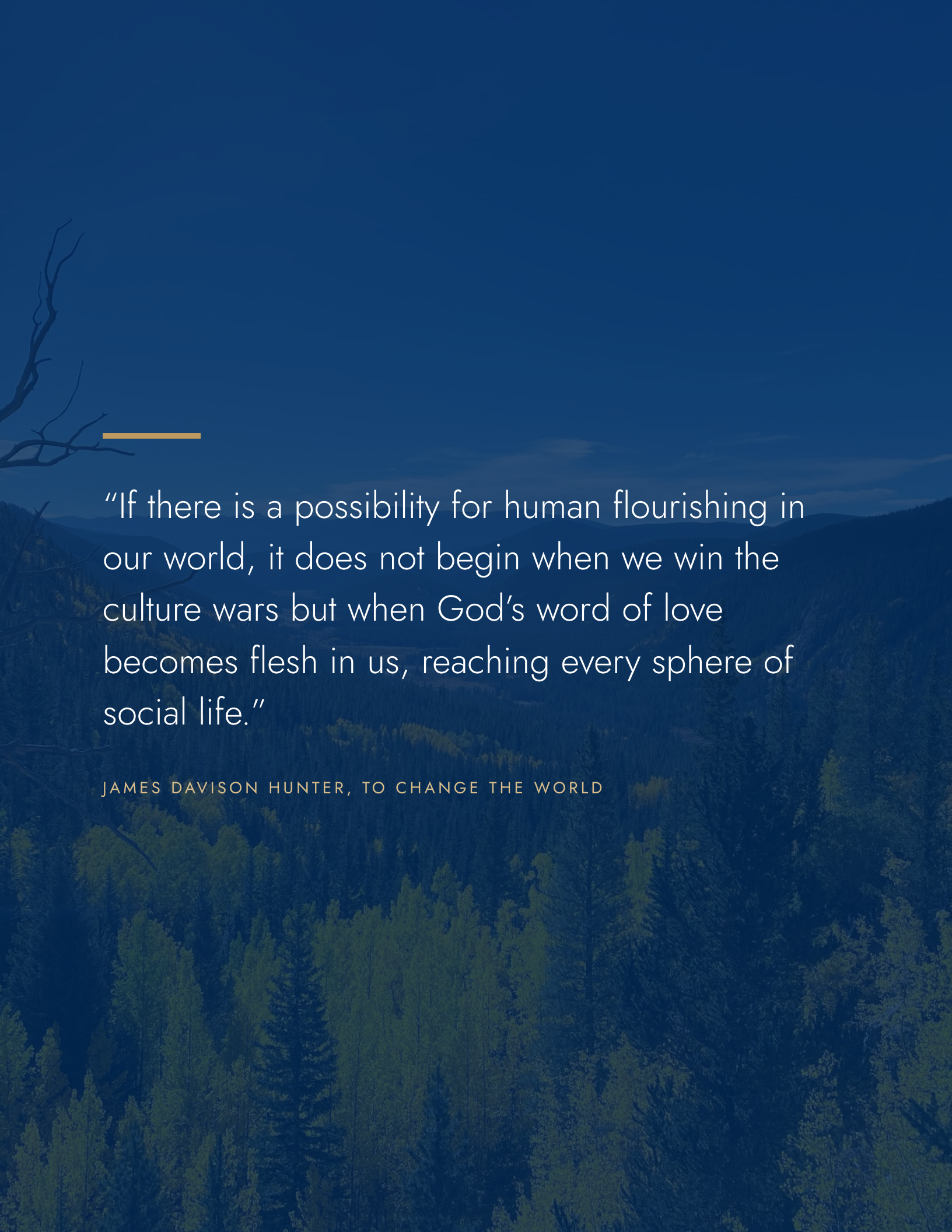
DENVER SEMINARY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Mark and Priscilla Young Center for Gospel and Culture

LITTLETON, COLORADO

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"If there is a possibility for human flourishing in our world, it does not begin when we win the culture wars but when God's word of love becomes flesh in us, reaching every sphere of social life."

JAMES DAVISON HUNTER, TO CHANGE THE WORLD

THE GROUND OF THIS WORK

Christ is risen. That claim is either the most consequential fact about the world or it is nothing at all, and Denver Seminary has staked its life on the former. The resurrection is not consolation offered to a diminished church. It is the vindication of creation, the announcement that the order of things has been restored rather than replaced, and therefore that every sphere of human making, thinking, and belonging falls within the scope of Christ's lordship.

This carries a consequence the church has been slow to accept. If all things hold together in him (Colossians 1:17), then the domains where meaning is now manufactured, which is to say technology, public life, the creative industries, and the academy, are not territory the church may concede. They are territory into which the church is sent. Not to recapture. Not to defend. To bear witness.

The Mark and Priscilla Young Center for Gospel and Culture exists to form the people who will go.

> The departure crisis does not create this Center's mission. The empty tomb does. What the departure crisis supplies is the address.

And the address is specific. Forty percent of Colorado adults now identify as religiously unaffiliated, against twenty-nine percent nationally; fifty-one percent identify as Christian. Along the Front Range this is a settled condition rather than a passing trend, and pastors feel its weight daily without the theological, research, and formational infrastructure the moment requires. America is not post-religious. It is post-churched, and the difference determines everything that follows. People who have left the church have not stopped wanting what the church was given to provide.

Denver Seminary seeks a founding Executive Director to build the Center that meets them.





DENVER SEMINARY

Denver Seminary is a private evangelical graduate institution in Littleton, Colorado, committed to the authority of Scripture, rigorous scholarship, and the formation of leaders for the church and the world. For more than seventy-five years it has prepared women and men to serve faithfully in ministry, counseling, leadership, and theological education.

The Seminary serves a broad community of learners drawn from across the Protestant traditions. Rather than aligning with a single denomination, it serves the wider evangelical church while holding what it calls charitable orthodoxy: theological conviction held with clarity and expressed through humility, respect, and gracious dialogue.

Denver Seminary speaks from strength. Its most recent accreditation review closed with no monitoring required. The Seminary of the Future capital campaign closed at $40.5 million against a $28 million goal. Its financial position permits proactive institutional development rather than reactive survival. It is from this settled ground, and not from anxiety, that the Seminary now establishes the Young Center.

75+
YEARS OF FORMATION

40+
DENOMINATIONS SERVED

$40.5M
RAISED IN THE COMPLETED CAMPAIGN



THE YOUNG CENTER

Established through a ten-million-dollar gift, the Young Center forms Christians for faithful, intellectually credible presence within the institutions that most shape how people think and believe. Colorado's Front Range is treated here as a laboratory whose findings can serve Christian witness across post-Christian America.

The company it intends to keep

The Center's ambition can be named by its peers. The Trinity Forum, whose hospitable conversations gather leaders around the questions that matter most. Comment and Cardus, whose public theology takes institutions and the common good seriously.

Praxis, which forms Christian founders and creative practitioners for redemptive work. The pattern of urban ministry that Redeemer established in New York and that has since been carried into a dozen cities.

Each has shown that serious Christian thought, offered generously and in public, still finds a hearing among people the church had written off. None of them is a seminary. The Young Center's distinctive claim is that this work belongs inside a theological institution, where formation is the native discipline, and where the faculty, research capacity, and confessional depth to sustain it are already in place.

> To our knowledge, the Young Center will be the only seminary-based center in America whose primary strategy is the formation of Christians for credible presence within the specific cultural institutions of a defined post-Christian region, using that region not merely as a mission field but as a living laboratory whose findings serve the wider church.

Why Colorado

Paul told the Athenians that God "marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands," and that he did so "so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us" (Acts 17:26–27). Colorado is such a boundary and such a moment. What the church learns here about forming faithful, courageous, and intelligent witnesses will be needed nationwide within a generation.



Alongside, not against

The Center enters this landscape as a partner. The Keller Center for Cultural Apologetics, working through The Gospel Coalition's national platform, equips church leaders broadly through research, writing, and conferences. The Young Center works locally and vocationally, forming practitioners at depth within specific cultural domains, and it does so with video and with graduate-level, practitioner-oriented tutorials and conversation as its primary public medium. Keller provides scale and national research; the Young Center provides a regional laboratory and specialization in technology, political theology, and the creative industries. The relationship is complementary by design.

THE CHARTER AND THE CENTER

The Young Center is not a departure from Denver Seminary's identity. It is that identity turned outward.

The Seminary's Charter grounds the institution in resurrection reality rather than institutional preservation. It is less a strategic plan than an account of what is true and of what therefore follows. Out of that account the Charter forms leaders who are faithful, courageous, and intelligent. The Center forms such leaders for the particular vocations that shape a post-Christian culture, and sends them into the institutions the church has too often left behind. To lead the Center is to carry the Charter across the Seminary's threshold and into the world it was written to serve.

The Charter's design principles are not honored here in the abstract. They are the Center's operating logic.

Resurrection-grounded intellectual courage

is the posture of the Faith and Flourishing dialogues, which pursue the hardest questions without anxiety.

Charitable orthodoxy and global witness

is the discipline asked of the Fellows, who hold conviction with clarity while engaging others with genuine curiosity and grace.

Theological inquiry grounded in ministry practice

is the shape of the formation itself, where reflection and practice are a single act rather than a sequence.

A candidate should understand the Center as one of the Seminary's clearest demonstrations that the Charter forms a culture, and not merely a document the Board has approved.



HONORING MARK AND PRISCILLA YOUNG

The Center bears the name of Dr. Mark and Priscilla Young in recognition of their decades of service to Denver Seminary and to the global church, and because its mission continues the work to which they gave their lives.

Through the 1980s and into the early 1990s the Youngs served in Austria and across the nations of the former Soviet bloc, engaged in theological education and leadership development in societies where secular culture had long since displaced the church from public life. Dr. Young served as founding academic dean of the Biblical Theological Seminary in Wrocław, Poland, then taught world missions and intercultural studies at Dallas Theological Seminary from 1995 to 2009, and led Denver Seminary as its seventh president from 2009 to 2024. He grew increasingly convinced in those final years that America itself had become a mission field.

The capacities the Center forms in its Fellows are missionary capacities: cultural interpretation, faithful presence within secular institutions, the ability to articulate Christian conviction with intellectual seriousness where it is no longer assumed. The Youngs spent their careers cultivating exactly these. The Center that bears their name now turns that same formation toward the mission field at Denver Seminary's own front door.

A word on naming and governance. The naming honors a legacy. The governance structure protects the mission. These are two expressions of the same institutional respect. Dr. Young serves as Chancellor of Denver Seminary, and with respect to the Center his role is that of its most visible public advocate: present at significant events, engaged with donors who share the vision. The Executive Director reports to the President and exercises day-to-day leadership of the Center's development. A candidate should read this arrangement as the condition that gives a new institution the creative candor it needs to find its footing.

THE WORK: FOUR INTEGRATED INITIATIVES

The Center concentrates its effort in four initiatives that reinforce one another. The video series builds credibility and draws applicants; Fellows become video guests; Forum speakers integrate with both; research grounds all three in the actual patterns of doubt and departure rather than assumed concerns. One initiative adds value. Four integrated initiatives compound it.

Faith & Flourishing Conversation Series.

Monthly thirty-minute video dialogues, professionally produced and distributed across YouTube, podcast platforms, and partner networks. The series establishes intellectual credibility and reach, addressing the questions secular culture raises and cannot answer. Year-one topics include AI, algorithms, and human dignity; therapeutic culture and the loss of transcendence; identity and the gospel's alternative vision; and justice beyond retribution.

Gospel & Culture Fellows Program.

The primary formation work. Cohort-based and vocationally specific, the program launches with the Technology and Human Flourishing track in Year 1, forming ten to twelve Fellows across four two-day intensives, and expands to additional vocational tracks thereafter, reaching twenty-five to thirty Fellows annually at maturity. Which domains come next is a judgment the founding Director will help make. Fellows return to their workplaces, congregations, and neighborhoods formed to give a reason for their hope in the very places where faith is most contested.

Annual Public Forum on Gospel and Culture.

A flagship public gathering convening church leaders, cultural professionals, university students and faculty, seekers, and the Seminary community around a substantial evening address, panel, next-day faculty seminar, and donor reception. Held in secular venues by design, it establishes Denver Seminary as a serious convener of consequential conversations.

Research Partnership in Service of Formation.

The Center intends to listen before it speaks. Its programming will be shaped by careful study of why people leave the church and what post-Christian seekers are actually looking for, so that the Center addresses real questions rather than assumed ones. Research relationships with established organizations, and in time original Colorado-specific study, will serve that end, and what is learned returns to church leaders as help for their own contexts.

A Launch Summit, *Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility*, borrowing Hunter's own subtitle with acknowledgment, will announce the Center's presence and establish its national relationships, combining a private symposium of some twenty-five leading practitioners with a public forum. It becomes an annual convening from Year 2 forward. The founding Executive Director will help shape and convene it, and will inherit the relationships it creates.

A word on method. The Center takes apologetics seriously as the intellectual dimension of Christian witness while refusing to let argument stand alone. Its working conviction, as Hunter argues, is that cultural influence follows from the faithful presence of formed Christians within the institutions that shape cultural imagination. Political power produces backlash. Accommodation forfeits the gospel's distinctive claims. Withdrawal preserves purity at the cost of presence. Faithful presence is the road less traveled, and the Center is built on the conviction that it is the most promising one.

A FOUNDATION OF STRENGTH

The Young Center begins from a position of unusual financial security. A ten-million-dollar Charitable Lead Annuity Trust, established by the Center's founding donor, provides the operational foundation for its first decade and beyond.

This matters more than it might appear. Most new initiatives spend their formative years under financial uncertainty, and that uncertainty constrains every decision: whom to hire, which programs to launch, how boldly to stake out a position. The Center is free of that pressure. It is free to build well and to let its work speak for itself.

The five-year operating model is disciplined and legible. It builds from a foundation year toward a steady state, drawing only a fraction of the trust's capacity and leaving substantial room for endowment growth and expansion.

YEAR	OPERATING BUDGET	DEFINING WORK
Year 1	$670,000	Foundation: video series, Technology Fellows, Annual Forum
Year 2	$864,000	Launch Summit; second Fellows track added
Year 3	$893,271	Full programming across three Fellows tracks
Year 4	$903,420	Steady state
Year 5	$918,871	Steady state with enhanced video production
Five-year total	**$4,249,562**	A fraction of trust capacity; room for endowment growth



Governance

The Young Center is a vital part of Denver Seminary. It is not a separate entity or organization, and it is therefore subject to the Seminary's bylaws, board policy manual, and the policies that govern every operation within the Seminary, including the same budgeting process, standards, and requirements applied generally. The Board of Trustees retains authority over the Center, including its budget, mission, and operations.

Within that framework the Executive Director reports directly to the President, who maintains oversight through regular review, and exercises day-to-day leadership of the Center's programming, staffing, and public voice. An Advisory Council drawn from church leadership, technology, the creative industries, the academy, the Board, and the Seminary faculty offers strategic counsel on renewable terms. The Board welcomes the Council's input; the Council does not govern. A candidate should read this arrangement plainly: the Center carries a public identity and none of the exposure of a start-up, and its leader builds inside an institution rather than beside one.

The Center also consolidates the assets and purpose of the Seminary's prior Gospel Initiative, retiring that brand and concentrating institutional momentum in a single, unified effort.



WHAT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR INHERITS

The founding Executive Director joins at the moment of greatest possibility in an institution's life: the beginning, when the work is still being shaped and the first decisions set the pattern for everything that follows. The role inherits genuine assets.

A founding endowment that removes financial anxiety. The Charitable Lead Annuity Trust funds the Center's first decade. The Director is freed to build with patience and to take the creative risks a new institution requires.

A defined and credible strategy. The Center's mission, theological grounding, four initiatives, budget, governance, and metrics are already articulated in a Board-approved proposal. The Director inherits a blueprint to execute and refine, not a blank page to fill under pressure.

The standing of Denver Seminary. A name that commands respect across evangelical Christianity, a faculty that joins scholarly rigor to pastoral sensitivity, and an institution occupying the theological center of the church it serves.

National relationships to be built, with the doors open. The Center's strategy anticipates partnership with the Keller Center for Cultural Apologetics, research collaboration with organizations such as Barna and Pew, and an alliance on the theological ethics of technology with the DELTA network at Notre Dame's Pulte Institute. None of these is yet in place. Establishing them is among the founding Director's first and most consequential tasks, and one of the clearest reasons the role calls for someone who already knows how to open such doors.

A place that concentrates the future. Colorado embodies the conditions Christianity will meet nationwide within a generation. To form leaders here is to develop the models, resources, and people the wider church will need.

A platform, not a holding pattern. For the right leader this is a national platform secured by a decade of funding, the backing and counsel of the President, and a founding canvas of unusual scope. Few roles in the church offer a builder this much room this early. The Seminary is committed to investing in whoever holds this position.

THE WORK AHEAD

Establish and lead. Build the Center as its founding leader, establishing its identity, first staff, advisory council, and operating rhythms with excellence and theological coherence.

Bring the initiatives to life. Launch the Faith & Flourishing series and the inaugural Technology and Humanity cohort, and convene the Launch Summit, demonstrating the Center's seriousness through its first public work.

Convene and partner. Cultivate the relationships on which the Center depends: the Keller Center, research partners, cultural institutions, church networks, and the donors who share the vision.

Steward the mission. Partner closely with the President to align the Center's development with the Seminary's Charter, ensuring the work expresses institutional vision rather than drifting from it.

Keep the end in view. Form Christians who are, in the institutions they inhabit, genuinely different: more intellectually serious, more pastorally generous, more able to bear witness to the gospel's truth and beauty where neither is any longer expected.

THE PERSON WE ARE LOOKING FOR

The Seminary is looking for a convener with a public voice.

The gift that matters most here is the ability to gather the right people around a question that matters, and to do it well enough that they come back. This is a role for someone who is at home on a stage, on camera, and on the page; who knows how to host a room of technologists, journalists, pastors, and skeptics and make each of them glad to be in it; and who arrives with a network already, because the Center's first two years will be built substantially out of relationships the Director already has.

A well-connected connector. The Center needs a leader who arrives with an established and growing network among Christian thought leaders, and who keeps building it as a matter of instinct. This is the qualification that most directly determines how fast the Center becomes real. The first video guests, the first Fellows, the first Forum speaker, the first research partner, and the first national relationships will come substantially from relationships the Director already holds.

On joy. The Charter refuses to separate intellectual rigor, spiritual depth, resurrection confidence, and joy, "because they were never meant to be" separated. That is not a decorative sentence. It describes the person the Center requires. Christian cultural engagement has too often been carried out by people who are anxious, aggrieved, or fighting a losing argument, and audiences can tell. We are looking for someone whose confidence in the risen Christ has made them generous, curious, and gladly interested in people who do not yet agree with them. Warmth here is a qualification, not a pleasantry.

A builder's instincts. The energy and judgment to bring an institution into being, set its culture, hire its first team, and decide well where no precedent exists. This is a role for someone drawn to the unbuilt.

Theological seriousness. Depth sufficient to hold the Center's convictions with clarity, to earn the respect of serious scholars, and to speak Christian truth into secular rooms without dilution. The Center's scholarly weight is carried jointly by its Advisory Council and the Denver Seminary faculty; the Director convenes that weight and need not personally supply all of it.

Fluency with the secular world. A reader of secular institutions and the questions they raise, equipped to engage technology, public life, and the creative industries with curiosity rather than suspicion, and to commend the gospel to skeptics without condescension or defensiveness.

Generative public work. A record of writing, speaking, or making things that travel. The Center's first and most visible initiative is a video series; its leader must be compelling in public.

Relational and stewardship capacity. Demonstrated ability to build and deepen relationships with donors and partners, stewarding a founding endowment with discipline and broadening support over time.

Executive presence grounded in service. The gravitas to represent Denver Seminary among sophisticated leaders while leading a team with humility, accountability, and care.

QUALIFICATIONS

Graduate theological formation is expected, and the Master of Divinity or its equivalent is the ordinary route to it. A doctorate is welcome and is not required. A substantial body of published or public theological work will be weighed as highly as a credential. The Seminary is looking for depth it can verify, and it will read a candidate's whole record to find it.

Beyond that, the Seminary expects to see:

An established network among Christian thought leaders. Evidence of relationships already held and actively cultivated across the church, the academy, and the cultural institutions the Center serves, together with a record of putting those relationships to work on behalf of an institution.

A record that points forward. Evidence of trajectory as much as tenure. The Seminary is prepared to appoint a younger leader on the strength of what they have already built and what they are plainly capable of building next.

Founding or institution-building experience. Demonstrated success in bringing a program, center, ministry, or organization into being, or in substantially rebuilding one.

Credible engagement with secular institutions. Professional experience within, or sustained engagement with, the domains the Center serves: technology, public policy, the creative industries, or the academy.

Convening at scale. A track record of gathering scholars, practitioners, and institutional partners around shared work, ideally including national networks of the kind the Center intends to build.

Team leadership. Experience hiring, forming, and leading staff in a culture of accountability held together with care.

Philanthropic partnership. Experience cultivating donors and stewarding significant resources, or the demonstrated relational capacity to do so.



REPORTING, TEAM, AND TERMS

The Executive Director reports directly to the President and will build out an effective team as the work grows, with program, events, and communications capacity funded from the outset. The Advisory Council provides strategic counsel; the President provides oversight and direction; the Board provides governance. Within that structure the Director leads the Center's programming, staffing, and public voice.

COMPENSATION

$100,000 to $120,000, plus benefits

LOCATION

Littleton, Colorado. This is an in-person role; it is not remote.

TARGET START

[To be confirmed]

TRAVEL

Regular regional travel; periodic national travel for convening and partnership

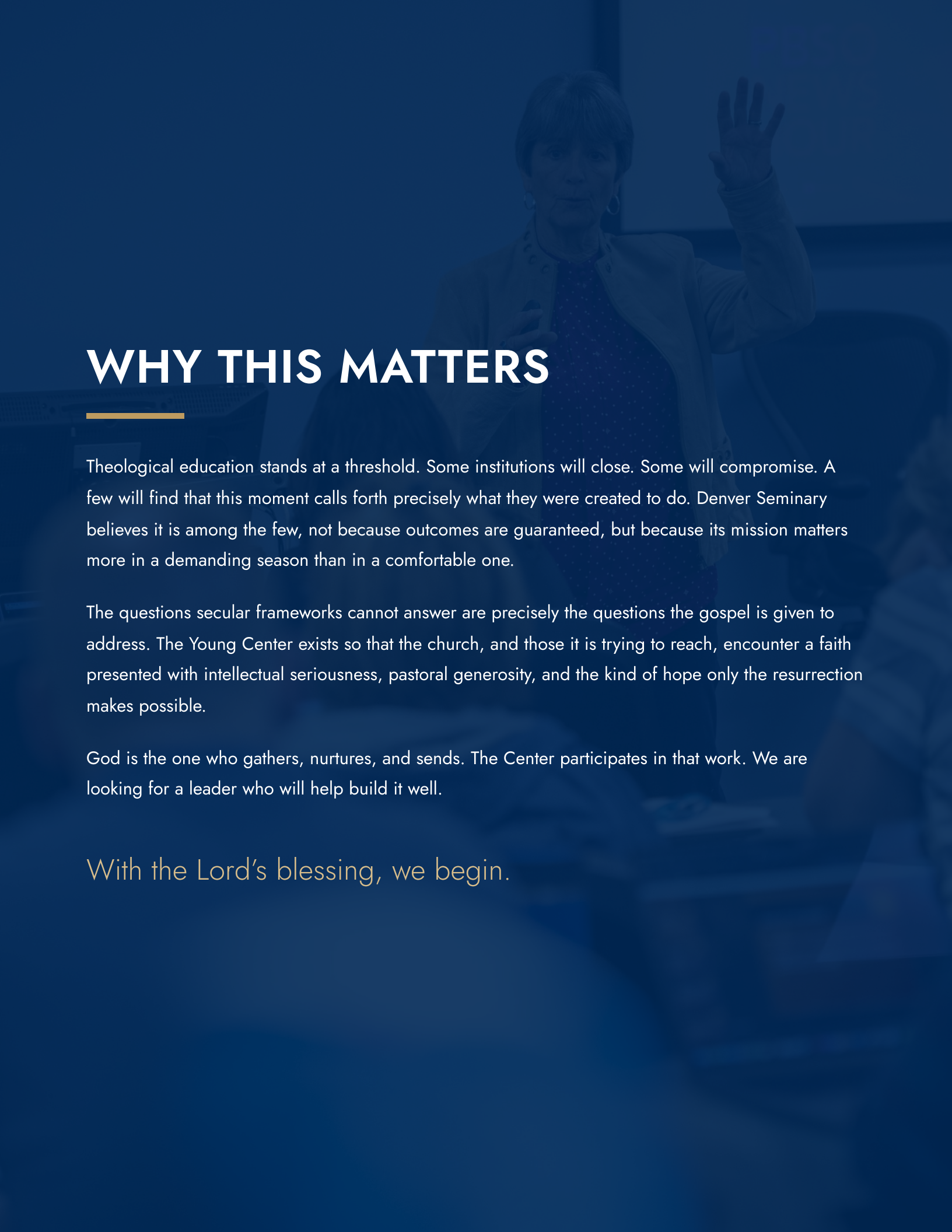


MEASURING SUCCESS

The Charter sets the measure before any metric does. It counts success, in its own words, not by market share or revenue growth but by the flourishing of the churches our graduates serve and the beauty of the gospel they embody. The indicators that follow serve that measure. They do not replace it.

The Center will be evaluated annually against five primary indicators reported to the Board: annual media reach across video and podcast; Fellows completing the full annual program, rising from ten to twelve in Year 1 to twenty-five to thirty by Year 5; Annual Forum attendance, rising from a first-year range of one hundred to three hundred; partner churches reporting improved formation and retention, from five in Year 1 to thirty or more by Year 5; and Denver Seminary student inquiries attributable to the Center's visibility, with a Year 1 baseline and a target of twenty-five percent growth by Year 5. Secondary data is tracked internally and reported in the Annual Assessment.

The most important measure is also the hardest to quantify, and it is the one these numbers serve: whether the Christians the Young Center forms are, in the institutions they inhabit, genuinely changed, and whether the church they serve is strengthened by their witness. That is what success finally looks like. The indicators tell us whether we are on the path to it.



WHY THIS MATTERS

Theological education stands at a threshold. Some institutions will close. Some will compromise. A few will find that this moment calls forth precisely what they were created to do. Denver Seminary believes it is among the few, not because outcomes are guaranteed, but because its mission matters more in a demanding season than in a comfortable one.

The questions secular frameworks cannot answer are precisely the questions the gospel is given to address. The Young Center exists so that the church, and those it is trying to reach, encounter a faith presented with intellectual seriousness, pastoral generosity, and the kind of hope only the resurrection makes possible.

God is the one who gathers, nurtures, and sends. The Center participates in that work. We are looking for a leader who will help build it well.

With the Lord's blessing, we begin.



TO LEARN MORE

Denver Seminary is conducting this search with the assistance of an executive search partner. To learn more, apply, or submit a nomination, please contact **YoungCenter@carterbaldwin.com**

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