

**IMPACT:** The Young America's Foundation is a conservative youth outreach organization that has chapters at high schools and universities across the country. YAF helps bring conservative speakers to college campuses and its speakers roster includes a number of anti-Muslim activists, speakers, and thinkers. One of its university chapters was identified as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC).

- According to its website, the **Young America's Foundation (YAF) was founded in 1960 at the estate of conservative writer William F. Buckley Jr.** with the promulgation of principles directed against Communism and in favor of economic freedom and minimal government, and then again in 1969 when a group of students at Vanderbilt University "started an organization called University Information Services (UIS) to provide students with conservative ideas that were missing in their educations." **YAF is dedicated to increasing the number of young Americans committed to the "ideas of individual freedom, strong national defense, free enterprise, and traditional values."** It lists itself as a human and civil rights advocacy and education group.
- YAF accomplishes its mission by **providing "conferences, seminars, educational materials, internships, and speakers to young people across the country."** In 2011, YAF joined with the **Young Americans for Freedom group, co-founder of the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC)**, which serves as the Foundation's chapter affiliate on college and high school campuses. Currently, the **foundation has more than 250 high school and college campus chapters.**
- A January 2018 article in the *Los Angeles Times* described YAF as "**one of the most preeminent, influential and controversial forces in the nation's conservative youth movement,**" that is backed by **\$65 million in assets.** The organization's budget comes largely from public donations. **Notable donors include Amway billionaires Richard and Helen DeVos**, the in-laws of U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, who gave about \$10 million in 1998. From 2003-2012, the DeVos family donated another \$15 million. Other donors include brothers **Charles and David Koch**, two powerful businessmen who use their wealth to influence American politics. The Koch brothers reportedly directly donated "about \$20,000 and \$50,000 to YAF, respectively." Additionally, since 2002, the brothers have donated almost \$1.5 million to YAF indirectly through two nonprofit funds, Donors Capital Fund and Donors Trust, affiliated with their family foundations.
- *The Washington Post* reported the **current president of YAF, Ron Robinson, is an "ally of the David Horowitz Freedom Center,"** whose founder, David Horowitz has been called the "godfather of the anti-Muslim movement," by SPLC. Robinson also **serves on the Board of the Government Accountability Institute, an organization funded by billionaire Trump backer Robert Mercer**, and co-founded by former head of *Breitbart News*, Steve Bannon. The Mercer family foundation has also donated \$1.2 million to YAF. **Between 2010-2012, YAF "paid Bannon... more than \$500,000...to produce three films."**
- A *Mother Jones* article profiling **Robinson found he served on the board of Citizens United**, and the American Conservative Union, which operates CPAC. Citizens United brought the landmark Supreme Court case in 2010, which "struck down limits on corporations' campaign expenditures."
- A 2017 article by investigative journalist Alex Kotch found **YAF President Robinson to have "white nationalist leanings."** Robinson, along with YAF board member James B. Taylor, "ran a now-inactive political action committee called America's PAC." In 2004, the **PAC donated \$5,000 to the white nationalist group, Charles Martel Society, which SPLC states "seeks to protect what it sees as the white European heritage of America from a perceived ethnic and ideological invasion by non-Europeans."** Mother Jones reported Taylor served as the president of the National Policy Institute, which is run by Richard Spencer, a self-avowed white nationalist.

# YOUNG AMERICA'S FOUNDATION

- YAF **offers “funding, logistical help, and legal support to conservative groups at colleges across the country.”** It holds a [repository](#) of conservative speakers, including members of the military and former US members of Congress, to **speak on various topics including “multiculturalism,” “radical Islam,” “western civilization,” and “traditional values.”** The [fees](#) for the speakers range anywhere from \$0-\$5,000 to \$20,000+.
- Speakers for the **topic of “radical Islam” include a number of anti-Muslim activists, speakers, and thinkers including [Robert Spencer](#), [David Horowitz](#), [Ann Coulter](#), [Daniel Pipes](#), and [Nonie Darwish](#).** Other YAF speakers have also made anti-Muslim comments, including [Lieutenant Colonel Allen West](#), whose official Facebook page [“shared](#) a meme that said retired Gen. James Mattis will ‘exterminate’ Muslims as Secretary of Defense.”
- In May 2017, YAF **sponsored a lecture at the University of Buffalo by [Robert Spencer](#), identified by the Center for American Progress as a “[misinformation expert](#)” fueling Islamophobia.** Spencer’s writings on Islam were [heavily cited](#) by the Norwegian mass murderer [Anders Breivik](#). The SPLC [described](#) Spencer as “one of America’s most prolific and vociferous anti-Muslim propagandists.” A *New York Times* article [noted](#) that **YAF had paid Robert Spencer’s \$2,000 fee**, and [“trained](#) the student leader who organized the event and provided literature for distribution.”
- YAF **supported conservative political commentator [Ann Coulter](#)’s controversial appearance at UC Berkeley** in 2017. Coulter has a history of making anti-Muslim comments. After the September 11th attacks, **she wrote: “We should invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity.”** She has also [suggested](#) Islam is a “car-burning cult” with a “predilection for violence.” YAF pulled its [support](#) for Coulter’s event citing security concerns.
- In 2007, SPLC **identified the Young Americans for Freedom chapter at Michigan State University as a [hate group](#)**, after it organized a [“Catch an Illegal Alien Day”](#) game, sponsored a [‘Koran desecration contest,’](#) jokingly threatened to distribute small-pox [sic] infected blankets to Native American students, posted ‘Gays spread AIDS’ fliers, and invited [Nick Griffin](#), the chairman of the neo-fascist [British National Party](#), to speak on the MSU campus.”
- The *LA Times* described the speakers promoted and approved by YAF as [“conservative provocateurs.”](#) On YAF’s roster of speakers includes musician [Ted Nugent](#), who in 2014 [called](#) then President Barack Obama, “a Chicago communist-raised, communist-educated, communist-nurtured subhuman mongrel [and] ACORN community organizer gangster.” The *LA Times* piece also **described the organization’s tactics as “aggressive and confrontational” and that “have become a beacon of right-wing empowerment** during the rise of President Trump.”
- In 2017, YAF launched its [Fred Allen Lecture Series](#). Speakers for the series [include](#) Dinesh D’Souza, Allen West, and Ben Shapiro. Shapiro’s views have been described as [“naked bigotry](#) toward Palestinians and Muslims,” by journalist and political commentator, Peter Beinart. Beinart [noted](#) that in 2016, Shapiro [“promoted](#) an article written on the website he edits, [The Daily Wire](#), which called the Muslim presence in Europe a [‘disease,’](#)” and declared Muslim men “uncivilized.” Shapiro’s talks cost at least \$20,000.
- In 1998, YAF [acquired](#) former President Ronald Reagan’s [688-acre mountain retreat](#) for an undisclosed [sum](#). The [reported](#) asking price was \$5.95 million.
- Notable **YAF alumni include current U.S. Attorney General [Jeff Sessions](#)**, White House senior policy advisor [Stephen Miller](#), and *Breitbart News* Editor-In-Chief [Alex Marlow](#).