

C&S

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The Power of &



Annual Report

JULY 1, 2025–JUNE 30, 2026

C&S sparks young people to create bold, fresh civic solutions that move our country forward.

**Rajiv Vinnakota**

President, C&S

Dear Friend,

For more than 80 years, C&S — formerly the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation — has invested in people with the ideas and potential to move our country forward.

The form of that work has changed with the country. For decades, we invested in scholars and educators who reshaped American higher education. Today, we also work with college leaders, employers, communities, and young people directly to create more opportunities for a new generation to participate and lead.

Our ambition is to spark 20 million young people to take civic action by 2029.

Across all our work, we help young people practice three essential civic skills: having productive conversations, using credible information, and collaborating to create solutions.

That work happens where young people already are: on campuses, in communities, and at work.

And it is powered by people like you who believe young people should have meaningful opportunities to shape the country they will inherit.

With gratitude,

Rajiv Vinnakota

President, C&S

By the Numbers

C&S is working to spark 20 million young people to take action as civic problem-solvers by 2029. In 2025–26, our work reached more than **one million young people** on campuses, in communities, and at work.

Here's what your support made possible:

On Campuses

142 COLLEGE PRESIDENTS

leading the College Presidents for Civic Preparedness coalition across 34 states and Washington, D.C.

662 EDUCATORS

participating in our Faculty Institute to strengthen how students practice civic skills in classrooms and across campus

39 COLLEGES

participating in Campuswide Immersion, working to make civic preparation part of the student experience across campus

88 SCHOLARS

named Faculty Fellows, Mellon Career Enhancement Fellows, Mellon Emerging Faculty Leaders, MMUF Adjunct Faculty Fellows, Mellon Mays GAP Fellows

In Communities

500 CARNEGIE YOUNG LEADERS

in the inaugural cohort, representing 27 states and Washington, D.C.

10 YOUNG PEOPLE

serving on the Youth Advisory Council, advising C&S leadership directly on strategy, programming, and priorities

At Work

40 COMPANIES

participating in a pilot to bring civic-skill building into the workplace

The Power of & On Campus

We partner with college presidents, faculty, and students to build a civic culture—so every student graduates ready to participate in their communities, workplaces, and country.



College Presidents for Civic Preparedness

Americans expect colleges to prepare students not only for careers, but also to contribute to their communities. Our research finds that 90 percent of Americans believe preparing students to be committed citizens is an important role for higher education.

College Presidents for Civic Preparedness helps campus leaders turn that expectation into action. Our coalition now includes **142 presidents across 34 states and Washington, D.C.**, collectively reaching more than **one million students**. Members are working to make civic preparation part of the student experience—from orientation and first-year courses to student-led dialogue programs. With **\$27 million invested** in the coalition, led by an anchor investment of \$10 million by Einhorn Collaborative, the coalition aims to grow to **500 campuses, reaching 5 million students over the next 5 years**.

Faculty Institute

Much of a student's civic learning happens in the classroom—in the way a professor frames a debate, designs a syllabus, or responds when a conversation gets difficult. **The Faculty Institute** is a professional learning experience that helps educators build these practices into courses and campuswide learning. This year, **662 educators participated**.

Thirty-seven educators also became C&S Faculty Fellows, testing new approaches that can be adapted by other campuses.



At **James Madison University**, Professor Kara Dillard used her Faculty Institute experience to strengthen Better Conversations Together, which reaches approximately 5,000 incoming students. Guided conversations help students practice engaging different perspectives from their first days on campus—making civic skills part of the college experience from the start.



“

Teaching and learning for democratic vitality is the moral imperative of our times.”

— **PRESIDENT DAMIAN FERNANDEZ**,
Warren Wilson College

Campuswide Immersion

One course can change a student's semester. A president committing an entire institution to civic learning can change a student's life.

Through **Campuswide Immersion**, C&S brings peer institutions together to make civic preparation part of the broader student experience. Schools develop campuswide plans, compare approaches, learn from one another, and use shared measures to understand how students are developing essential skills. This year, **39 institutions participated in Campuswide Immersion**.

The University of Dayton's Dialogue Zone hosted 50 events reaching more than 1,000 students, faculty, and staff—from casual coffee-and-chat breaks to discussions about serious topics—including conspiracy theories and the meaning of America today.

The Power of & On Campus



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Higher education plays an indispensable role in **how the next generation learns to build relationships and collaborate across differences**, as well as become engaged members of their communities. C&S has built something rare: **a coalition of presidents willing to lead and implement that change** across all facets of their institutions.”

— JENNIFER HOOS ROTHBERG, *Executive Director of Einhorn Collaborative*

“

Throughout the debate, **I found myself questioning my own preconceived notions** and considering ideas I hadn't thought of before.”

— DENISON UNIVERSITY STUDENT LUCY DOYLE



“

The Faculty Institute allowed me to subtly but meaningfully reshape our first-year program, which reaches every incoming student. Beginning in fall 2026, **dialogue-across-difference activities will become a permanent part of the curriculum.**”

— LISA RAFANELLI, *Assistant Dean at Manhattanville University*

Research: Trust in Higher Education Starts Local



74% of Americans trust colleges to do what is right — but **69%** believe higher education needs major changes.

In May 2026, C&S released *Trust in Higher Education Starts Local*, supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The research found that Americans have not given up on higher education—but they want colleges to demonstrate their value in tangible ways, especially through visible impact in their own communities.

The Power of & On Campus



Higher Education Fellowships

For eight decades, C&S has supported scholars who shape what higher education can be.

In 2025–26, we supported 51 scholars and educators through fellowship programs that invest in academic talent at critical stages of their careers.

Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Advancement Program creates a pipeline of outstanding scholars by funding their path toward PhDs and eventual careers in academia. This year, **21 awardees** were named. Since the program began, **431 grants have been awarded, and 90% of scholars have earned their doctorate.**



Mellon Fellow **Luis-Alejandro Dinnella-Borrego** examines how theology, secularization, politics, and cultural representation shape public life. In the classroom, he challenges students to explore the social impact of ideas and institutions.



Since 2001, the **Career Enhancement Fellowship** has supported more than **500 junior faculty members** in the arts and humanities with stipends, funding for travel and research, mentorship, and a national network. This year, C&S named **20 new fellows**.



Mellon Fellow **David C. Turner III** connects scholarship with community action. Through partnerships with community organizers, he supports young people in conducting research and developing solutions to long-standing community challenges.

Mellon Emerging Faculty Leaders, now in its eleventh year, supports junior scholars across fields at the moment when their careers — and their influence on students — are taking shape.

The 2026 cohort spans political science, history, sociology, and the arts — **ten junior scholars** joining a community of more than 100 faculty members who, since 2015, have been shaping the next generation of students who will lead our communities.



“

I create opportunities for the students to be part of the conversation, providing them with a supportive environment to learn from and to be in dialogue with each other, empowering them to find their own voices and draw from their own experiences, and **challenging them to listen deeply to others** who might hold views different from their own.”

— **VAN TRAN**

Mellon Emerging Faculty Leader

The Power of & In Communities

C&S accelerates the work of young people who are ready to take action in their communities, giving them the tools and pathways they need to create fresh civic solutions.



Carnegie Young Leaders

In 2025, C&S selected the inaugural cohort of **500 Carnegie Young Leaders from 27 states and Washington, D.C.** Fellows receive project funding, mentoring, training, and a national peer network to help turn a local idea into action.

Their projects spanned the full breadth of civic life: voter registration drives, food rescue networks, financial literacy workshops, mental health advocacy, and platforms connecting young people directly to local government. In every ZIP code represented, a young person is doing the work.



Karrington Harried pairs 50 students and 50 seniors across two retirement homes in Maryland, creating relationships across generations and combating social isolation. “Each connection may look small—a game of cards, a shared story, a walk outside—but the impact is profound. As these relationships grow, our community will begin to look different—less isolation and more consideration.”



Ashleigh McKenna trains high school students to navigate media bias and engage their peers while expanding opportunities for young people to participate in voter registration.



David Jen and his team are advancing Asian American history education in New Jersey after seeing anti-Asian hatred affect their own families and communities.

Youth Advisory Council

C&S's **Youth Advisory Council** brings ten young people ages 14–24 directly into organizational decision-making. Members advise C&S leadership on strategy, programming, and priorities—and helped design the council itself from the ground up.

This year, members also represented C&S at national convenings and helped ensure youth perspectives shaped the work from the beginning.



“

History belongs to those who **dare to believe in themselves and their communities.** Serving in the Youth Advisory Council is not just an opportunity for collaboration it is also a catapult to a more robust civic future for you and your community.”

— ANTHONY AKATOR JR



Reinhold Niebuhr wrote that “nothing that is worth doing can be achieved in our lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope.” I have always read that line as an invitation rather than a lament. The work of building a more just country is larger than any one of us, and larger than any one generation. It asks us to begin anyway, and to trust those who come after us to carry it further.

That is what the Youth Advisory Council has meant to me. C&S did not ask us only how its programs felt. It asked what they should become, and then it made room for our answers. In doing so, it treated young people not as the future of American civic life but as part of its present.

The young people in this report are registering voters, feeding communities, bridging generations, and insisting that their history be taught. None of this work is finished, and none of it is done alone. It moves forward because people across generations decide that the promise of this country is worth the effort of building together. Your support is part of that effort, and part of that hope. On behalf of the Youth Advisory Council, thank you for believing that young people belong at the table, and for helping us keep that table open to those who come next.



DA'TAEVEYON DANIELS

Chair and Founding Member, C&S Youth Advisory Council

Research: Gen Z Civic Vibe Check



9 in 10 young Americans care deeply about their communities. **The biggest barrier isn't apathy. It's not knowing how to start.**

That's the headline finding of C&S's Gen Z Civic Vibe Check, a national survey of 1,002 young people ages 14 to 22 conducted by YPulse.

37% don't know how to get involved

42% say seeing the impact they could make would motivate them

32% want tools to help them create solutions

77% talk about issues with peers and loved ones in person

73% of those eligible vote in elections

The message is clear: young people want to contribute. Our job is to make the first step easier to see—and easier to take.

The Power of & At Work

The same civic skills young people need in their communities also matter at work: having productive conversations, using credible information, and collaborating to create solutions. As AI changes how work gets done, these distinctly human capabilities—judgment, communication, and collaboration—are becoming even more valuable.

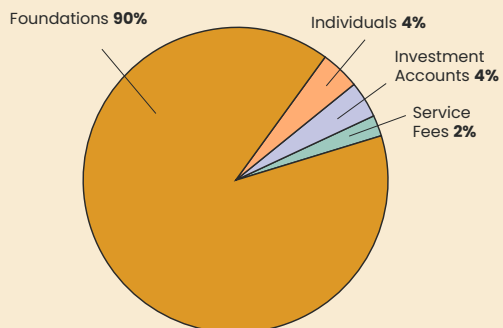
This year, C&S teamed up with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation to explore how civic skills can be strengthened on the job. Together we designed and piloted an online course—Civics Academy—that launched as part of the Foundation’s Civics@Work initiative last summer. **Over 40 companies took part in the initial pilot**, and almost half (46%) of participants stated they were more likely to engage in conversation with people who have differing political opinions after taking this course.



Financials

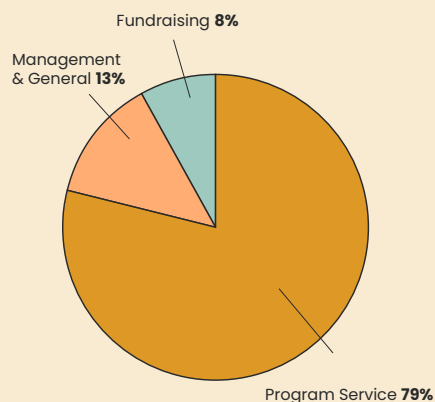
Revenue

FY26 Total Revenue = \$22.4M



Expenses

FY26 Operating Expenses = \$11.9M



At the time of this report, FY26 financial data is unaudited and may be subject to change.

Of the \$22.4M in total revenue recognized in FY26, \$14.4M represents multi-year pledges restricted to future years. An additional \$4M of FY26 expenditures were funded by multi-year pledges recognized in prior years.

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*Reflects ten or more consecutive years of giving — a lasting commitment we are honored to recognize.

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The Fellows Legacy Society honors those who have chosen to include C&S in their estate plans, ensuring that the work of building an engaged generation of civic leaders continues for years to come. We are grateful for this profound expression of lasting commitment.

The Estate of Archie E. Albright VF

The Estate of Donald S. Barton WF '63

The Estate of Mary Bevan in memory of
Roger V. Bevan WF '68

Marice C. Bezdek WF '62

The Estate of JoAllen Bradham WF'59

The Estate of Norman H. Dill WF '60

The Estate of Eleanor Thomas Elliott VF

The Estate of Robert P. Everett '59

James A. Francis CN '89

The Estate of Kate G. Frost WF '65 P

The Estate of Daniel J. Geagan WF '59

The Estate of Robert F. Goheen WF '45

The Estate of Allen Greenstein WF '60

The Estate of Scott A. Harris WF '70

The Estate of Karl H. Kaiser

The Estate of Douglas M. Knight

The Estate of Marie D. Moore WF '63

The Estate of Allan T. Nance' 54

Michael E. O'Donnell WF '66

Maryann V. Postans WT '95

The Estate of Charles T. Price WF '60

Clay C. Pytlik WF '63

Jon A. Quitslund WF '61

The Estate of Philip D. Reed, Jr.

The Estate of Haskell Rhett

The Estate of Harry L. Sawatzky WF '61

Carol Simpson Stern WF '63

The Estate of Frank E. and Margaret Taplin

The Estate of Ward C. Thorne

The Estate of Mary V. Trent VF

The Estate of Dr. Francesca G. von Broembsen
WF '64

The Estate of Karen M. Walowit WF '64

The Estate of Randolph Williams MLK '69

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We Want to Hear from You!

C&S's story includes yours. If you are a Fellow, supporter, or longtime member of our community, we'd love to hear where life has taken you. Share an update, tell us why you give, or let us know how C&S has shaped your path. **Reach us at giving@cands.org or (609) 608-6457.**

20 million young civic problem-solvers by 2029.

The work in this report shows what can happen when young people have the skills, support, and opportunity to act. Now, C&S is preparing to bring that opportunity to millions more.

In 2026, C&S made a bold three-year commitment to spark 20 million young people as civic problem-solvers—expanding our work on campuses, in communities, and at work to help young people turn their ideas into action.

Young people are ready to contribute. Together, we can help millions more find a place to start.

Stay Connected

Want to follow along as the next chapter unfolds? Sign up for our e-newsletter and get regular updates on the work your support makes possible from campus to community, and beyond.

