

FREEDOM'S CHAMPION

ALUMNI IN FOCUS
**A VISION FOR
FREEDOM IN
LITHUANIA**

By Asta Narmontė

WINTER 2019

Atlas Network's
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LET ME SELL MY LAND

By AJ Skiera

THINK TANK IMPACT CASE STUDY
**UNLOCKING POTENTIAL
FOR FILIPINO FARMERS**

**CELEBRATION OF THE
LIFE OF DONALD G. SMITH**

By Tom G. Palmer

**LAUNCH OF ATLAS
NETWORK'S CENTER
FOR U.S. AND CANADA**

**INAUGURAL U.S.
INVESTORS SUMMIT
FOR LIBERTY**

LIBERTY FORUM & FREEDOM DINNER 2019


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Cover: Viktor Tsytsyura is one of 6 million Ukrainian landowners who are prevented from selling their land due to the country's moratorium on selling farmland (AtlasNetwork.org Photo/Bernat Parera).

MISSION

Atlas Network increases global prosperity by strengthening a network of independent partner organizations that promote individual freedom and are committed to identifying and removing barriers to human flourishing.

VISION

Our vision is of a free, prosperous, and peaceful world where the principles of individual liberty, property rights, limited government, and free markets are secured by the rule of law.

STRATEGY

Atlas Network cultivates a network of partners that share this vision. To accelerate the pace of achievement by our partners in their local communities, Atlas Network's unique "Coach, Compete, Celebrate!" strategic model inspires our partners to improve performance and achieve extraordinary outcomes.

Coach

Atlas Network provides world-class seminars, workshops, mentoring, and other learning opportunities that inspire professionalism and build community among our independent partners.

Compete

Atlas Network offers grant and prize competitions that fuel our partners' efforts to develop, innovate, and succeed.

Celebrate

Atlas Network fosters camaraderie and stokes ambitions among our partners by celebrating their greatest accomplishments through events and media outreach.



Atlas Network has been a four-star Charity Navigator member since 2008.



Atlas Network is a GuideStar Exchange Platinum-Level Participant.



Atlas Network's donation payment processor is certified to PCI Service Provider Level 1, the most stringent level of certification available.

FREEDOM'S CHAMPION

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A MILESTONE FOR FREEDOM

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

A MILESTONE FOR FREEDOM



Just before last month's Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner, which we hold every November in New York City, our team hit a noteworthy milestone: 500 independent partners in our network!

What a difference from the early days of Atlas Network, which was founded in 1981 by Sir Antony Fisher. Fisher developed the idea of fighting socialism with free-market think tanks that were wholly independent, non-partisan, and non-profit. His first step in this direction was the London-based Institute of Economic Affairs, launched in 1957 and still thriving today. Their success fed Sir Antony's determination to build a larger network. He saw that—instead of laboring as a lonely soloist—it was wiser to build a chorus of voices that could carry the message of liberty to new audiences.

Sir Antony saw that—instead of laboring as a lonely soloist—it was wiser to build a chorus of voices that could carry the message of liberty

USS Intrepid, I looked over the room of more than 800 attendees from six continents and was truly in awe of the amazing work that our partners are doing to ensure that our shared values continue to thrive. They are leading the way on issues as diverse as land reform in the Philippines, Ukraine, and South Africa; opening markets for innovative technologies in the United States and India; or just helping entrepreneurship thrive in Africa, South America, and eastern Europe. They are making a difference. And it is because of their successes that the vision Sir Antony Fisher planted at Atlas Network continues to expand and prosper.

Your investment in Atlas Network's achievements, whether you are a donor, a partner, or an ally, continues to make a huge difference for freedom throughout the world. Thanks for all that you do for Atlas Network so that we can help our partners make an impact, wherever in the world they are located. And my very best wishes to you and yours for a happy and prosperous 2020!

Brad Lips
Brad Lips
Chief Executive Officer
Atlas Network

Thanks to Sir Antony's early vision, the independent think tank model is now firmly established as worthwhile and effective. As the market for such organizations has grown, Atlas Network has flourished with it.

The two-day Liberty Forum, which always features an impressive slate of speakers from all over the globe as well as the opportunity to engage our partners in networking and competitive challenges, is the highlight of our year at Atlas Network. At the closing Freedom Dinner, held on the decommissioned aircraft carrier

LET ME SELL MY LAND

by AJ Skiera

Imagine you own a parcel of fertile farmland, but you're too old to work it, cannot sell it, nor use it as collateral in a bank loan. Would you say that land is *really* yours?



Viktor Tsytsyura owns a plot of farmland outside Ternopil, Ukraine, but cannot work it, sell it, or use it as an investment tool due to the country's moratorium on selling agricultural land (AtlasNetwork.org Photo/Bernat Parera).

Imagine you own a parcel of fertile farmland, but you're too old to work it, cannot sell it, nor use it as collateral in a bank loan. Would you say that land is *really* yours?

That hypothetical question is the reality for over six million Ukrainian landowners who, after the collapse of the U.S.S.R., received plots of land from their government as compensation for years of toil on collective farms. Little did they know at the time this gesture would perpetuate years of injustice.

Commonly referred to as the “breadbasket of Europe,” Ukraine is home to vast farmland with some of the most fertile soil in the world. However, between 1932 and 1933, a Stalin-orchestrated famine—referred to today as the *Holodomor* (meaning “death by hunger” in Ukrainian)—deprived people of basic foodstuffs, and this forced starvation killed millions of Ukrainians.

Millions more civilians would perish in the Second World War from the totalitarian regimes of both Hitler and Stalin in one of the greatest human sufferings in all of western civilization. Historian Timothy Snyder has popularized the term “Bloodlands” to describe the distinct suffering of the region of Central and Eastern Europe that encompasses the Baltic states, Poland, Belarus, and the very part of Ukraine in which Viktor Tsytsyura was born 80 years ago.

Viktor Tsytsyura

Beginning his life in Ternopil, Ukraine, Viktor worked for 15 years as chief engineer in a machinery manufacturing factory near Lake Baikal, about 20 km from the Russo-Chinese border. He eventually returned to his beloved Ternopil to fill a similar position at another state-run factory nearer home, living in the same apartment in the same Soviet-era blockhouse with his wife Lubov since 1985.

Viktor and Lubov maintain a dacha and modest garden about 20 km outside Ternopil, which they visit almost every day, resting in the countryside and enjoying fresh tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and grapes. Viktor's parents had worked for many years on a Soviet

What is unique about the situation is that Ukraine stands alone among the democratic nations of the world by not allowing landowners to legally sell their land.

collective farm, and as recompense for their years of labor, they were granted 3.5 hectares of farmland by the Ukrainian government in 2001. They were quite old at the time and long past working age, which was common for individuals receiving such plots of land. Their choice was simple: they'd just sell it.



Only, they couldn't.

When the Ukrainian government awarded roughly 32 million hectares of arable land to seven million of its citizens, it also introduced a “one-year” moratorium on selling that land. Nineteen years later, the moratorium is still in place. The landowners have aged. Many are now retired. Nearly a million have already died, including Viktor's parents.

The policy of the moratorium on farmland sales was designed to “help” the recipients of the land. If no one could sell, no one would be pressured by companies or foreign interests to part with their property. But there were unforeseen consequences: many of these people had no access to finance or lacked the tools to work the land effectively. As a result, much of it lay unutilized or is leased for next to nothing.

Viktor felt that he was an “owner” in name only because he couldn't utilize his property in any meaningful way. He couldn't even locate the exact location of his plot of land in a vast field. He had only one viable option: to rent it out for a mere US\$70 per hectare per year, which is an above-average rate in Ukraine. The soil is versatile and the farmer renting Viktor's land grows wheat, buckwheat, corn, and sunflowers.

What is unique about the situation is that Ukraine stands alone among the democratic nations of the world by not allowing landowners to legally sell their land. What is not unique about it is that paternalistic policies such as the moratorium often hurt most the people they were designed to help.

When Viktor inherited his parents' land he soon realized it was worthless; he was unable to work it, unable to sell it, and unable to use it as an investment tool. He thought the days of the Soviet reality were over, but—in the case of his land—they were not. Viktor had been played by the state his entire life, but the U.S.S.R. had collapsed. He has private property, and now 30 years after the fall of the Soviet system, why can't he do what he wants with it?

Fed up not only with his situation but the situations of six million honest Ukrainians like him, he took legal action.

A Legal Challenge

Viktor had always admired the freedoms and rights that the U.S. government has afforded its citizens, chief among them the freedom of speech and the ability to challenge unjust laws. He even read the U.S. Constitution before visiting his local courts, only to be turned away by bureaucrats who told him it was impossible to do anything to challenge the law until the law was removed. Undeterred, he continued his fight for the six million landowners whom “are all prisoners to their situation.”

While watching a national debate show, Viktor noticed Dan Pasko, a Ukrainian businessman, speak forcefully against the moratorium and promote “farmland.in.ua,” a website that provides resources for landowners to launch legal challenges to the moratorium. Viktor realized he was not alone in his mission to remove one of the last vestiges of Soviet tyranny. NGOs were actively engaged on the issue (including a handful of Atlas Network partners), and so Viktor got in touch with EasyBusiness, the Kyiv-based think tank Pasko co-founded.

EasyBusiness, an Atlas Network partner, was founded in 2014 in the wake of Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity to

harness the prevailing national desire for reform into effective research and advocacy toward liberalization and a more business-friendly environment. Taking on the moratorium was one of their first projects, starting with a landmark report in 2015 examining economic and legal implications of the ban. EasyBusiness works with dozens of organizations, including the World Bank, on prospective reform, and their economic models of potential market structures are leading a serious discussion on what form a liberalized market should take.

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However, the EasyBusiness team realized that pushing for top-down reform without any political will for it neglected the ultimate end-users of reform: the landowners adversely affected by the moratorium. So, they created the farmland.in.ua website to provide a platform that amplified the concerns of landowners. Over 500 landowners registered their information online, about 20 filed claims to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), and 2 cases were accepted, including Viktor's.

Viktor connected with EasyBusiness and a pro-bono legal NGO to file a case to

the ECHR challenging the constitutionality of the moratorium on the basis that it violated the Ukrainian constitution and the human rights of its citizens.

Movement

In May 2018, the ECHR ruled that the moratorium violated the human rights of Ukraine's citizens and that the Ukrainian government ought to make necessary changes to the law or else pay damages of US\$50 billion to the affected landowners. EasyBusiness was consulted on the economic and legal aspects of the moratorium to the ECHR and is named as a third party in the lawsuit.



↑ Top left: Viktor reads the ECHR ruling delivered in May 2018, which determined that the moratorium violates the human rights of 6 million Ukrainian landowners (AtlasNetwork.org Photo/Bernat Parera).

↗ Top right: A local museum has asked for Viktor's personal documents so that his activism on behalf of millions of Ukrainian citizens may be commemorated (AtlasNetwork.org Photo/Bernat Parera).

→ Bottom right: Viktor enjoys some raspberries on his brother's farm in Rakovets' (AtlasNetwork.org Photo/Bernat Parera).



In November 2019, the Ukrainian parliament passed a law in its first reading to end the moratorium and establish a land market in 2020.

This is a major step in restoring the property rights of millions of people, but just as important as ending the moratorium is what form the soon-to-be-liberalized market will take and whether any restrictions will be put into place. EasyBusiness is currently analyzing four possible market structures, and their team estimates that a liberalized market will yield up to US\$100 billion in investment in Ukraine, which—when combined with the avoidance of the US\$50 billion penalty—is a \$150 billion swing from maintaining the status quo.

Viktor has worked hard his entire life, first as an engineer and now as a public advocate in his second life. He loves his country and is a proud Ukrainian patriot. His purpose is simple: he would like to leave something behind for his granddaughter and his great-grandson, and he would like for others like him to have the same opportunity. He believes that allowing six million men and women just like him to exercise their full private property rights will drive the country forward both morally and financially. He is fighting for what is right.

Viktor believes that allowing six million men and women just like him to exercise their full private property rights will drive the country forward both morally and financially. He is fighting for what is right.

Viktor Tsytsyura is a living human museum of what has happened in Ukraine the last hundred years: hard work and suffering yet maintaining hope and tenacity in the quest for a better, more prosperous future. His story is one of perseverance and courage in the face of authority. Both he and EasyBusiness speak truth to power, and

their advocacy has helped push the national debate on the moratorium past a critical mass in which the government plans to end the ban and implement a market for farmland in Ukraine. Viktor has even been asked by a local museum for his personal documents so that his activism on behalf of millions of Ukrainian citizens may be commemorated.

With the proposed removal of the moratorium and implementation of an agricultural land market, landowners will not be forced to sell their land—they merely will be given the right to do as they choose. And that is the essence of the freedom for which Viktor

has so ardently advocated: the absence of compulsion and the ability to exercise full control over that which is his.

Viktor just wants to sell his land. The choice should be his. His fight for freedom is our fight for freedom.

↓ Left: Viktor rests on a tractor near his brother's home in Rakovets', after a brief visit (AtlasNetwork.org Photo/Bernat Parera).

↓ Right: Viktor owns 3.5 hectares of farmland near Ternopil, Ukraine (AtlasNetwork.org Photo/Bernat Parera).



01 CONNOR BOYACK WINS 2019 THINK TANK SHARK TANK

Connor Boyack of the Libertas Institute won the 2019 Think Tank Shark Tank with his family-oriented curriculum, "The Free Market Rules." Using stories about free-market economics, children of all ages and their parents learn the ideas of a free society. Think Tank Shark Tank offers think tank leaders the opportunity to pitch projects to a panel of judges to win \$25,000 in seed-funding. The other finalists were Adriana Pineda of Venezuela's CEDICE Futuro and Dhananath Fernando of Sri Lanka's Advocata Institute.



NEW DOCUMENTARY TELLS THE HEARTBREAKING STORIES OF FOUR WOMEN UNDER SOCIALISM IN VENEZUELA

The *Female Exile*, the award-winning documentary produced by Spanish think tank Fundación para el Avance de la Libertad (Fundalib), is a cautionary tale of the excesses of state power. Four women exiled from Venezuela share their experiences of the human rights abuses of the socialist state and the cost of standing up against this brutal regime. The half-hour documentary is subtitled in English and is available at [AtlasNetwork.org/news](https://atlasnetwork.org/news).



03 ANUKI PREMACHANDRA WINS 2019 JOHN BLUNDELL ELEVATOR PITCH COMPETITION

Anuki Premachandra of Advocata Institute won the 2019 John Blundell Elevator Pitch Competition at Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner. Premachandra spoke about efforts to cut taxes on sanitary napkins in Sri Lanka, which has made hygiene products unaffordable and kept girls out of school and women out of work. This year's contestants came from Atlas Network's new Leader Lab training. This competition honors the late John Blundell, who served as general director at the Institute of Economic Affairs and as president of Atlas Network.



ONLINE COURSE ON THE RULE OF LAW EDUCATES STUDENTS IN TURKEY AND AROUND THE WORLD

The Freedom Research Association, based in Turkey, has produced an online course on the rule of law that provides an education from legal experts on the importance of justice and fairness. The course focuses on both practical and philosophical perspectives on the law, a view that is not always accessible in the Middle East. Freedom Research Association pitched this project at the 2017 Think Tank Shark Tank.



05 PACIFIC LEGAL FOUNDATION WINS 2019 LIGHTS, CAMERA, LIBERTY FILM FESTIVAL AWARD

Quota, a short film by Pacific Legal Foundation that challenges systemic race-based discrimination in Connecticut schools, has been named the winner of the 2019 Lights, Camera, Liberty Film Festival. Lights, Camera, Liberty is an annual film workshop that helps Atlas Network partners transform the way they market their messages through online video. Each participant organization that completes the annual workshop is eligible for the \$1,000 prize, which is presented annually at Atlas Network's Liberty Forum in New York City.

06 ECONOMIC OLYMPIAD IN SLOVAKIA MAKES ECONOMICS FUN FOR THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS

Institute of Economics and Social Studies in Slovakia (INESS) has created an event that not only makes economics understandable for younger generations, but also fun. Their second annual Economic Olympiad engaged 5,300 students from all over the country in competitions to prove mastery of economic issues. INESS is hopeful that the Olympiad will inspire the next generation of Slovaks to discover how markets really work.



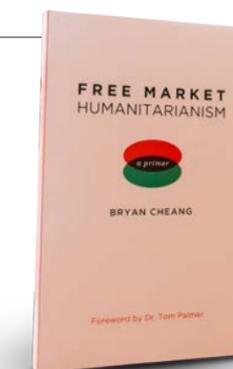
URUGUAY'S CED HELPS TO MAKE LAUNCHING A BUSINESS EASIER FOR ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurs in Uruguay have historically dealt with red tape and high startup costs just to get a business off the ground, but thanks in large part to the research and advocacy of Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo, the process will be easier in the future. The Uruguayan Chamber of Deputies has passed new legislation to curtail bureaucratic hurdles and reduce costs in order to make it easier for entrepreneurs to enter the market.



08 NEW BOOK POSITS THAT ECONOMIC FREEDOM IS REAL SOCIAL JUSTICE

Bryan Cheang, director of the Adam Smith Center in Singapore recently published *Free Market Humanitarianism: A Primer* as a way to show young people that the best solutions to the issues of inequality, third-world poverty, environmentalism, social identity, and LGBTQ+ rights lie in free markets. Cheang explains in an op-ed that "... for social justice to truly be achieved, market institutions and policies are absolutely non-negotiable."



ATLAS NETWORK PRESIDENT MATT WARNER ON THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF FOREIGN AID IN THE HILL

"Governments and outside organizations, in general, tend to blunder when trying to plan for local communities, each with its own rich histories, traditions and values," explains Atlas Network President Matt Warner in his recent *The Hill* op-ed. "Innovators in the poverty space are now recognizing how critical even individual choices are in the process of finding a successful path to prosperity."



10 EXECUTIVE ACCELERATOR PROGRAM EQUIPS LEADERS IN THE LIBERTY MOVEMENT TO GROW, PLAN, AND INSPIRE



Executive Accelerator, a new, six-day workshop for senior think tank directors and managers, offers these emerging leaders a comprehensive understanding of strategic planning, team management best practices, and leadership skills. Participants gain new insight into their strengths while developing new skills for building sustainable, high-performing teams. The inaugural workshop in Virginia hosted 22 think tank leaders from 12 countries.



Celebration of the Life of Donald G. Smith

Delivered by Tom G. Palmer, November 15, 2019

Love is a key to understanding Donald Smith. Don's love embraced more than those who were known to him. It embraced countless strangers whom he would never meet. Don was a true philanthropist—a lover of humanity—helping millions who would never know the identity of their generous benefactor, and with only the knowledge that he had helped as reward.

Don exemplified goodness and generosity. His goodness lives on through the millions of lives he saved from tyranny, or even from death. His generous spirit continues to be active in the multitudes who were introduced to the ideas of liberty because of his respect for the dignity of every human being. Very few of his beneficiaries will ever know to whom they should be grateful for the defense of their freedom, or—in at least two countries, for the avoidance of civil wars that could have killed many thousands. Don's goodness and generosity live on through his positive impact on so many people.

Don added value to the world by investing capital in overlooked and underappreciated enterprises, a philosophy that also guides the Smith Family Foundation's philanthropy. Don was a businessman of the old school. He understood the importance of economizing, that cutting costs frees up scarce resources to satisfy more human needs.

When we flew together to visit our mutual friend George M. Yeager, both of us flew on discounted coach economy tickets. Don was seated between a couple, both of whom were

big people who had clearly hoped that the seat between them would remain empty. I offered to trade places and Don declined. I asked him later why he didn't fly business class and I got a lesson in his philosophy: "I save my money so I can spend it on the things that are important to me: liberty, free markets, that stuff!"

By investing in local efforts to remove barriers to enterprise, Don Smith has made it possible for millions of poor people to start their own businesses—from India to Burundi to Peru, to enter previously closed professions and to get jobs in this country and beyond. His investments in free trade campaigns have increased the real wages of the poor. He supported brave freedom fighters in difficult places, from Afghanistan to Venezuela to Lebanon to Manhattan.

In 2012 I sent a letter to organizers of projects the Smith Family Foundation was supporting. I told them about their benefactor.

When he leaves events that he has paid for, other people wave for taxis, but Don walks across the street to take the bus. He just flew from New York to Tokyo and back on business and he flew both ways discounted coach airfare. When he travels to Washington, D.C., he takes the bus and saves \$100 each way rather than taking the train. Then he writes substantial checks to support causes that are important to him. He told me that he saves money so that he can spend it on what really matters to him.



Don continued a long tradition of creating shared value by advancing the principles and policies of liberty. Two great figures in the libertarian tradition come to mind when I think of Don and his impact. The Brazilian abolitionist Joaquim Nabuco worked tirelessly for the liberation of the enslaved people of his country. Nabuco exhorted us to,

Educate your children, educate yourselves, in the love for the freedom of others, for only in this way will your own freedom not be a gratuitous gift from fate. You will be aware of its worth and will have the courage to defend it.



Two days after Don's passing I spoke in São Paulo to over 1,050 members of the Brazilian Students for Liberty at their national conference. I talked about Nabuco's example and that of their host, Donald Smith, who was supporting the event. They understood that Donald Smith loved their freedom. They asked me to convey to the Smith family and to all of Don's friends their appreciation and love. Don's love for the freedom of others continues to burn brightly across the world and has inspired thousands and thousands of young people on every continent. He is also continuing the legacy of Jacques Claude Marie Vincent de Gournay, a businessman and investor in 18th century France who devoted his resources to advancing the ideas and the policies of liberty.

In addition to organizing and financing the publication of books on libre échange, free exchange, de Gournay took under his wing young people whom he instructed in the principles of liberty, notably the young Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot, who as finance minister of France abolished barriers to trade, eliminated forced labor, introduced cost cutting in government and reduced public expenditures and debt, and eliminated impoverishing mercantilistic interventions and monopolies. In his eulogy on Vincent de Gournay, Turgot



pointed out that his mentor was "developing those principles which experience in business had taught him." Vincent de Gournay was the Donald Smith of his day.

Both Vincent de Gournay and Donald Smith invested in the liberty movement, and those investments continue to improve the world. Their modesty led them to invest, not in monuments to vanity, but in the freedom of their fellow human beings.

Scott Barbee mentioned to me shortly after we lost him some of the ways in which Don's life exemplifies the virtues of the Stoics. One thought from Marcus Aurelius' meditations summed up Don Smith's life: "Don't live as though you were going to live a myriad lives. Fate is hanging over your head; while you have life, become good." Don, you succeeded. You were good. You did good. You are good.

Josephine “Pina” Templeton

1940-2019

Atlas Network remembers Josephine Templeton, a trustee of the Templeton Foundation, the Templeton World Charity Foundation, and the Templeton Press, who died on October 25. Dr. Templeton, or “Pina,” as she was widely known, was a respected pediatric anesthesiologist and was highly engaged in the Templeton family’s philanthropic efforts.

Pina was born in Capri, Italy and came to the United States with her family when she was nine years old. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Fordham University and a medical degree from the University of Rome in 1968. While serving her residency at the Medical College of Virginia, she married John M. “Jack” Templeton, Jr. a fellow medical resident. During their long careers at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Pina often worked with Jack as the lead anesthesiologist on surgical teams at CHOP, including groundbreaking work to separate conjoined twins.

Pina retired in 1999 and focused on her interests in philanthropy, including the Museum of the American Revolution, Opera Philadelphia, Opportunity International, and the Templeton foundations, as well as many others that benefitted from her knowledge and attention. After Jack’s death in 2015, she worked with CHOP to fund research on brain tumors, hoping to honor her husband’s legacy by helping to find a way to defeat the disease.

Pina is survived by her daughters, Heather Templeton Dill, who is the president of the John Templeton Foundation, and Jennifer Templeton Simpson, six grandchildren, and two sisters.



“Pina Templeton’s warmth, caring, and intelligence were immediately apparent to all who met her. Her wise counsel and support for so many philanthropic endeavors made her a force for good.”

– BRAD LIPS,
ATLAS NETWORK

CENTER FOR U.S. AND CANADA

Atlas Network’s new Center for U.S. and Canada, which launched in October, is working with civil society organizations in both countries to create positive perceptions of the role of free enterprise and individual liberty in advancing a freer, more prosperous world for all.

“Individual initiative by people and groups can create a catalyst for change, but experience has proven that a network of allied people and organizations is essential to make that change transformational and sustained,” said John Tillman, the Center’s new director. “I am excited to be working with Atlas Network to create new opportunities for peace and prosperity to thrive.”

By leveraging Atlas Network’s strengths in training programs, competitive grants, media outreach, and events, and by building new capacity through coalition engagement, the Center will engage a peer-to-peer network that is advancing innovation and idea diffusion and multiply their impact.

Tillman, who is also the CEO of the Illinois Policy Institute and works with a variety of other organizations, says that a priority of the Center is to seek solutions for achieving a more inclusive prosperity in American and Canadian communities. Under Tillman’s direction, the center will seek to transcend traditional ideological divides and focus on the important role of the individual, not the state, in carving a path out of poverty on both sides of the border.



Cardinal Institute Executive Director Garrett Ballangee speaks about his organization to prospective supporters at the U.S. Investors Summit for Liberty.



Brian Yablonski, executive director of the Property and Environment Research Center, pitches his organization during the U.S. Investors Summit for Liberty as existing PERC Supporter Chris Wright observes.

INAUGURAL U.S. INVESTORS SUMMIT FOR LIBERTY

The Property and Environment Research Center (PERC) and the Cardinal Institute for West Virginia Policy were both awarded grants of \$75,000 at Atlas Network’s inaugural U.S. Investors Summit for Liberty, which gave ten pre-selected, U.S.-based organizations a platform to compete for a total of \$500,000 in general support funding. Each organization set up an information booth and later took the stage to pitch a specific plan to a small group of supporters who have an expressed interest in advancing innovative and scalable efforts to promote ideas and policies that encourage individual freedom, free enterprise, and prosperity.

Emcee John Tillman, who directs Atlas Network’s new Center for U.S. and Canada, spoke of the importance of the Smart Bets’ work to advance human freedom and human prosperity. Tillman explained the idea behind the summit, noting that it was modeled on venture capital investor summits where a curated selection of capital seekers pitch their “undervalued” companies to high-capacity investors during one concentrated networking event.

The ten public policy organizations, which Atlas Network is calling “2020 Smart Bets,” pitched their plans to a small group of supporters who have an expressed interest in advancing innovative and scalable efforts to promote ideas and policies that encourage individual freedom, free enterprise, and prosperity. Following the pitches, organizations met with individual donors to answer questions and discuss opportunities for project investment.

In addition to the awards made to Cardinal Institute and PERC, Beacon Center of Tennessee, Becket, Center for Economic Accountability, Georgia Center for Opportunity, Libertas Institute, Taliesin Nexus, the Center for the Philosophy of Freedom at the University of Arizona, and Yankee Institute for Public Policy were also awarded funding for general support projects. Major support for the program came from the Smith Family Foundation.

ASTA NARMONTĖ

A VISION OF FREEDOM IN LITHUANIA

By Asta Narmontė
Communications Director at Lithuanian Free Market Institute

My journey to the libertarian movement started in a TV news studio in Lithuania. I worked for 10 years as a reporter and then as an editor-in-chief. As a journalist I covered many stories about numerous fallacious government decisions and their consequences for ordinary people along with corruption scandals. Being frustrated by the misuse of taxpayers' money, populism, and a lack of responsibility of so many high-profile officials in the government, I wanted to stand in the shoes of the ones who worked to bring about change. The Lithuanian Free Market Institute (LFMI) is the organization which shines in this fight.

I had visited LFMI's office several times to take interviews and I was impressed by how passionate they were about the ideas they represented, so when I saw job ad from LFMI which said: "If you are passionate about freedom, we are searching for you," I did not doubt it. The former president of LFMI Žilvinas Šilėnas and the team of LFMI believed in me and my journey in this amazing community began.

I am so thankful to Atlas Network for the opportunity to improve as a professional, to learn from the best lecturers, and to learn the best practices of different organizations from all over the world.

Among the value Atlas Network offers the international movement, to me the most important aspect is the feeling you get when you come to Atlas Network's events—the feeling that *you are not alone*. We in the movement sometimes get exhausted and even feel that it is a Sisyphean job we are doing, that nobody cares or listens, and that the left is winning the fight of ideas and people tend to trust them over us. When I meet all these people from all around the world, it is an amazing feeling that our team is not alone in this fight. Moreover, it is validating to learn that our small organization from a small country faces similar problems as other

Being frustrated by the misuse of taxpayers' money, populism, and a lack of responsibility I wanted to stand in the shoes of the ones who worked to bring about change.

I believe that the support, cooperation, and mentorship of Atlas Network is crucial for organizations like ours.

organizations in other parts of the world—even those with much larger budgets. The sense of community that Atlas Network fosters empowers us to seek changes even more passionately and effectively. Furthermore, many projects that we have developed

at the Lithuanian Free Market Institute began in meetings with colleagues from other think tanks.

What an amount of knowledge I have gotten from Atlas Network! At the Leader Lab I improved my strategic planning and team management skills. I had an opportunity to not only listen, but also to interact with inspiring leaders and ask questions about challenges I face in my daily work.

The Lights, Camera, Liberty workshop in LA was a great inspiration for creating and using more video production to spread the ideas. At the Lithuanian Free Market Institute we have strong relations and experience working with the media—we have around 3,300 media appearances per year—but it is not enough. The way how people get information and how they interact with it is changing. The "screen time" is longer, but engagement with content is decreasing. So, we need to rethink our communication strategy constantly. The Lights, Camera, Liberty workshop provided a big pool of ideas for new ways of reaching big audiences.

Once my nine-year old son said to me, "Mom, when I grow up, I will be a soccer player. I will first play in FC Bayern, FC Barcelona, and then I will come back to play for the Lithuanian national team because we are so hopeless at soccer. I have to do something about it. I will practice a lot and I will win championships." I think this statement of his is amazing because it conveys the meaning of our daily work. Day-in and day-out we at the Lithuanian Free Market Institute fight for a free and responsible society where every kid can be whatever they want to be. Furthermore, we educate children and adults alike, changing their mindset from sitting back and waiting for miracles to happen to actually initiating change.



Narmontė makes frequent media appearances on behalf of LFMI.



↑ Top: Narmontė with Ona, a home baker who benefits from a simple business license that LFMI has publicly defended from being removed. To supplement her income as a librarian, Ona bakes traditional šakotis cakes for special occasions.

↓ Bottom: A graduate of Atlas Network's Leader Lab and Lights, Camera, Liberty, Asta Narmontė is communications director at the Lithuanian Free Market Institute.



Targeted broad-based communication is essential to our goal of fostering a free-market environment where people can pursue their dreams in a way that best reflects their individual interests while not relying on government. An important part of my job is to push the issues that we see as very important through a scrutinized media filter. In addition to that, we constantly look for new forms of presenting our ideas so we can prevent flawed government decisions.

I believe that the support, cooperation, and mentorship of Atlas Network is crucial for organizations like ours. The Lithuanian Free Market Institute is celebrating its 30th anniversary next year, and for more than 20 years we have had the honour of being part of the Atlas Network. Beyond the organizational support, Atlas Network has provided individual support not only to me but to several of my colleagues, and for that, I am very thankful.

LIBERTY FORUM & FREEDOM DINNER 2019

Sharing the message of liberty was a key theme of Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner 2019, which brought together more than 800 liberty champions from six continents for two days of conference sessions, networking, and building new opportunities for change around the world. This annual gathering is made possible by the generosity of many donors, with special thanks to the Smith Family Foundation, John Templeton Foundation, and Templeton Religion Trust.



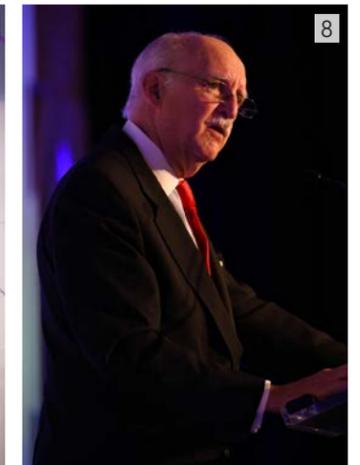
1: Representatives of the six Templeton Freedom Award finalists were interviewed onstage by Atlas Network's Casey Pifer.

2: Atlas Network CEO Brad Lips (left) and Heather Templeton Dill (right) present Calixto V. Chikiamco, president of Foundation for Economic Freedom in the Philippines, with the 2019 Templeton Freedom Award.

3: Patrick Stephenson of IMANI Center for Policy and Education in Ghana speaks during the Global Trade Collaboratory.

4: Connor Boyack of the Libertas Institute in Utah delivers his winning pitch during the 2019 Think Tank Shark Tank.

5: Eric Tubbs of Think Freely Media, journalist Deroy Murdock, and Atlas Network Board Member Scott Barbee deliberate during the Great Communicators Tournament.



6: Atlas Network board chair Linda Whetstone presents former Manhattan Institute president Larry Mone with the Sir Antony Fisher Achievement Award.

7: Atlas Network's Dr. Lyall Swim and Brad Lips present the John Blundell Elevator Pitch Award to Anuki Premachandra (center) of Sri Lanka's Advocata Institute. Inés Marrache of Asociación de Contribuyentes del Perú and Eva Christensen of Mannkal Economic Education Foundation in Australia were runners-up.

8: The Honorable Douglas H. Ginsburg delivers the 7th annual Liggio Lecture at Liberty Forum.

9: Pacific Legal Foundation Creative Director Jaclyn Boudreau accepts the 2019 Lights, Camera, Liberty Film Festival Award for Quota.

10: Atlas Network's Roberto Salinas León introduces Platte Institute's occupational licensing work at Freedom Dinner.

11: Atlas Network's Matt Warner and filmmaker Charlie Fritschner look on as IDEAS' Luis Loria hoists a Costa Rican nougat.

12: Director of Atlas Network's Center for African Prosperity, Magatte Wade, delivers an impassioned Cornerstone Talk at Liberty Forum.

13: Participants from the inaugural Leader Lab pause for a moment of celebration ahead of Freedom Dinner.

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL FOR FILIPINO FARMERS



FEF President Calixto V. Chikiamco accepts the 2019 Templeton Freedom Award for FEF's work to end restrictions on agricultural land patents.

The Foundation for Economic Freedom in the Philippines has won the 2019 Templeton Freedom Award for their work to end restrictions on agricultural land patents, liberating billions of dollars in land values and potentially transforming the country's entire agricultural sector.

In the Philippines, property rights and poverty are closely linked. More than fifty percent of the Filipino population lives in rural areas, and the country's rural population depends mostly on agriculture for its income. Poverty is more prevalent among agricultural workers, in large part because rural landowners face heavy government restrictions on how they can manage their property.

Since the 1930s, the government has placed two major burdens on citizens who hold what is called an "agricultural free patent," essentially the deed to the farmers' land. Because of these restrictions, the patent is virtually worthless. It's estimated that in the past 25 years, the government has issued roughly 2 million agricultural free patents.

More than fifty percent of the Filipino population lives in rural areas, and the country's rural population depends mostly on agriculture for its income.

Starting in 2015, the Foundation for Economic Freedom (FEF) took aim at this unfair scheme. In the ensuing years, FEF organized a campaign focused on evidence-based research, advocacy, and engagement with stakeholders to bring change to the Philippines.

Agricultural land patents are rooted in the country's transition to independence in the 1930s. Under the Public Land Use Act enacted in 1936, an agricultural free patent was issued to those who have "continuously occupied and cultivated" tracts of agricultural public land. However, patent holders were prohibited from mortgaging or selling their land within five years from the issuance of the patent.

To circumvent this problem, patent holders engaged in underground market transactions, which increased the risk of



← Left: A local newspaper covers the Agricultural Free Patent Reform Act that the Foundation for Economic Freedom was instrumental in achieving.

→ Right: FEF President Calixto V. Chikiamco speaks about land reform.



↘ Bottom right: FEF also conducted youth outreach in connection to their work on land reform in the Philippines.



default and contributed to the lack of property investment in the countryside, as rural banks were reluctant to lend to farmers with patents because the risk of foreclosure and low marketability of the patent after being foreclosed was a significant barrier. Another problem was that land transactions were not closed for five years, meaning that the original landowners had the option to buy back the property with impunity within that time. As a result, this constricted rural land market became a major cause of agricultural underdevelopment and poverty in the Philippines.

"There are millions of Filipinos who need property in order to increase their productivity, and there is also much property in the country that is left unused," said FEF Senior Program Officer Ranna Pintor. "This is a clear example of inefficiency in its market structure."

A 2016 study by FEF estimated that agricultural assets covered by the five-year restriction amount to at least ₱387 billion Philippine pesos, or more than US\$7.5 billion. This amount may even reach trillions of pesos if patents prior to 1980 are included.

"In the Philippines the face of poverty is rural," said FEF President Calixto Chikiamco. "Giving farmers the right to do what they would like with their land will be a big step in turning this trend around, and will strengthen our democracy. Receiving the Templeton Freedom Award can only inspire us to achieve even greater heights."

Severe restrictions on land use made rural banks unwilling to accept agricultural free patents as collateral for financ-

ing, resulting in significant underinvestment in the countryside. When banks were willing to work with patent-holders, it was usually because the five-year restriction on sale and mortgage had already expired, with additional requirements and at lower loan value.

"In developing nations like the Philippines, maximizing the use of existing resources is critical in promoting societal development," said Pintor. "Giving a farmer more land to use enables him to increase his overall productivity and increases his revenue, enabling him to raise his standard of living."

To fix these problems, FEF helped to draft legislation to reform severe agricultural patent restrictions, built a coalition of supporters, and worked with

In developing nations like the Philippines, maximizing the use of existing resources is critical in promoting societal development.



legislators to pass the new law, which is already delivering access to capital for millions of people and transforming the entire agricultural sector of the Philippines.

"What the Foundation for Economic Freedom has achieved is truly epic," said Dr. Tom G. Palmer, Atlas Network's executive vice president of international programs and George M. Yeager

Chair for Advancing Liberty. "It took years, but thanks to FEF's efforts, at one stroke 2.5 million people received full property rights to their land—and that means increased investment, increased output, more opportunities, more freedom, and better lives for all the people of the Philippines."

Removing the two main limits on property titles is likely to be transformative for the entire agricultural sector of the Philippines and for the lives of millions of people.

Atlas Network mourns the passing of a dear friend, Donald G. Smith, whose leadership in the advancement of liberty has been exceptional. Thanks to his philanthropy, millions of the world's poor and disadvantaged enjoy greater freedom to lift themselves out of poverty. Across the globe, the Smith Family Foundation's investments have materially promoted the rule of law, peace, prosperity, liberty, and the dignity that they bring.

The world is a better place because of Donald Smith, whose humility was only matched by his love for the freedom of other people. A light has gone out, but only after kindling countless more.

ATLAS NETWORK BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
NOVEMBER 6, 2019



DONALD
G. SMITH



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