

FREEDOM'S CHAMPION

SUPPORTER
SPOTLIGHT:
ATLAS NETWORK
BOARD CHAIR
DEBBI GIBBS

WINTER 2020

Atlas Network's quarterly review of
the worldwide freedom movement

DIGNITY RESTORED

By Matt Warner

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2020 LIBERTY FORUM & FREEDOM DINNER

FINDING COMMUNITY FROM THE "BOTTOM OF THE WORLD"

By Casey Russell

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2020 TEMPLETON FREEDOM AWARD WINNER

2021 REGIONAL LIBERTY FORUMS

THE
TEMPLETON
Freedom
AWARD
2020

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Cover: Pastor Lee Robbins runs several enterprises to help the formerly incarcerated reintegrate into society. He served three years at the federal prison camp in Atlanta, Georgia. Photo / AtlasNetwork.org / Isaac Torres

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**

FREEDOM'S CHAMPION
An Atlas Network Publication
Editor-in-Chief **AJ Skiera**
Design **MainTask.pro**



FINDING INSPIRATION AND LEADERSHIP IN NEW ZEALAND

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

FINDING INSPIRATION AND LEADERSHIP IN NEW ZEALAND



When I was back in college Seattle's grunge music scene was all the rage, but I had a special affinity for indie rock bands from New Zealand. The Clean, the 3-D's, and Tall Dwarfs all occupy a special spot in my quirky record collection—and in my heart. Imagine my surprise when I discovered that one of our supporters, Debbi Gibbs, had been the manager for a leading Kiwi indie rock band of that era (Straightjacket Fits) and that she had serendipitously arranged for them to play a gig close to the Brandenburg Gate on November 9, 1989. On that monumental night that the Berlin Wall fell, New Zealand's Straightjacket Fits was the house band of the Free World for thousands of East Germans exiting communism for the first time!

I mention this story at the front of this issue of *Freedom's Champion* because, inside, we celebrate Debbi Gibbs' recent election as Board Chair of Atlas Network, succeeding the ever-amazing Linda Whetstone. We also have another New Zealander, Casey Russell, featured as an alumna of our organization's training arm, the Atlas Network Academy, which recently announced a number of exciting enhancements.

New Zealand pops up one more time in this issue, as the top-scoring country in a new *Global Index of Economic Mentality (GIEM)* that uses survey data to assess how the public in 74 countries tend to think about the efficacy of markets, the role of government in redistributing wealth, and whether individuals should be responsible for working for their own economic success. We shared the initial findings of the GIEM at our virtual Liberty Forum conference in November and will publish it more formally during 2021.

New Zealand ranks at the top of all countries studied in Atlas Network's new Global Index of Economic Mentality.

One of the worrisome findings in the GIEM was that, while the U.S. ranked highly overall in its appreciation of economic freedom, younger Americans appear to

be much more skeptical about the virtues of free enterprise. We need to get better at showing that socialism is not the answer. If you truly want to raise living standards and achieve equality for all under the law, the best solutions are grounded in respecting the dignity of individuals, getting government out of the way, and unleashing the creativity of the volun-

tary sectors of society. This message is at the heart of Dignity Unbound, an important Atlas Network project being led by Matt Warner who authored the cover story to this *Freedom's Champion*.

While I've given up on persuading people of the scruffy charm of New Zealand's great indie rockers, I do aim to see the day when—all over the world—the merits of free enterprise and limited government are as well-understood as they appear to be in New Zealand.

As we chart a way forward to get closer to this goal in 2021, I'm grateful for the community of Atlas Network donors and partner organizations that are actively collaborating to advance the themes of our Dignity Unbound project.


Brad Lips
Chief Executive Officer
Atlas Network



DIGNITY RESTORED: THE POWER OF FREEDOM TO END POVERTY

By Matt Warner

More than a billion people have escaped extreme poverty in the last 30 years—an unprecedented 64 percent drop in those living on \$1.90 per day or less. In recent years, Atlas Network’s fight for economic freedom around the world has focused, in part, on accelerating that decline. This year, the impact of the pandemic has introduced a new urgency to that fight.

The World Bank is estimating as many as 115 million people are at risk of slipping back into extreme poverty—marked by a life plagued by hunger, disease, and desperation. We can prevent that from happening. We know what to do to stop it.

This year we launched Dignity Unbound, a project dedicated to expanding economic freedom for all who experience poverty, extreme or otherwise. Our strategy is unique in the field of economic development, and our partner network of independent, local think tanks is the key to our success.

Achieving economic development can be a vexing task. The foreign aid community has spent billions over the past several decades attempting to spread prosperity and liberal democracy using a top-down approach. It doesn’t work. The overwhelming majority of those who have worked their way out of poverty have done so in countries where little, if any, foreign aid has played a defensible role. This shouldn’t surprise us. Wealthy nations didn’t become rich because of aid. They became rich because of a combination of economic freedom and a spirit of enterprise. They became rich because they availed themselves of a special kind of knowledge. The knowledge of the individual.

Expertise has its place. Economists, engineers, and scientists play an important role in society by gathering and disseminating technical knowledge. But technical knowledge alone cannot make our decisions for us as we work to solve economic problems. Economic problems require what Hayek called the knowledge of time and place. A street vendor, a farmer, a fisherman from a local village each possesses knowledge that no expert can obtain. They know what matters to them. They know their own preferences. They know their own tradeoffs and values. They know which traditions and social expectations must be navigated and accounted for in their own economic decision making.

Reverence for the dignity of the individual is what has been missing from the foreign aid model.



How do societies make use of that knowledge? It starts with a fundamental respect for the individual. It starts with affording to each person the dignity of leading their own life and making their own choices. When governments try to make those decisions for them or limit their choices, they deny all of that individual knowledge from influencing the economic landscape. Reverence for the dignity of the individual is what has been missing from the foreign aid model.

In contrast, human dignity is at the center of Atlas Network’s approach. Dignity Unbound achieves poverty reduction by taking human dignity seriously. Our strategy is simple, but effective. We know the most proven way to unleash the practical knowledge of the individual is by strengthening the institutions of limited government and free markets. We also know, as many are coming to understand, that institutions cannot be imposed from the outside. It hasn’t worked in Eastern Europe and Russia. It hasn’t worked in Latin America. It will not work in Africa and South Asia.

← Left: Dainius Lapinskas works the floors at the Netmark factory in Tauragė, Lithuania. The Danish fishing net company was able to expand in Tauragė once the municipality sold off unused assets—one of the many liberalizing recommendations made in the Lithuanian Free Market Institute’s Municipal Performance Index, which spurs competition among municipal governments in Lithuania.

→ Right: Papa Coriandre, who was able to hire over 100 employees as a result of change in the law, is pictured with stacks of resumes of people he’s hired in the last 12 months.

↓ Atlas Network’s Dignity Unbound campaign will be premiering a series of short films featuring the people whose lives have been transformed thanks to the reform efforts of our local partners. Here is Rekha Dey, who runs a successful company making homes of bamboo in Dehradun, India.



Rekha Dey

Director, Tanjun Wonder Bamboo Enterprises

I am a bamboo entrepreneur.



Institutions are best formed by those who will be governed by them. For this reason, Atlas Network has carefully and painstakingly cultivated a global network of independent, local think tanks who lead on institutional change in their communities.



What does work is locally driven change. Institutions are best formed by those who will be governed by them. For this reason, Atlas Network has carefully and painstakingly cultivated a global network of independent, local think tanks who lead on institutional change in their communities. They tell us what the free-market reform priorities are in their own countries and communities and they

develop sophisticated strategies to achieve them. We fund the best of those projects and diligently facilitate the global ideas sharing that helps to sharpen their plans.

Prioritizing local leadership does not mean all learning should be local. Most of the poverty reduction to date can be attributed to the global transfer of goods, ideas, and technology. The key difference in our model is autonomy, the freedom and prerogative to make decisions about which ideas are most useful and how to adapt them in the local context.

For example, we helped a new think tank get started in Burundi. The Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes (CDE Great Lakes) demonstrated to us their commit-

ment to this cause and through their participation in our robust training programs we learned firsthand how effective they could be. Training and getting to know our potential grantees is a unique advantage we bring to our grant making decisions. One of the first projects we supported in Burundi was designed by CDE Great Lakes. They recognized that one of Burundi's biggest challenges was the size of its informal economy. They identified specific policy changes that would break down the barriers to formal participation in the market. Most importantly, they designed the strategy for achieving those reforms in cooperation with government officials and the public they engaged through the media.

As a result, they achieved a big reduction in fees required to register a business legally. They also streamlined the process, making it much quicker and simpler to obtain registration to start a business. Microenterprise entrepreneurs can't spend seven months visiting a dozen government offices. They need to make money every day to get by. Add to that the stark reality that the more government approvals needed, the more opportunities for government officials to extract bribes, raising the costs for low-income merchants even more.

In the year prior to the reforms achieved by CDE Great Lakes, Burundi saw only a five percent increase in new business registrations. In the year following the reforms, business registrations increased by 49 percent. One of those businesses was run by a man known locally as "Papa Coriandre" because he makes and sells products made of coriander (a parsley-like herb grown in his community). Papa Coriandre had managed a three-person operation for decades, never able to grow his business because in



1: The next chapter of our storytelling work will feature American partners, such as the Georgia Center for Opportunity (GCO). Pictured is GCO's Kristin Baker (right) and Latesha Jackson (left) who found employment and other resources through GCO's Hiring Well, Doing Good initiative.

2: Aimable Manirakiza (left), the CEO of CDE Great Lakes, speaks with a Burundian entrepreneur.

3: Bakers of Panadería Comunitaria "La Masa Critica" at work in Cooperativa La Juanita in the La Matanza region of Buenos Aires Province, Argentina.

4: Sixit Bhatta (center), the founder of the ridesharing app Tootle in Kathmandu, Nepal, poses with one of Tootle's drivers, Bhim Maya (right), and customer Chiran (left).

5: Truth Graf is a peer recovery specialist for Fulton County in Georgia, helping people who have struggled with drug addiction turn their lives around.

6: Pastor Lee Robbins runs several enterprises to help the formerly incarcerated reintegrate into society. He served three years at the federal prison camp in Atlanta, Georgia.

7: Luis Diego Soto Clausen (center) and the employees of his company Turrone de Costa Rica, which produces nougat that is enjoyed throughout Latin America.

the informal economy he was always vulnerable to government abuse at the hands of thieving police or others who knew he had no recourse to fight them. Thanks to the legal protections he now enjoys, he has exponentially grown his business and now employs over 100 people from the local communities.

Now consider this. Papa Coriandre already knew how to grow a successful business. He already knew there was a market and unmet demand for his products. He already knew who to hire and how to expand. He already had the means to invest in his own success. The only thing he needed was for government to get out of his way and to respect his human dignity as an equal citizen under the law.



Too many poverty programs, however, would assume Papa Coriandre needed entrepreneurship training, or that he needed startup capital, or, as is often the case, that he needed to change to a business outsiders thought was more promising. Wrong. Papa Coriandre knows so much more about his own time and place than any outsider could provide. That knowledge just needed to be respected and freed to discover a path to success.

This is what Dignity Unbound is doing all over the world. In fact, those same principles apply just as effectively in the United States where we have recently invested in projects to make it easier for people to thrive with reforms identified by local partners in the areas of job opportunities, housing, and healthcare.

In all of our efforts you can be sure that one thing is constant. We start with human dignity and fight for the process that protects it. The changes that allowed Papa Coriandre to prosper are replicable, and our partners are ready to help people thrive all over the world. They need your help.

Your generous gift in response to this issue will go 100% to our grantmaking efforts in support of think tanks working to make their countries freer places.

Matt Warner, president of Atlas Network

THIS QUARTER IN

WORLD

10

The best of Atlas Network's monthly World10 Report.
Subscribe at AtlasNetwork.org/World10

01

IN SEARCH OF TRUTH: CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM IN GEORGIA

The latest short film to be released for Atlas Network's Dignity Unbound tells the story of Truth Graf, whose struggles with addiction sent her to prison for seven years and whose road to renewal now serves others in addiction recovery. She now works for the state as a peer recovery specialist, and her pathway to employment was made easier thanks to the reform efforts of Georgia Center for Opportunity.



ARAB CENTER FOR RESEARCH SELECTED AS WINNER OF THE 2020 MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA LIBERTY AWARD

This year's 2020 Middle East & North Africa Liberty Award, along with the \$25,000 prize, was given to the Arab Center for Research for their *Refugee Reintegration project*, which confronts the ongoing refugee crisis in North Africa. Arab Center's Nuh El Harmouzi also recently appeared on the Atlas-Nexus podcast, which you can listen to on any major podcast provider or Atlas Network's website.



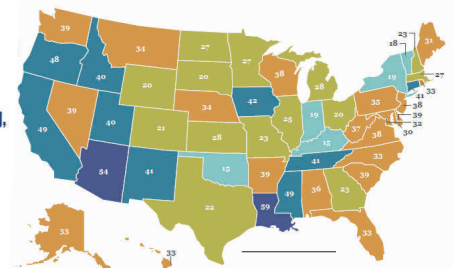
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TAKING ON THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING

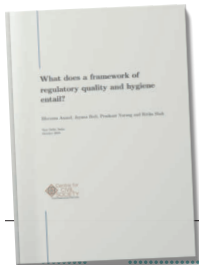
The Archbridge Institute is working to reduce the heinous effects that occupational licensing laws have on low income communities across the United States. Their team published an original dataset that documents the growth of occupational licensing requirements and how they have hindered economic mobility in each state.

Growth in Low Income Occupational Licensing, 1993-2012

50-59 20-29
40-49 15-19
30-39



CCS RECOMMENDATIONS INCORPORATED INTO NEW STATE REFORM ACTION PLAN IN INDIA



The Centre for Civil Society (CCS) produced the Quality of Regulation report in 2019 to spur decisionmakers to be more intentional in lawmaking. In 2020, CCS applied the report to review existing laws and regulations that affect the ease of doing business throughout the country and conducted a quantitative analysis of these laws to obtain objective and quantifiable feedback on their quality. In its 2020 action plan, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade included many of the key principles that CCS recommended in the Quantity of Regulation report.

05

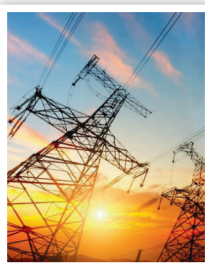
THOMAS BEACH AND JEAN-CLAUDE GRUFFAT JOIN ATLAS NETWORK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Atlas Network is excited to announce that Thomas Beach and Jean-Claude Gruffat have joined our board. "We're so excited to welcome Jean-Claude and Tom to the board," said Atlas Network's CEO Brad Lips. "Their rich history in the liberty movement and devotion to personal freedom and dignity around the world will help take our impact to new heights in the years ahead."



06 NEW “HUMAN ACTION” DOCUMENTARY EXAMINES THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF LUDWIG VON MISES

The film, produced by Freedom and Entrepreneurship Foundation in Poland, features Mises’ intellectual journey and contributions to the economic field of study and offers a glimpse into his personal life. Mises was not just an economist and author—he was a loving husband, a refugee from war-torn Europe, and a friend to many.



FUNDACIÓN ELÉUTERA CAMPAIGNS FOR TRANSPARENCY AND PRIVATIZATION OF HONDURAS’ ENERGY MARKET

Fundación Eléutera has driven reform of the energy market in Honduras since 2014, helping usher through major legislation that ended the state-run monopoly. Their work and influence in the energy sector has helped change the way the government and citizens of Honduras view privatization and increased transparency in the marketplace.



08 THE STORIES OF FREEDOM, THE INSPIRATION OF MILTON AND ROSE FRIEDMAN, AND THE ART AND POETRY OF BOB CHITESTER

Bob Chitester is the founder of Free to Choose and the man who brought Milton Friedman and free-market economics into living rooms around the world with the landmark 1980 *Free to Choose* series. After 50 years of television management and program development, Chitester examined the relationship between the philosophy of liberty and the capacity for creativity, reflected on his career and friendship with Milton and Rose Friedman, and explained how good storytelling can impact society’s future in a must-listen episode of the Atlas-Nexus podcast.



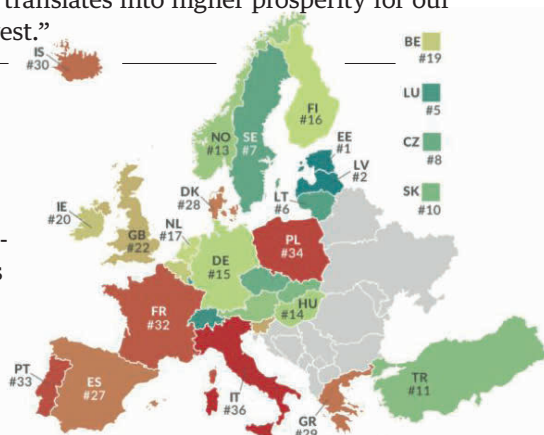
SPANISH THINK TANK CREATES COMPETITION AMONGST CITIES

The 2020 Europe Liberty Award winner, Fundación para el Avance de la Libertad (Fundalib), continues to see city governments in Spain heed the warnings of their Index of Economic Freedom of Spain’s cities. The city of La Laguna publicly implemented tax reforms to increase its ranking in the index, for example. Lieutenant Mayor Alejandro Marrero even said “Thanks to the work so far carried out, we have been able to go up in this index, and according to the publishing organization [Fundalib] this translates into higher prosperity for our city, with more freedom to work, consume, and invest.”



10 TAX FOUNDATION TAKES ANALYSIS TO EUROPE

The Tax Foundation worked with several European Atlas Network partners on the International Tax Competitiveness Index, including KEFiM in Greece, Prometheus-Das Freiheitinstitut in Germany, the Centre for Policy Studies in the U.K., and Instituto de Estudios Económicos in Spain. The index’s aim is to promote pro-growth tax policies throughout Europe, and it generated 291 media hits in 45 countries, over 100,000 social media engagements, and 20,000 pageviews in the first week alone.





SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

DEBBI GIBBS

Debbi Gibbs has served for many years on the Board of Atlas Network as a member and as Vice Chair. Following our Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner, she was named Chair of the Board. Our Strategic Partnerships Advisor, Vale Sloane, recently interviewed Debbi about her entry into the freedom movement and her involvement with Atlas Network.

Vale Sloane: Debbi, how did you originally get involved with Atlas Network?

Debbi Gibbs: I knew “of” Atlas Network through the ether and had been on the website a couple of times. I knew that Dad’s [Atlas Network supporter Alan Gibbs] friend John Blundell was involved and that there was this “great girl” that connected us with Libertarians around the world when we travelled—I now know her as the infamous Agent W [out-

going Chair of the Board, Linda Whetstone]. John invited me to participate in a couple of Liberty Fund Colloquium, where I met Dan Grossman and George Pearson. I subsequently discovered that they were vetting my classical liberal credentials! At their invitation I attended my first Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner, and that was when I really came to understand this worldwide network for which Atlas forms such an important hub. I loved it! Then I met Brad Lips who said, “Did you really manage Straitjacket Fits?” and I thought “what a fabulously eclectic group of people—this is my tribe!”

VS: Why do you choose to support Atlas Network?

DG: Leverage. I know no other way to effect such meaningful change so efficiently and effectively as training our partners and funding grants for their most promising projects.



Debbi announces the winner of the 2020 Templeton Freedom Award during the annual Freedom Dinner (see page 18 for further information).

VS: Given your background as a New Zealander, you bring a truly international perspective to Atlas Network. How does that shape your view of our work and mission?

DG: I think Kiwis are a particularly outward-looking people. You can't delude yourself that an island nation of 4 million people is the center of the world. I brought that with me when I moved to the U.S. and I still feel fundamentally that globalization is a good and growing thing. The butterfly effect of liberty and prosperity in this interconnected world can be amplified and accelerated by Atlas' networking capacity and increase the impact and efficacy of advances in every community.

VS: How do you think Atlas Network differs from other organizations in the U.S. liberty movement?

DG: That global focus is uniquely ours. It's not that we don't have an important role and impact in the U.S. but it is within the context of the wider world. I also think that we exemplify the ideals of collaboration and the premise that a rising tide lifts all boats. We believe in competition and that it is good for everyone—not a winner-takes-all zero-sum game. Freedom is not pie.

VS: What is your fondest memory at an Atlas Network event?

DG: Every Liberty Forum has fond memories—and it is always of the people.

VS: Congratulations on your new role as Chair of the Board for Atlas Network! What are you most excited about in your upcoming position?

Debbi and her father, Alan Gibbs, who is also a longtime supporter of Atlas Network.



Debbi, Nena Whitfield (center), and Stephanie Lips (right) at the 2014 Freedom Dinner.

The butterfly effect of liberty and prosperity in this interconnected world can be amplified and accelerated by Atlas' networking capacity and increase the impact and efficacy of advances in every community.



DG: I am really hoping to be able to get to some of the Regional Liberty Forum events. I don't need to be chair to do that but I am lucky to be presiding over a period when Atlas Network is developing a federal structure with regional centers as subhubs of local expertise and engagement. I think we will see the impact of this approach in the Regional Liberty Forums. I am also excited to see how all the technology refinements exemplified in the Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner 2020 get incorporated into our future communications and collaborations.

VS: You've been involved in charting and supporting the growth of Atlas Network in your time on our Board. What does the future look like?

DG: I don't think I have very good predictive powers, but I do believe that Atlas Network has a strategy and vision that is both strong and flexible. We also have robust systems for evaluating our work and that of our partners and being able to assess our impact enables Atlas Network to maximise our resources and capacity as it grows. So the future looks bigger and better and brighter!

VS: On a final note, I know that you have a fantastic story about where you were when the fall of the Berlin wall happened. Would you mind sharing it?

DG: Well once upon a time, a long time ago I managed the aforementioned "Straitjacket Fits," a fantastic maelstrom of an indie rock band. Our first world tour was through the U.S. and Europe in 1989. We happened to be playing in Berlin the night the wall came down. I don't know if people who were paying more attention to the news at the time anticipated it at all, but we had just driven through the infamous corridor to West Berlin and the idea that all that Eastern security was about to crumble was unfathomable! We were told that the East Germans were breaching the wall during our set and asked if the bands would play again. I remember that the next morning West Berlin was completely out of toothpaste and cheese. On the 20th anniversary the singer wrote to me "dunedin (and Auckland) dorks wander into a large slice of history. Bit like that 'zelig' movie really..."



ALUMNI IN FOCUS

CASEY RUSSELL

FINDING COMMUNITY FROM THE 'BOTTOM OF THE WORLD'

By Casey Russell

I was mid-way through my undergraduate degree in policy in 2018 when I started working at the New Zealand Taxpayers' Union (NZTU). I was excited to stay in the non-profit realm I had come from and indulge my interest in politics, but I spent a while struggling to get my head around what we did at the NZTU. I could barely tell you what a think tank was let alone the rule of law or the Overton window, but I did know we were fighting for something important—lower taxes, less waste, and more transparency within government.

A few months deep and I wasn't sure I was cut out for the job. My colleagues seemed to get 'it' and I didn't—I lacked the strategic vision of what we were about and why. Fortunately, the following February I set out for my first Atlas

Network training course—Think Tank Essentials in Colombo, Sri Lanka. It started to come together, and I began to understand what I thought I wasn't cut out for. The pleasure of connecting with so many others working towards the same shared goals at the Asia Liberty Forum solidified my enthusiasm for our work.

Getting back into the office after that first course was thrilling. The NZTU was deep into our Axe This Tax campaign—I was just in time to contribute in a meaningful way. A few months later and we were popping champagne bottles, the Prime Minister had shot down the capital gains tax proposal, and we had won. Seeing every ounce of hard work that we had put into that campaign pay off was unlike anything else I'd felt in my professional career. As the Engagement



Casey poses at the NZTU headquarters in New Zealand.

Coordinator of the NZTU, every day of that campaign I had read emails from our 60,000 members and supporters about how this tax would have impacted their lives, with the ability to keep their homes and their businesses in jeopardy.

Knowing that together we were able to defeat it proved the power of unity—something I’m reminded of with every Atlas Network event I attend!

Living isolated at the bottom of the world, with only a handful of other liberty-minded groups around us it can be easy to feel as if we’re alone in the fight. While I am very grateful to have learnt so much in terms of practical skills from Atlas Network—being able to come together with other Atlas Network partners and discuss the work they’re doing provides priceless inspiration.

Taking part in Leader Lab last year was by far the most beneficial experience I’ve had with Atlas Network yet. Not only was the training itself eye-opening, but it gave me a chance to compete for the first time. After watching Anthea Haryoko’s winning Think Tank Shark Tank pitch earlier in the year, I couldn’t be happier when she was a mentor for my group during the business plan competition. It provided an-



Casey competes in the 2019 John Blundell Elevator Pitch Competition at Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner in New York City.

other special moment that was only possible with Atlas—the opportunity to work with someone whom I already admired. The competition itself was tough but allowed us to close off the training feeling confident in the content.

More recently, I was able to take part in Think Tank Shark Tank myself—virtually in lieu of the Asia Liberty Forum this year. Just as it was taking part in the John Blundell Elevator Pitch Competition in 2019, I was humbled to be competing with people so accomplished.

The support that Atlas has provided not only to me personally, but to the New Zealand Taxpayers’ Union has been vital to our success as an organisation. I am immensely grateful for the opportunities provided to us by Atlas Network and look forward to the next time we’re able to come together again.

While I am very grateful to have learnt so much in terms of practical skills from Atlas Network—being able to come together with other Atlas Network partners and discuss the work they’re doing provides priceless inspiration.



← Left: Casey at the 2019 Leader Lab. To the far left is Anthea Haryoko of CIPS.

↗ Bottom left: Casey and the rest of the competitors in the John Blundell Elevator Pitch, made up of alumni of the Leader Lab training program.

↓ From left to right: Alex Cordell, Casey Russell, Kameron Griffin, and Amna Quddusi, at the 2019 Asia Liberty Forum in Colombo, Sri Lanka.





NOT YOUR GRANDFATHER'S ZOOM CONFERENCE



Property foreclosures, restorative justice, right to work, and entrepreneurship are at the core of five films that were recognized at this year's Lights, Camera, Liberty Film Festival. *Free the People's How to Love Your Enemy: A Restorative Justice Story* won the \$10,000 prize.



Along with Professor Carlos Newland and Pál Czeplédi, Atlas Network CEO Brad Lips unveiled a new study that illuminates whether the Overton Window is moving toward, or away from, free-market policy solutions. The Global Index of Economic Mentality (GIEM) is a cross-country study that measures popular support for economic freedom, using data collected via the World Values Survey. Where GIEM scores are high, people do not expect government to play a major role in directing or regulating economic activity, or in redistributing income. The populations of these countries largely favor an institutional framework that prioritizes private initiative, free competition, and personal responsibility.



A proud tradition at Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner each year is the Think Tank Shark Tank competition (generously sponsored by the Smith Family Foundation). Roxana Nicula of Fundación para el Avance de la Libertad (Fundalib) in Spain won the \$25,000 in seed-funding for her project to take on the highest self-employment tax in the European Union. This year's esteemed panel of judges included Fred Young, Heather Rae Johnson, and Montgomery Brown.

“It’s now well-established that economic freedom is associated with low poverty and other desirable social outcomes,” Lips commented. “We are excited to learn whether the GIEM’s measures prove useful in identifying where institutions of economic freedom may be at risk, because of declining support, and where popular support could enable greater free-market reforms.”



The 2020 Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner was our most-attended ever with over 1,000 people tuning in throughout the program.

“Imagine a world with none of the 500 Atlas Network think tank partners,” challenged Ron Manners, recipient of the 2020 Sir Antony Fisher Achievement Award, before describing such a world as terrible. “Here is our challenge—it’s a huge challenge—we need to all accept the role we must play in expanding freedom around the world.”



Ron Manners, recipient of the Sir Antony Fisher Achievement Award, hosted a watch party in Perth, Australia.



The team at the Property & Environment Research Center, a finalist for the 2020 Templeton Freedom Award, hosted a watch party in their office for the big announcement.



The team at Universidad Francisco Marroquín called in from Guatemala.

Did you miss the excitement? All the sessions are available at LFFD2020.AtlasNetwork.org!





In his Liggio Lecture (named in honor of Atlas Network's late executive vice president Leonard Liggio), Professor David Schmidtz critiqued how moral philosophy lost its way in the 20th century by removing itself from practical problems that can be evaluated in light of empirical evidence. He called for a return to lessons learned in the Enlightenment that, at its best, philosophy engages the practical challenge of discovering norms and rules that allow people to live together in peace.



The audience was the judge for our annual John Blundell Elevator Pitch competition, where eight alumni of our Leader Lab program each had just sixty seconds to persuade the global crowd of the importance of their work to promote liberty. Natalie Dowzicky of the Cato Institute won first place and a \$1,500 grant for her organization. Devin Scanlon of the Mercatus Center at George Mason University took second (\$1,000), and Graeme Taylor of Texas Public Policy Foundation took third (\$500).



Economist Aleś Alachnoviĭch gave an optimistic report on pro-freedom protests in Belarus that have persisted since the country's disputed presidential election in August.

Hong Kong publisher and dissident Jimmy Lai explained in a touching interview why he's risked so much for a cause that's being suffocated by the Communist Chinese government.



Rising star Big Daddy Liberty spoke with Ibrahim B. Anoba—who is a fellow at Atlas Network's Center for African Prosperity—about the prospects of the Cheetah Generation leading authentic change throughout Africa. Anoba has written extensively about the roots of liberty in the African tradition and how a rediscovery of that tradition can help unleash the continent's economy in the 21st century.



Chief innovation officer and vice president at the Commonwealth Foundation in Pennsylvania, Jennifer Stefano, provided poignant anecdotes of the response of Americans to the disruption posed by the pandemic and by heavy-handed government responses during a discussion of strategies needed to create inclusive prosperity and social resilience in the wake of pandemic and shutdowns.

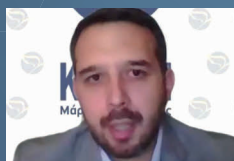


The best part of Liberty Forum is learning from smart people from all over the world. This year, the sense of 'common cause' among disparate peoples felt even greater by our participation from afar. Thank goodness Atlas Network exists to bring this community together!

– ATLAS NETWORK BOARD MEMBER ROBERT BOYD



Agustín Etchebarne



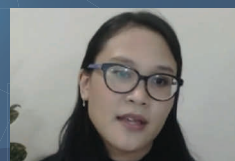
Alexander Skouras



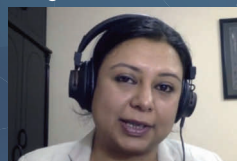
Amity Shlaes



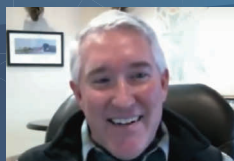
Aneetha Warusavitarana



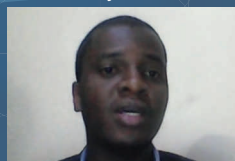
Anthea Haryoko



Arpita Nepal



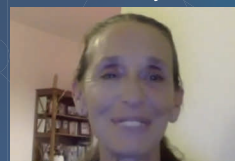
Brian Yablonski



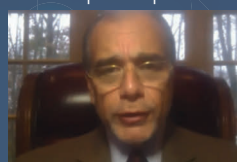
Bruce Vaillant



Calixto V. Chikiamco



Corinne Parenti



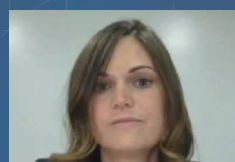
Juan José Daboub



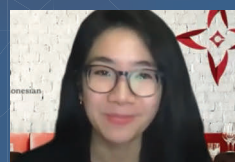
D. Dhanuraj



Dinh Tuanminh



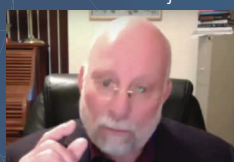
Elise Westhoff



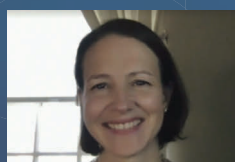
Felippa Amanta



Guillermo Peña Panting



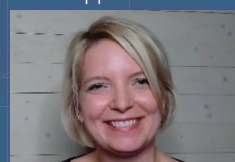
Jeffrey A. Singer



Heather Templeton Dill



Ibrahim B. Anoba



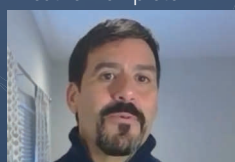
Isabelle Hirs-Schaller



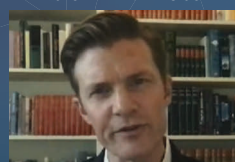
Iván Cachanosky



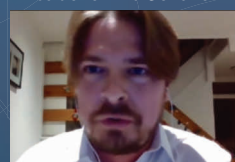
John B. Taylor



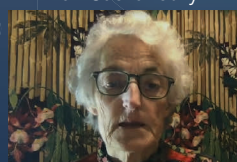
Jesús Gerena



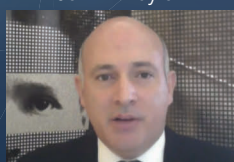
Johan Norberg



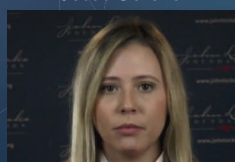
Kristian Niemitz



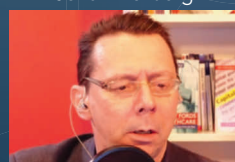
Linda Whetstone



Luis E. Loria



Maggie Horzempa



Mark Littlewood



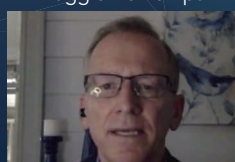
Matthew Mitchell



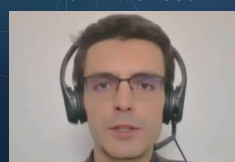
Niels Veldhuis



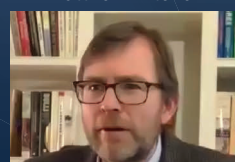
Rainer Heufers



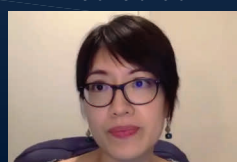
Randy Hicks



Ratko Nikolić



Scott Barbee



Tricia Yeoh



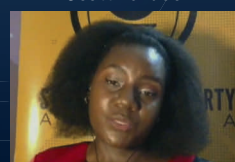
Will Dowell



William Easterly



Emily Chamlee-Wright



Linda Kavuka Kiguhi

Thank you to the dozens of speakers and hundreds of active attendees who made #LFFD20 a success!



INDONESIAN THINK TANK WINS 2020 TEMPLETON FREEDOM AWARD

Center for Indonesian Policy Studies (CIPS) was announced as the winner of the 2020 Templeton Freedom Award for its work to liberalize the food trade in Indonesia, and CIPS Executive Director Rainer Heufers accepted the award, which carries a prize of \$100,000 and is generously sponsored by Templeton Religion Trust. It was presented at Atlas Network's virtual Freedom Dinner on November 12.

Since gaining independence in 1945, Indonesia's government has pursued a harmful policy of food self-sufficiency that imposes severe import restrictions, tariffs, price controls, monopolies by state-owned enterprises, and barriers to entry—all in the name of independence. These laws increase the cost of food, resulting in significant food insecurity across Indonesia: 26 million people lack the income to buy adequate food and an additional 68 million Indonesians are considered extremely vulnerable to food price increases. Focusing its efforts on making nutritious food widely available for the poor, Center for Indonesian Policy

Studies' Hak MakMur campaign contributed to the reduction of import restrictions on beef, corn, rice, and other food products, resulting in an estimated savings of US\$1.9 billion for Indonesian households between 2016 and 2019.

Most recently, the Indonesian parliament passed into law the single largest set of policy reforms since Indonesian democracy began two decades ago.

"They plan to open Indonesia's food trade and increase the role of the private sector in raising agricultural productivity," explained Heufers. Previously, Indonesian laws only allowed imports when domestic supplies were insufficient; under the new law, the government has dropped import restrictions as a strategy to support farmers, penalties on imported commodities and arbitrary weight limits have been removed, and citizens are free to import livestock. Atlas Network is proud of all that CIPS has accomplished in its short existence, and we look forward to their continued success on this important issue.



Atlas Network CEO Brad Lips and Board Chair Debbi Gibbs greet the finalists of the 2020 Templeton Freedom Award shortly before the announcement of CIPS as the winner, which served as the grand finale of the 2020 Freedom Dinner.

Along the way, the CIPS team benefited enormously from engaging with the Atlas Network Academy," said Heufers. "In particular, the Mentorship program within ANA came at a crucial time for our team. We encountered a cash flow crisis, and the Mentorship program helped us identify a way forward, and we're so much stronger on the other end of that experience."



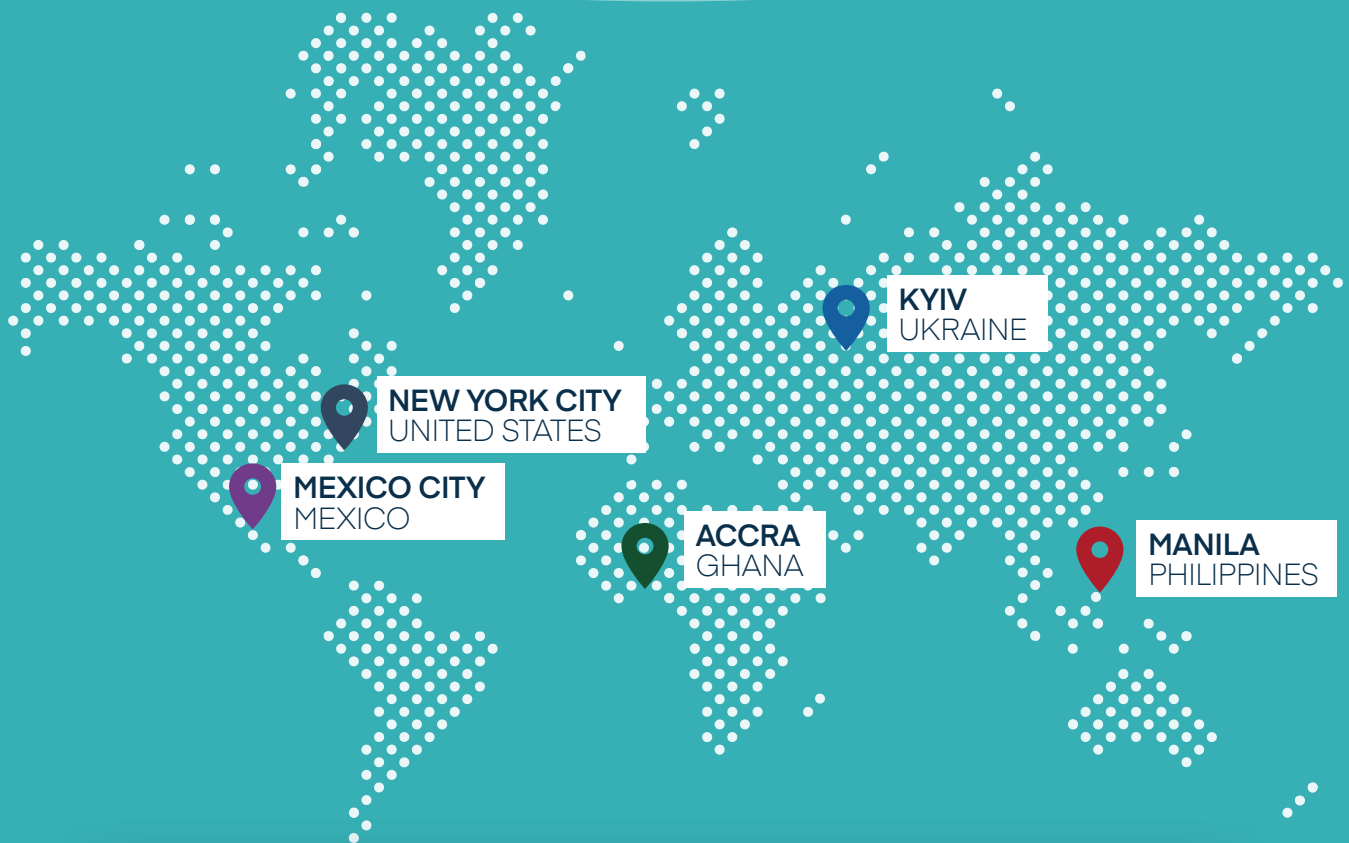
CIPS
Center for Indonesian
Policy Studies

CIPS has engaged with the full suite of Atlas Network Academy's offerings over the last several years. Its head of external relations, Anthea Haryoko, has won multiple Think Tank Shark Tank competitions, and Heufers' involvement with the Mentorship program created critical relationships that fostered the organization's long-term viability and allowed his team to focus on the crucially needed policy reform component of its work.



Join us at our 2021 Regional Events!

After a year of virtual events, we are excited to meet in-person when and where it's possible. As we pave the path forward, save the dates for our Regional Liberty Forums—and especially for our 2021 Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner in New York City.



May 13-14	Europe Liberty Forum in Kyiv, Ukraine
June 10-11	Latin America Liberty Forum in Mexico City
August 19-20	Africa Liberty Forum in Accra, Ghana
November 10-11	Liberty Forum in New York City
November 11	Freedom Dinner in New York City
December 16-17	Asia Liberty Forum in Manila, Philippines

Dates subject to change, so please check [AtlasNetwork.org](https://atlasnetwork.org) for the latest information.

DEBBI GIBBS

“The butterfly effect of liberty and prosperity in this interconnected world can be amplified and accelerated by Atlas Network’s networking capacity and increase the impact and efficacy of advances in every community.”



– DEBBI GIBBS



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