



## Jack Miller Center Presents Senator Ben Sasse Inaugural Award for Civic Education Leadership

**Philadelphia, PA** — *May 5, 2026*: The Jack Miller Center (JMC), an educational nonprofit advancing civic education across America, today announced that Ben Sasse, former U.S. Senator for Nebraska and thirteenth president of the University of Florida, will be the inaugural recipient of its Award for Civic Education Leadership. The award will be presented at the National Summit on Civic Education on May 18-19 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the birthplace of American independence, as the nation prepares to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

“Throughout his entire career, Senator Sasse has been a champion for civic renewal,” said JMC President Hans Zeiger. “From his ‘Schoolhouse Rock’ approach to reminding Congress of its own purpose to his leadership in establishing the Hamilton School for Classical and Civic Education at the University of Florida, he has consistently worked to advance literacy in the institutions of American self-government. We cannot think of a more fitting recipient.”

The Award for Civic Education Leadership recognizes individuals who have advanced the cause of teaching America's founding principles and history in extraordinary ways, through scholarship, public service, and institutional leadership. Recipients are selected by JMC leadership in recognition of a sustained and significant contribution to the civic education movement.

“This award really belongs to the men and women who struggle each generation to pass the meaning of America along to the next,” said Senator Ben Sasse. “For my part, I’ve had the privilege of reminding my colleagues over the years what makes this country remarkable. The constitutional system is still the greatest order for any government ever, and it is our job to steward it and protect it.”

In addition to the Award itself, JMC will also be contributing, in honor of Senator Sasse, to a scholarship fund at the University of Florida’s Hamilton School. The Award for Civic Education Leadership has been made possible through a generous anchor gift from Charles Kurz II of Philadelphia.

“Our country needs statesmen and educators like Senator Sasse now more than ever,” said JMC chair Michael Weiser. “He understands the true meaning of our Founding documents—the principles of equal human dignity, government by consent, and limited powers. Senator Sasse sets a high bar for future recipients of the award.”

Senator Sasse is also widely recognized for his ability to build bridges across political and ideological lines, earning the respect of colleagues and collaborators who may not share his politics but share his love of the American story and the work of civic renewal. Celebrated documentary filmmaker Ken Burns, whose life's work has been devoted to bringing American history to life for new generations, offered this reflection:

“I cannot imagine a person more worthy of the Jack Miller Center inaugural Award for Civic Education Leadership than my dear friend Ben Sasse. While we don't necessarily agree on every policy or political issue, Ben recognizes that patriotism is not about differences but agreements, including the importance of our founding, the value of education and scholarship and the need for dialogue. Whether in the Senate or in academia, or just the diner down the street, he has advocated fiercely for historical literacy and the importance of our institutions and self-government. Ben has taught all of us about the value of leadership. He continues to confront life—and death—with courage, faith, good humor, and discipline. It is one of the most heroic acts I've ever witnessed.”

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### **ABOUT THE JACK MILLER CENTER**

The Jack Miller Center is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advancing the work of scholars who teach and study the ideas, documents, and history we hold in common as Americans. We seek to grow the talent pipeline of university educators who teach the American political tradition, to forge new models for university-based training of K-12 civics and history teachers, and to build a diverse coalition of Americans to ignite a civic education renaissance.

### **ABOUT THE NATIONAL SUMMIT ON CIVIC EDUCATION**

The National Summit on Civic Education is an annual, invitation-only convening of leading scholars, educators, administrators, and funders committed to advancing civic education in America. This year's Summit, taking place May 18-19 in Philadelphia, will bring together approximately 500 civic education leaders for two days of programming centered on America's founding principles and their enduring relevance. Highlights include a keynote conversation with celebrated columnist Peggy Noonan, a live recording of the Old School podcast featuring Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Jon Meacham, a naturalization ceremony for new American citizens, and a live competition awarding \$30,000 in prizes to innovative civic education projects. The Summit is supported by 65 sponsoring organizations from across the political spectrum.

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