



ROBERT H.
JACKSON
CENTER

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2020

A.S. KING CAPTIVATES YOUTH AUDIENCE

On Tuesday, May 17, 2020, A.S. King inspired a new generation of students to embrace the joys of reading as the Jackson Center's 16th annual Young Readers author. King presented her remarks virtually, with the open and animated style evident in the vitality of her writing. Middle school students were asked to read her latest novel, *The Year We Fell From Space*, and high schoolers were encouraged to read her 2016 work, *Still Life With Tornado*. Both novels touched on her theme, "Being a Superhero," wherein King asked students to consider their past experiences, including trauma, and how they can shape their future and learn from mistakes rather than be defined by them. King took the audience of students on a journey through her challenges in grade school and what led to her career as an author.



A.S. King, Young Readers 2020 Presenter.

King aptly has been called "One of the best Y.A. writers working today" by the *New York Times* Book Review. She is the 2012 winner of the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize and won the 2020 Michael L. Printz Award for Excellence in Young Adult Literature for her novel *Dig*. During her career, King's presentations have helped tens of thousands of students take control of who they allow in their decision-making space. The Jackson Center is looking forward to inviting King back, in person, for students to fully appreciate her skill in connecting students with literature in ways that will resonate with them for the rest of their lives.

The Jackson Center initiated its Young Readers program 16 years ago, not only to showcase amazing young adult authors, but to introduce students to literature that is relevant to their lives. Because the books selected for the program address not only students' needs but also their interests, Young Readers has served as a powerful encouragement for students to develop a deeper appreciation for reading. This is especially important since adolescent literacy continues to be a challenge for many students. In the wake of research from the National Assessment of Educational Progress that finds 65 percent of graduating high school seniors and 71 percent of America's eighth graders are reading below grade level, there is a looming literacy crisis among middle and high school students. While schools continue to grapple with this issue, the Jackson Center continues to reach out to our youth to stimulate a desire to read by connecting students to stories that they feel compelled to explore, just as a young Robert Jackson devoured books to connect with a world he would later inhabit and contribute to in remarkable ways.

Special thanks to the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) for providing online access to all schools in New York State for the Jackson Center's 2020 Young Readers program.



A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of the Jackson Center,

I have written, revised, and then rewritten this letter numerous times in the last few weeks. In fact, this newsletter has already gone to the printer as I continue to struggle to find the words to appropriately express how I am feeling and what we plan to do about it.

During our recent Living Voices programs, I was reminded that significant change rarely comes wrapped in the solitude of one issue. This turbulence shakes us out of our complacency and forces us to confront the uncorrected conditions that inhibit us from achieving the Jackson Center's vision for society. During the pandemic of 1918-1920, women were demonstrating and dying for the right to vote. During the current pandemic, in the United States, we are demonstrating and dying for the right to live in a fair and just society. Let me clarify, for the rights of our black and brown community members to live in a fair and just society.



In October 1937, then-Assistant Attorney General Jackson wrote an address about our Constitution and the complexity of our government to be delivered on Founders Day at the University of North Carolina. "Our forefathers never expected to finally solve the social and economic problems of their own day, much less those of all days to come. The chief purpose was to devise mechanics and to create a form of political organization, so that questions as they arise might always be answered by a peaceful method, and by a democratic process." He then adds that the ultimate test of the Constitution is whether it is continuously adequate for each generation to develop and apply the policies needed in their times.

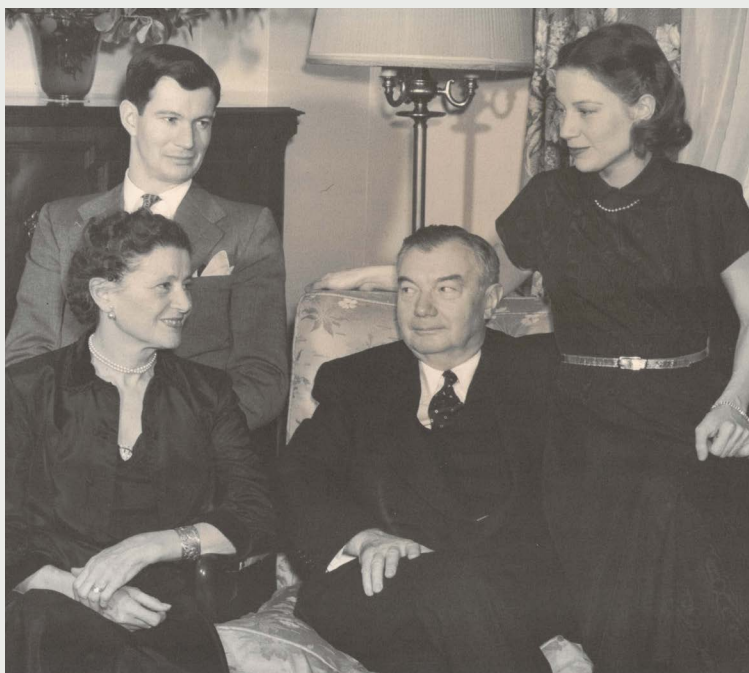
We are testing the Constitution today, as we should in every generation. Our 2020 programming theme is 'The Other - Through Your Eyes.' The goal is to create a window into another person's experiences to begin forging the connections that bring people to a common ground. By the end of the conversation, hopefully you understand why they have that viewpoint, even if you do not share it. I could not have predicted how the need for these conversations would come to such a head in the last few months. I am glad that we are taking the time to have these important discussions - with ourselves, our families and friends, and our wider communities. We must continue these conversations to work toward change, which is long overdue and will still take too long to accomplish. We each need to own our part in creating and shaping how we move forward and the changes for which we advocate. As AAG Jackson concluded in the Founders Day address, "We may well remind ourselves that there is not only a past and present, there is also a future. And we are among its founders." The Jackson Center takes that responsibility seriously, as we always have, but we know we can do more. Hold us accountable. Do more with us.

Stay well,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kristan".

Kristan

INTRODUCING: JUSTICE AT HOME



The Jackson family (William, Mary, Irene and Robert) enjoy an evening at home in this photo from our archives.

To maintain connectedness while we are physically distant, the Jackson Center recently launched *Justice at Home*, a special edition e-newsletter that arrives in your email inbox every three weeks with updates on our virtual programming, lesson plans, lectures, and interesting finds from our digital archives. If you are interested in receiving *Justice at Home*, go to roberthjackson.org, scroll to the bottom of the homepage, and enter your first name, last name and email address in the newsletter sign up box.

If you enjoy the *Justice at Home* e-newsletter, please pass it on to a friend and share it on your social media pages. Make sure to tag us @roberthjacksoncenter and use the hashtag #JusticeatHome. You can find previous versions of the newsletter on our website at <https://www.roberthjackson.org/article/justice-at-home-e-newsletter/>

BEST LAID PLANS

Courage, Character and Justice: The Truman Years – We were slated to do a two-day program in conjunction with the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum and Chautauqua Institution on April 2-3 in Washington, DC. Guest speakers were to include Secretary Madeleine Albright, Professor John Q. Barrett, Senator Roy Blount, Rebecca Erbelding, Eli Rosenbaum, and Peter Yeo. **Update:** We anticipate rescheduling this event for a future date.

Young Readers: A.S. King – Our Young Readers program typically includes an essay contest, dinner with the author for the winners of the essay contest, and nearly 1,000 students hearing from the author live. **Update:** We reconceptualized this program as a virtual program. Thanks to Ms. King's flexibility and the great BOCES system in New York State, we were able to offer this program across New York State on May 19, 2020.

Living Voices – We had three Living Voices programs slated for this Spring. Hear My Voice (for high school) about a teenager experiencing the Women's Suffrage movement; Through the Eyes of a Friend (middle school) about the fictional best friend of Anne Frank talking about the Holocaust; and New American (elementary school) about a young Irish immigrant coming to America through Ellis Island and working in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. **Update:** Living Voices created a virtual version of each program, which we offered across New York State on June 3, 2020 through the BOCES system. We have virtual access to these programs through the end of August. If interested, please contact us for the information.

THE 2020 FIXED STAR VIRTUAL GALA

Extraordinary plans are underway as the Robert H. Jackson Center announces “The Fixed Star,” a celebratory Virtual Gala on **Thursday, September 10, 2020**, to benefit the programs and events we provide to our local, national, and international communities. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and necessary social distancing protocols, we are hosting our live event virtually from the Jackson Center this year and broadcasting it around the globe. This is also a fitting opportunity to reflect the full measure of Justice Jackson’s influence from Chautauqua County country lawyer to Chief U.S. prosecutor at the first Nuremberg trial in Germany.

RHJC President Kristan McMahon stated, “We are thrilled and honored to open our 2020 Fixed Star Virtual Gala with the remarkable **Ben Ferencz** in the 100th anniversary year of his birth. We know Ferencz will deliver an impassioned and rousing call to action for us all as the last living podium prosecutor to argue at the Nuremberg trials.” Ferencz will light the torch for an evening that will also include voices inspired by Jackson’s legacy and the Jackson Center’s work to educate, inspire, and engage new generations.

Our evening will feature many unique silent auctions items, inspirational stories, and a lot of fun. So, from wherever you will be watching, bring your family, friends, colleagues and neighbors to join us on **Thursday, September 10**.

All proceeds from this event will bring vital funds and support to Jackson Center programs and initiatives. If you have questions or are interested in becoming a sponsor or a table captain, please contact RHJC Director of Development Marion Beckerink at (716) 483-6646.

If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein.

West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette, 319 U.S. 624 (1943)

In Memoriam: Brian A. Hill

On March 26, 2020, Brian Hill, one of the Jackson Center’s 2019 summer interns passed away suddenly from a brain aneurysm at the age of 23. He was a 2019 graduate of Allegheny College.

Brian spent most of his time last summer behind a video camera or in the Cappa Theatre editing bay, helping us to tell our story and showcase our programs and events. He graciously lent his time and talents to his fellow interns to help them with their projects, including the exhibit honoring Stan Lundine and our annual State of the Center video. He was a caring and exceptionally creative person, who saw the world through a kind and supportive lens.

Brian continued to dream up endeavors for us well after the summer, as he and his fiancée Sophia were discerning their future plans and goals. He will always be a special part of our Jackson Center family, and I wish we had the opportunity to see how his vision and creative expressions would unfold. Our deepest condolences are extended to Sophia, his parents and family, his friends, and all who were able to spend time with him.



Brian Hill, 2019 RHJC Summer Intern and 2019 Allegheny College graduate, assisted with video production and editing at the Jackson Center.

MORE THAN TEA WITH THE JACKSON CENTER



Kristan and Robert L. Tsai, Professor of Law at American University, discuss the anti-Asian rhetoric surrounding COVID-19 via Zoom for the Center's April 23 Tea Time with the Jackson Center.

This Spring, the Jackson Center launched its first virtual programming series, Tea Time with the Robert H. Jackson Center (#TeawithRHJC, for short). Beginning on April 9, RHJC President Kristan McMahon has been live on the Center's Facebook Page each Thursday at 3:00 pm. Focusing both on Jackson's influence on current events and his legacy, the Tea with RHJC programs are exploring our two 2020 program themes - "The Other - Through Your Eyes" and the 75th Anniversary of the Nuremberg Trials. The Tea chats have delved into the history of the events leading up to the Nuremberg Trials, the work of the international courts and tribunals today, how some world leaders are using the COVID-19 pandemic to consolidate power, the ramifications of labeling the coronavirus as 'The China Virus,' Jackson's evolution of thought on the Defense Production Act, and how the coronavirus is changing the access to justice.

Special guests at our teas have included:

David Crane, RHJC Board member and former International Prosecutor

Professor Robert L. Tsai, American University's Washington College of Law

Kurt Graham, Director of the Harry S. Truman Library & Museum

James Johnson, Prosecutor of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone and chair of the International Humanitarian Law Roundtable

Stephen Vladeck, A. Dalton Cross Professor in Law at The University of Texas at Austin School of Law

Navi Pillay, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Professor William Casto, Paul Whitfield Horn Professor, Texas Tech University School of Law

Gurbir Grewal, Attorney General of New Jersey

If you have a Facebook account, please follow the Jackson Center's Facebook page to be notified when we go live on Thursdays. You may interact with us by commenting on the video or asking questions during the live stream. We will respond either during the Q&A portion of the conversation or the following week. Share the video link with your friends on Facebook and other social media accounts, using the hashtag #TeawithRHJC. If you don't have a Facebook account, please send your questions to info@roberthjackson.org. If you are not able to join us live for the Teas at 3pm or missed previous live streams, you can watch the videos on our Facebook Page or our YouTube channel. The most recent Tea is available on our website at <https://www.roberthjackson.org/event/tea-time-with-the-jackson-center/>.

WE ARE WRITING THIS STORY TOGETHER

The practice of giving not only reflects what we value in our lives, but how we plan to shape the world in which we would like to live and leave for future generations. The Robert H. Jackson Center sincerely appreciates all who have chosen to support our mission to provide the tools for all ages to think critically about what it takes to live in a civil society. We certainly do not tell people what to think; but, instead, how to think about fairness, equality and justice to educate and inspire action. Because Robert H. Jackson embraced that ideal, it is our mission to advance that and to bring you the voices of those who have devoted their lives and careers to addressing these issues that impact each of us, as we are seeing even more starkly now, as our personal stories and those of our communities are evolving.

Thank you for believing in us and for being an important part of our story as we discover how we will each protect civil liberties for all, under the law. Please consider the number of ways in which you can effectively and efficiently make your impact and leave a legacy of which you will be proud.

***Automate Your Giving**

You may set up a schedule to donate your gifts to the Jackson Center on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis. Our Bench Circle is not just for monthly givers, but for donors who have a general idea of how much they would like to give each year. Moreover, you will not have to rush at the end of the year to meet your charitable goals.

***The CARES Act**

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act provides two new provision for taxpayers:

- If you do not itemize, the CARES Act created a new partial above-the-line deduction for cash contributions up to \$300 to eligible charitable organizations.
- If you itemize, the CARES Act temporarily modified the percentage limitations on the income tax charitable deduction for cash contributions to eligible charities.

***Appreciated Assets**

You do not need to make a cash gift. Consider donating appreciated assets, like stocks, directly to the Jackson Center. Depending on your circumstances, you may not need to pay capital gains taxes on the stock's appreciation, which effectively increases your donation and decreases your tax exposure. (Please consult your tax advisor for more information.)

***Donor-Advised Funds**

A donor-advised fund is a charitable giving vehicle offered through a public foundation to provide cash (or appreciated securities converted into charitable dollars) to benefit a non-profit organization. When contributing to a donor-advised fund, you immediately receive the maximum tax benefit from the IRS for your contribution, and you can set up the funds to continue providing grants to the Jackson Center even after your death. (Please consult your tax advisor for more information.)

***IRA Assets**

Retirees, may donate up to \$100,000 tax free from their IRA each year. To take advantage of this qualified charitable distribution, the IRA account owner must be age 70½ or older at the time of the IRA distribution. While a distribution from your IRA is generally treated as taxable income, under this provision, those assets are excluded from income if the distribution is made directly to a qualified charity. (Please consult your tax advisor for more information.)

***Make it A Family Affair**

You can cultivate a culture of giving in your family that makes each member a stakeholder in building a better tomorrow by supporting the Jackson Center. A private family foundation is a charity set up as a charitable trust or corporation. Setting up a private family foundation is a great way to get your entire family involved in your charitable priorities.

Of course, knowing how to donate requires an understanding of how much you can afford to give. Please consult your financial planner or other financial advisors to help you identify and work toward your charitable goals, as well as charitable tax-saving strategies you may never have considered. If you have questions regarding gifts to the Jackson Center, please feel free to contact our Director of Development, Marion Beckerink, at (716) 483-6646 or tmbeckerink@roberthjackson.org.



(From left to right), Ben Speggen VP of Jefferson Educational Society, RHJC Director of Development Marion Beckerink, and RHJC Co-Founder Greg Peterson at our February Jackson Day in Warren County event.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and necessary social distancing protocols, please check our website, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram pages for updates on events.

Tea Time with the Jackson Center, Thursdays, 3pm

The Robert H. Jackson Center Facebook Live Page

Each Thursday at 3pm live on the Center's Facebook page, Tea Time with the Jackson Center takes both a look forward at Jackson's influence on current events and look back at Jackson's place in history. You do not need a Facebook account to join the Tea Time conversations - simply go to <https://www.facebook.com/roberthjacksoncenter/> to see our Facebook page, watch previous #TeawithRHJC events, and join us live on Thursdays at 3pm. The recorded videos are also uploaded onto the Jackson Center's YouTube channel, and the most recent Tea is available on our website at <https://www.roberthjackson.org/event/tea-time-with-the-jackson-center/>.

If you have a Facebook account, follow our page and share the videos with your family and friends on social media using the hashtag #TeawithRHJC.

Ruth Marcus, Robert H. Jackson Lecture on the U.S. Supreme Court

Monday, July 6, 2020, 4pm

Chautauqua Institution's 2020 Virtual Season

Ruth Marcus is deputy editorial page editor for the Washington Post and a highly acclaimed reporter focusing on domestic policy and politics. She has covered every major institution in Washington, D.C., including the Supreme Court, the White House and Congress, and has written about judicial confirmation battles stretching back to Robert Bork in 1987.

After receiving her bachelor's degree at Yale College, Marcus wrote for the National Law Journal before attending Harvard Law School. She began writing for the Post while at Harvard Law, from which she earned her J.D. in 1984, and formally joined the paper after graduation.

Marcus joined the Post's national staff in 1986, covering campaign finance, the Justice Department, the Supreme Court and the White House. From 1999 through 2002, she served as deputy national editor, supervising reporters who covered money and politics, Congress, the Supreme Court and other national issues. She joined the editorial board in 2003 and began writing a regular column in 2006. She was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary in 2007.

Marcus is the author of *Supreme Ambition: Brett Kavanaugh and the Conservative Takeover*, published in 2019 by Simon & Schuster. It is the definitive account of a pivotal moment in modern history, one that was 30 years in the making and that will shape the judicial system of America for generations to come.

Check out Chautauqua Institution's website for more details on this lecture: <https://online.chq.org/ci/>

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

On May 19, 2020, the Western New York Region entered Phase One of New York State's un-PAUSE, which permitted construction to resume at the Center. Our construction has been on hiatus since mid-March to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our new lobby entrance, mansion elevator, and heating and electric work are substantially complete. A bit more of the exterior work needs to be finished, but not much! We are very close to completion. It all looks beautiful, and we are excited to fill it and use it.

There will, no doubt, be a few punch list items, a final cleaning and a wrap-up of paper work, but we can now see the light at the end of the construction tunnel! When we can safely gather, we cannot wait for you all to see it, too!



UPCOMING EVENTS CONTINUED:

The Fixed Star Virtual Gala, September 10, 2020

We are honored to have Ben Ferencz, the last living podium prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials, open the Robert H. Jackson Center's Fixed Star gala in the 100th year of his birth. This celebratory evening will include remarks from special guests, unique silent auction items and the opportunity to raise funds to benefit the programs and events we provide to our local, national, and international communities. To help limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus, we will host our event virtually from the Jackson Center.

Debbie Cenziper, Al & Marge Brown Lecture Series on WWII, September 17, 2020 **The Robert H. Jackson Center**

This year's lecture will feature 2007 Pulitzer Prize winner Debbie Cenziper, an investigative reporter for the Washington Post. She is speaking on her most recent book, *Citizen 865: The Hunt for Hitler's Hidden Soldiers in America*. The book recounts the remarkable true story of a team of Nazi hunters at the U.S. Department of Justice as they raced against time to uncover members of a brutal SS killing force who disappeared in America following WWII.

Investigative Journalism with Debbie Cenziper, September 18, 2020 **The Robert H. Jackson Center**

Debbie Cenziper will discuss the tools and methods of investigative journalism, including the basics of data and investigative reporting, as well as the research and use of public records. Before joining the Post, Cenziper spent nearly 15 years at The Miami Herald and the Charlotte Observer. She received the Pulitzer Prize for local reporting for her year-long investigation of housing corruption in Miami, which led to the convictions of several developers and to a federal takeover of the county housing agency. She is also the author of the book *"Love Wins: The Lovers and Lawyers who Fought the Landmark Case for Marriage Equality,"* published by William Morrow in 2016. Cenziper is Associate Professor and Director of Investigative Reporting at Medill School of Journalism in Washington D.C.

Founders Day, December 14, 2020 **The Robert H. Jackson Center**

Join RHJC staff, Board and friends, as we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Robert H. Jackson Center.

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