



Belmont Abbey
COLLEGE
*That in all things God
may be glorified*

For Immediate Release

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Belmont Abbey College Expands Program in Washington, D.C. with Groundbreaking Initiatives

Belmont, N.C. (February 28, 2025) – Belmont Abbey College is thrilled to announce an expansion of its Belmont House on Capitol Hill and its commitment to further establishing a significant presence in Washington, D.C., aimed at amplifying faithful Catholic voices in media, politics, and culture. As a Catholic higher education institution, Belmont Abbey College is making a decisive commitment to defend religious freedoms and restore the public square through three groundbreaking initiatives: the establishment of a permanent Belmont House, plans for an Intentional Catholic Student Residency Program, and aspirations for new Academic Programs dedicated to promoting the transformation of political life and discourse.

Considering our founding as one nation under God, the role of faith and the pursuit of truth have never been more important than they are today, and Belmont Abbey College is rising to the challenge. This effort is part of the "Made Strong" element of the College's Made True Capital Campaign, which has raised more than \$130 million for the College. The focus of "Made Strong" underscores Belmont Abbey's commitment to realigning culture with God's truth and highlighting the essential relationship between religious freedom and civil society. Today's program expansion is made possible by gifts totaling \$15 million to support the three initiatives. These gifts are part of a \$45 million plan to increase the effectiveness and significance of Belmont House on Capitol Hill.

"We are taking Catholic higher education to a new level, we are ensuring that as a faithful Catholic college our voice is heard in the public square," said Dr. Bill Thierfelder, President of Belmont Abbey College. "These initiatives will play a significant role in effecting the change needed to foster a culture that upholds faith, community, and the common good."

The Belmont House: Since its founding in 2021, the Belmont House has quickly become a vital place of fellowship, collaboration, decision-making, and cultural influence on Capitol Hill. As just one example, strategic conversations held at the Belmont House during the International Religious Freedom Summit led directly to House Resolutions 82 and 5686, which address egregious human rights violations in Nigeria and Azerbaijan. With the acquisition of a new, permanent location on 3rd Street, just 500 feet from Capitol grounds, the College will continue to support and expand lay apostolates, convene thought leaders, build dynamic networks, and develop and offer programs with direct and tangible implications for public policy. Over the last three years, the Belmont House has already hosted dignitaries from across the globe, congressmen and senators addressing the issues of the day, alumni gatherings, and provided a space for impactful discussions and events that engage the broader public on issues of faith, culture, and politics.

Intentional Catholic Student Residency Program: Adjoining the new permanent Belmont House, we plan to develop an Intentional Catholic Student Residency Program that will foster community within safe, affordable living spaces for at least 30 Catholic undergraduates interning on the Hill. The College envisions this program as a catalyst for collaboration, designed to inspire and invigorate the next generation of leaders. This round of funding included acquiring adjacent properties for future development that will allow this program to grow to 60 students a semester.

Academic Programs: Our future Academic Programs to promote the Common Good and to transform political discourse to equip future leaders to defend the role of faith in our society will provide enrichment and rigorous, faithful formation to students across secondary and post-secondary levels. The College anticipates that young professionals in the intended master's degrees will develop expertise in political writing, legislative affairs, campaign management, statecraft, and more, infusing American political life with the guiding principles of natural law and divine Truth.

Belmont Abbey College believes that restoring our culture begins with a vision of human flourishing through God's providence, a vision embodied by the College's exceptional alumni and informed by 1,500 years of Benedictine tradition. The College's network of alumni in Washington, D.C., will play a crucial role in advancing these initiatives, providing a direct link to influential sectors in politics, government, and beyond. This network will create a pipeline for current and future students seeking careers in public service, media, and policymaking. By fostering connections between students and seasoned professionals, Belmont Abbey College aims to equip the next generation of leaders with the tools and knowledge needed to promote a culture rooted in faith, service, and moral integrity.

Through these efforts, the College is committed to making a lasting impact on society by shaping leaders who will advocate for the common good with a firm foundation in Catholic social teaching. Abbey alumni are a testament to these values and boldly carry them into the public sphere, inspiring others to do the same. Recent alumni like Lily Mullen, who currently serves as a Donor Relations Associate at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty; Grace Bruno, Health Policy Advisor in the U.S. Senate; and Nikolas von Spakovsky, Advance Team Associate for the Donald J. Trump for President 2024 campaign, are helping shape the political culture through their faith-driven service. These alumni exemplify the kind of leadership our culture urgently needs—leaders who approach challenges with a strong moral foundation rooted in faith.

“This is only the beginning for the Belmont House,” said Executive Director Emmett McGroarty. “The Belmont House will be an anchor for the faithful on Capitol Hill, bringing strong moral leadership and the teachings of the Church into the heart of politics and public life and serving as a home for Catholics on the Hill. We are proud to be a voice for truth, advocating for the restoration of faith in the public square.”

Abbot Placid, Chancellor of Belmont Abbey College, shared his thoughts on the significance of these initiatives: “We are establishing a place in Washington, D.C., where, building on St. Benedict’s instruction to receive all guests as Christ, we can offer a space for people of good will to gather to discuss and promote religious liberty and the important contributions that faith communities can bring to public life. As a Catholic college, we can place the insights of the Catholic intellectual tradition and the Church’s social teaching at the service of those tasked with shaping the life of our country.”

Belmont Abbey announced these groundbreaking initiatives during the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C., on February 28, 2025, where the College also served as a sponsor of the event. This occasion underscores the College’s deep commitment to promoting faith and values at the highest levels of public discourse. Following the breakfast, Belmont Abbey officials will join former congressmen and other distinguished guests, including Bishop Michael Martin of the Charlotte Diocese, for a hard-hat tour of the new facilities.

As Belmont Abbey College continues to deepen its presence in Washington, D.C., it remains steadfast in its mission to promote the values of the Catholic faith, defend religious freedom, and contribute positively to society. For more information about the Belmont House and its initiatives, please visit <https://belmonthouse.bac.edu/>.

About Belmont Abbey College: Founded in 1876, Belmont Abbey College is a private, Catholic baccalaureate and liberal arts institution. Our mission is to educate students in the liberal arts and sciences so that in all things God may be glorified. Guided by the Catholic intellectual tradition and the Benedictine spirit of prayer and learning, we welcome a diverse body of students and provide them with an education that will enable them to lead lives of integrity, to succeed professionally, to become responsible citizens, and to be a blessing to themselves and to others. Our beautiful and historic campus is conveniently located just 10 miles west of Charlotte, N.C., and is currently home to more than 1500 students. For more information, visit <https://belmontabbeycollege.edu/>.

About The Belmont House on Capitol Hill: The Belmont House on Capitol Hill is a venue to bring together people of faith, people in government, policy experts, and Catholic ecclesiastical leaders from around the world. The mission of the Belmont House is to restore civil society and reclaim the rights of people of faith in the public square. The Belmont House is an institution of Belmont Abbey College, the Catholic College of the South, based in Belmont, North Carolina, just outside of Charlotte. For more information, visit <https://belmontabbeycollege.edu/about-us/belmont-house/>.