
Evan's Civic Vision

Journalists, policymakers, and civic leaders are frequently confronted with the true power of free markets to transform lives, all thanks to the support and dedication of one man—Evan Scharf.

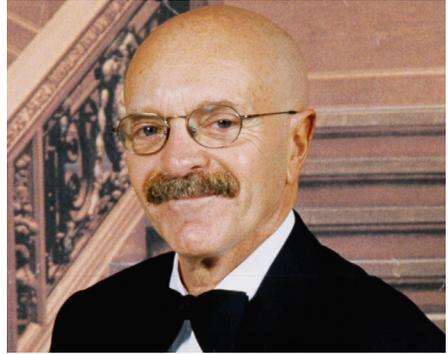
Sadly, Evan passed away in 2016. He and his wife, Sue, had supported Cato at the Club 200 level for many years, and he had given serious thought to his charitable legacy.

Evan established a Chair for the Public Understanding of Economics because he believed that a persuasive economist could use timely research and commentary to inform the public about the social benefits of freedom. He wanted to create a position at Cato for an outstanding libertarian economist to prominently demonstrate how free people create and sustain prosperity.

“Evan understood that capitalism must be defended against socialism, and this is turning out to be one of the major themes of the 2020 presidential election,” Sue Scharf said.

Ryan Bourne accepted the R. Evan Scharf Chair for the Public Understanding of Economics in March 2017. “These tumultuous political times are throwing up a tidal wave of economic policy ideas. Some are beneficial, but most would impair freedom while making us poorer,” Bourne said. “I see a large part of my job as shooting down bad ideas early, highlighting the real causes of economic problems we see, and the ways existing government policy often contribute to them.”

Bourne brought to the position his valuable insight and expertise as a leading economist, advocating for Brexit in London. His unique ability to simplify issues for a wide public audience has proven to be a great match for Evan’s plan to promote the promise of prosperity. “Ryan Bourne is



a superstar himself,” Sue said. “I check the Cato website daily to keep up with the work Ryan is doing, and I’m so impressed with him and the Cato scholars.”

For instance, Bourne’s latest work directly addresses the growing number of people who consider inequality as a major problem to be solved by more taxes, spending, and regulation. In November 2019, Bourne and Cato’s director of tax policy studies and editor of *DownsizingGovernment.org*, Chris Edwards, published “Exploring Wealth Inequality.” Bourne and Edwards reviewed the evidence for six prominent claims by proponents for bigger government to redistribute larger amounts of wealth. Their research shows inequality is no crisis and explains how government can, instead, truly help those living in poverty.

With free-market economic policies under increasing attack from politicians and journalists on both the left and right, the Cato Institute’s work in making the moral and economic case for a free economy is arguably more important today than ever before. Evan Scharf recognized Cato’s ability to move people toward a free society, and his vision to advance liberty foresaw today’s opportunities to show the public how to use the power of economic thinking to build a better life. ■

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE VISION AND INTENT OF YOUR LEGACY AT CATO, PLEASE CONTACT BRIAN MULLIS AT BMULLIS@CATO.ORG OR 202-789-5263.