

# Why the little 'i'?

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## Restoring civility: The legacy of an unlikely friendship

"I will be forever grateful that Donna invited me for coffee," recalls The FAMiLY LEADER President and CEO Bob Vander Plaats.

Bob and Donna Red Wing were often quoted in the news media on opposite sides of contentious issues. Bob leads a Christian organization that advocates for public policy consistent with biblical values. Donna was a longtime LGBTQ activist and, in her own words, "a sometimes agitator." They were natural "enemies" who became the most unlikely of friends.

***Watch the moving video made by Mutual of Omaha about Bob and Donna's "unlikely friendship" below:***

Though Donna Red Wing has since passed away, Bob continues to tell others of how her simple, but counter-cultural act of reaching out changed him and began a friendship that leaves behind a legacy of restoring civility.

"Donna often told the story of how a friend inspired her to reach out to the one person she was most naturally inclined to dislike. I'm not sure it's really an honor, but she chose me," Bob recalls. "She invited me to meet for coffee, and to both of our surprise, we both showed up! Then, over a number of coffee meetings, something even more surprising happened: We became honest, real, and true friends."

“Donna’s friendship did not change my convictions about God’s design for marriage or biblical sexuality, and neither did my friendship change her position,” Bob continues. “But that was never the point. We met to get to know one another as real people beyond the headlines.”

“We were often opponents on policy, but instead of lobbing rhetorical grenades at one another from the relative safety of our own echo chambers, we met face to face,” Bob recalls. “It changed us both. I know it changed the language and the tone we employ at The FAMiLY LEADER. Getting to know Donna taught our whole staff to stop and think, ‘How can we advocate for our position while still being conscious of and honoring the real people (like Donna) who disagree with us?’”

The answer, The FAMiLY LEADER has learned, was spelled out for us years ago in Scripture, an answer summed up in one phrase: “Speaking the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15).

Bob and Donna’s unlikely friendship became the subject of astonished columns and articles in both local and national newspapers. Colleges and civic groups invited Bob and Donna to speak to students and communities about relearning how to speak to one another. In an age where deep cultural and partisan divides are the norm, their example of civility inspired many:

- Read the Des Moines Register column that first brought attention to Bob and Donna’s unique friendship.
- Watch video from Bob and Donna’s civility presentation to students at Drake University.
- Read the Washington Post’s astonished coverage of Bob and Donna discussing civility at The Wallace Centers of Iowa.
- Watch video of Bob and Donna discussing civility on stage at Des Moines Area Community College in Ankeny, Iowa.

Bob tells others the love he and Donna shared as friends was real. He could imagine one day attending her funeral or she attending his. But never did he anticipate that day would come so soon.

Nor did he anticipate the honor he would receive from Donna's partner, Sumitra. After Donna's passing in 2018, Sumitra asked Bob – considered by many in Donna's circles to be an "enemy" to the cause – if he would speak at Donna's funeral.

"The request was one of the greatest honors of my life," Bob says.

***Watch video from Donna Red Wing's memorial service in which Bob spoke of their friendship and Donna's legacy of civility:***

"I'm deeply grieved that my friend is now gone from this world," Bob says, "but I hope her example of reaching out will challenge others to do the same. I hope it challenges me. I want our commitment to restoring civil dialogue in America to continue as the lasting legacy of the day Donna Red Wing invited me for coffee."

*Photo credit: Des Moines Register*

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## **Help wanted: TFL seeks to fill 2 key positions**

The FAMiLY LEADER is seeking qualified candidates with a commitment to our Christian faith and vision for cultural transformation to fill two available positions: Vice President of Development and Social Media Coordinator.

# Vice President of Development

The FAMiLY LEADER is seeking a Vice President of Development to assist in fundraising. The Vice President of Development is responsible for the overall coordination of the Development Department and for leading the Development team to accomplish its core mission: meeting the annual income budget and securing long-term income and membership growth for TFL. The position is responsible for developing and implementing long-range strategic plans to achieve the organization's long-term objectives for income and membership growth and is responsible for developing with the President's Office a plan for personal contact by the President with selected donors including emails, letters, notes, phone calls, and meetings. A qualified candidate would possess education or experience in the field (an MBA is preferred) and should have 5-10 years of experience in nonprofit fundraising management of major gifts, direct marketing, and estate gifts, strong knowledge of TFL, the conservative movement, and excellent relationships with leading conservative donors. Interested candidates should send a resume and cover letter to [nathan@thefamilyleader.com](mailto:nathan@thefamilyleader.com).

## **Job Duties:**

- Develop and implement long-range strategic plans to achieve the organization's long-term objectives for income and membership growth
- Develop with the President's Office a plan for personal contact by the President with selected donors including emails, letters, notes, phone calls, and meetings
- Create and execute an annual budget plan to meet short-term income and donor growth goals
- Manage a multi-million dollar caseload of top and high-profile donors
- Structure the Development Department as needed over time to optimize its effectiveness in accomplishing its mission
- Maintain timely and effective reporting systems to track key performance metrics throughout the Development Department

- Work with external coalition allies
- Work with outside consultants, educational institutions, and other outsourced resources to improve the body of development knowledge, import best practices and keep TFL on the cutting edge of nonprofit fundraising

#### Strategic Planning

- As a member of the senior management team, the Vice President of Development participates in the overall planning activities of TFL, developing specific and measurable department goals that advance TFL's vision and mission and complement, augment, or support the goals of other departments
- Establish department priorities, prepare and monitor the department budget, provide overall direction for staff activities under the President, and lead by example. Use department resources effectively to achieve TFL objectives

**Education:** MBA preferred

**Experience:** 5-10 years of experience in nonprofit fundraising management of major gifts, direct marketing, and estate gifts; strong knowledge of TFL and the conservative movement; and excellent relationships with leading conservative/Christian donors

**Management:** Key management skills including strategic planning and goal setting, budgeting, staffing, performance counseling, mentoring, and career planning are required

**Communication:** Excellent writing, presentation, and strong public speaking skills; an articulate advocate of TFL's vision and mission

**Computers:** Comfort working with needed software including Microsoft Office, Outlook, CRM/ Donor database such as Blackbaud, and Salesforce.com

#### **Special Skills/Requirements:**

- Understand and support the TFL mission and vision for America and the department's goals and objectives

- An understanding of and commitment to conservative principles is required
- Ability to effectively interact with the rest of the management team; a team builder
- A strong commitment to and personal relationship with Jesus Christ and active membership in an evangelical New Testament church

## **Social Media Coordinator**

The Family Leader seeks a full-time Social Media Coordinator (SMC) to oversee the day-to-day operation of TFL's social media platforms. The SMC is responsible for creating, managing and using digital platforms, including our websites, to deliver TFL's policy content and messages to prospective and current members of our key audiences. The coordinator will track how we engage with the audiences, ensure all platforms are linked and used appropriately, keep audience lists up-to-date and segmented as needed, and analyze results to improve strategies. The SMC will educate the rest of TFL's team about audience insights and the best practices for impact. Responsibilities will include but are not limited to: daily coordination of TFL's social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, etc., researching and curating content for social media platforms, and facilitating the creation of graphics and videos for social media, including working with other designers and TFL team members. The SMC should be willing to work odd hours when the news cycle demands. Qualified applicants should possess an active Christian faith and agree with TFL's statement of faith. He/she should desire to see Christian principles applied in the civic arena and should have experience with digital campaigns, data analysis, and content creation and curation across platforms. Experience with marketing, photography, and photo editing are a plus. Interested candidates should send a resume and cover letter to [nathan@thefamilyleader.com](mailto:nathan@thefamilyleader.com).

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## **LEAD – More info >>**

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# **TFL joins fight to protect religious liberty at University of Iowa**

Once again, an assault on religious liberty has struck the Hawkeye state, this time at the University of Iowa itself. And once again, The FAMiLY LEADER is working behind the scenes to defend every Iowan's freedoms.

Shortly before Thanksgiving, The University kicked off campus a student group – Business Leaders in Christ, or BLinC – because of a dispute over the religious group's beliefs. An openly homosexual student had complained that he had been denied the vice presidency of BLinC because he refused to sign the group's Statement of Faith, which affirms the Bible's authority on human sexuality.

University officials, in turn, sided with the complaint, and – according to a lawsuit filed on BLinC's behalf – singled out BLinC's Christian beliefs about sexuality, finding that the beliefs themselves were “discriminatory and impermissible.” In fact, the University is demanding BLinC change its Statement of Faith and submit an “acceptable plan” for choosing its leaders before it can return to campus.

“This is premeditated religious discrimination, plain and

simple,” said Eric Baxter, senior counsel at Becket, the religious liberty law firm representing BLinC. “A state school cannot demand a change to students’ faith any more than the U.S. president could demand a change to the Bible.”

TFL’s Vice President and Chief Counsel Chuck Hurley has been working alongside Iowa legislators and Becket conducting intense legal research and consultation to help the Christian students find either a judicial or legislative solution to the dispute.

“By inserting itself as a theological and moral authority over Christian practice,” Hurley explains, “the government has grossly violated the separation of church and state and trampled the rights of all Iowans. The government has no business determining which pieces of a religious group’s Statement of Faith are and aren’t ‘acceptable.’”

***Give to protect religious liberty in Iowa today! Your donations will help TFL’s Chuck Hurley give tangible aid in defending Iowa’s university students and YOU.***

In *BLinC v. University of Iowa*, BLinC is asking the court to stop this religious discrimination and allow it to choose leaders who embrace its mission, just like every other student group on campus.

In fact, there are over 500 student groups at the University. Fraternities and sororities, for example, can limit membership to men and women respectively. Pro-choice groups can reject students who are pro-life and vice versa. Feminist groups may require members to support their cause. And environmental groups can choose leaders who support theirs. But even though BLinC allows anyone to join, the University is uniquely denying BLinC the ability to require its leaders to share its mission and beliefs.

The students of BLinC, however, are sticking to their convictions.



“This is 2017, not ‘1984,’” said Jacob Estell, the student president of BLinC. “Our beliefs weren’t made by us, and they can’t be changed by us either – certainly not just to satisfy Orwellian government rules.”

***This attack on your faith is right on your doorstep! Please consider a gift of even \$10, \$25, \$100, or more to keep religious liberty alive in Iowa.***

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**CTF 2017, info >>**

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## **VIDEO: National media interviews Bob on Trump, religious liberty**

The FAMiLY LEADER shared with you last week U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions’ landmark memo, clearly defending and reasserting the constitutional freedom of religion. The Oct. 6 memo marks a significant victory for religious liberty – restricting enforcement of the Johnson Amendment, declaring Americans do not forfeit their religious liberty in the marketplace, and more.

And at the Values Voter Summit on Oct. 13, President Trump declared that he was keeping his promise to ensure that “our nation’s religious heritage would be cherished, protected, and defended like you have never seen before.”

On the Fox Business Network the next day, The FAMiLY LEADER President and CEO Bob Vander Plaats responded to the president's remarks on Making Money with Charles Payne. Watch the interview by clicking the image below:



*Help The FAMiLY LEADER continue to stand in the gap for you and your religious liberty. Join us by donating \$10, \$25, \$50, or more today!*

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**VIDEO: Bob speaks to NFL, anthems, and America's greater needs**

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# You don't want to miss a moment: 2017 Family Leadership Summit

One month ago, the 6th Annual Family Leadership Summit inspired and encouraged Christians to join a movement advancing the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33).

Watch a 4-minute video recap of the amazing day below:

***Would you like to inspire more great content like this? Support future Summits by donating to The FAMiLY LEADER today!***

Watch the entire day's livestream, [click here](#):

To watch individual moments or speakers, click their name below to watch on YouTube:

- The opening
- Sen. Chuck Grassley
- Gov. Kim Reynolds
- Sen. Joni Ernst
- Benham Brothers
- Pastor Jim Garlow
- Kellyanne Conway
- Jeff Meyers
- Church Ambassador Network, Greg Baker
- Steve Scheibner
- George Barna
- If 7:14
- Rafael Cruz

*And, for the first time widely available to the public, click the link below to be taken to a previously created “thank you” page, where you can listen to audio of the breakout sessions!*

Breakout sessions page

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## Watch the 2017 Family Leadership Summit livestream

Want to relive the 2017 Family Leadership Summit? Or were you unable to attend and want to see what you missed?

We’ve got you covered!

The livestream of the 2017 Family Leadership Summit was captured and archived. Just click below to start watching:

Keep your eyes peeled for future content from the Summit, as we hope to post photos, breakout sessions, individual speaker videos for easier viewing/sharing, and more. You won’t want to miss it!

*Would YOU like to inspire more great content like this? Support future Summits by donating to The FAMiLY LEADER today!*

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## UPDATE: Supreme Court

# **victory, but health care looms**

Bob Vander Plaats' weekly discussion of the nation's top issues touches on some encouraging news from the U.S. Supreme Court, and encourages lawmakers to choose "principle over politics" on health care:

Come, join thousands of others like you who want to see our nation put "Principle over Politics" again! Join us at the 2017 Family Leadership Summit on July 15. **Click here to learn more and reserve your tickets today!**

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## **Bob Vander Plaats: Trump delivers 'presidential moment' on Islam**