

The Heritage

SOCIETY of THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

News & Gift Planning Ideas for Friends of the Aspen Institute

Fall 2017

Sharing the Power of Storytelling with Future Generations

“Writing is at my core now. I never would have expected that.”

Dennis “Denny” Vaughn, the newest member of the Aspen Institute’s Heritage Society, recently named Aspen Words in his will after more than a decade of involvement with the program. It all began with an unexpected request from Lorenzo Semple, Jr., screenwriter of *Three Days of the Condor*, *Papillon*, and the TV series *Batman*. Lorenzo was also the husband of a lifelong friend.

After practicing law for 35 years in Los Angeles, Denny and his wife Linda had moved to Aspen. Lorenzo knocked on their door and asked Denny if he wanted to write a novel set in a performing arts environment. What began as a story-line, then a vignette, and then a chapter, eventually led to an introduction to Aspen Words where Denny took his first Summer Words workshop over 15 years ago. With Lorenzo’s coaching and the support of these Aspen Words workshops, Denny wrote and published *The Price of Revenge*. A second novel, *The Longboat*, awaits publication.

“This story about Lorenzo shows how something serendipitous can change your life.”

As an avid participant in workshops and also a former president of Aspen Words, Denny has seen

Photo credit: Jonathan Farrer



Dennis Vaughn is helping to advance Aspen Words

Aspen Words grow from its roots in the Roaring Fork Valley to a prominent national platform for emerging and eminent writers. “Education is the principal role of Aspen Words, connecting readers and writers with much camaraderie,” he explains. “I have been particularly impressed by Aspen Words’ service to the community, placing renowned writers in classrooms across the valley to teach a variety of students.”

Since that introduction 15 years ago, Denny has participated in a workshop nearly every year. These workshops, which are hosted by well-known, prize-

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Inside: “Values in the Crucible” & Simple Ways to Make a Lasting Gift

Heritage Society Seminar Explores Timeless Values

On August 1, 2017, Heritage Society members participated in a customized readings-based seminar exploring timeless values. Modeled after the classic executive seminar and inspired by the legendary Mortimer Adler, the Heritage Society Seminar covered two sessions, “The Republic of Conscience” and “Of Hope and History.”

Led by Aspen Institute Senior Moderator Keith Berwick, participants were encouraged to learn from each other, explore their individual legacies, and appreciate their role and responsibility in building a good society for future generations.

We thanked our Heritage Society members around the seminar table who have cumulatively been part of the Institute family for more than 200 years, and whose legacy includes supporting the Institute’s mission beyond their lifetimes.

Photo credit: Leigh Vogel



Heritage Society members Bob Blattberg and Jane Jenkins discuss “Of Hope and History”

Tax-Wise Ways to Make a Gift Before Year-End

- **Give appreciated securities.** Especially in today’s market with record highs, stocks, bonds, or mutual funds held longer than one year can be an attractive option to make current gifts to the Aspen Institute. You can completely avoid capital gains tax and generally deduct the full value of such gifts.
- **Make a current gift to the Aspen Institute directly from your IRA if you are age 70½ or older** without having to pay taxes that might otherwise be due if you withdrew the funds. These donations can count towards all or part of your annual required minimum distribution and can be especially advantageous if you do not expect to itemize your deductions. You can donate up to \$100,000 per year.

Simple Ways to Make a Lasting Gift

These days it is impossible to watch television, read a newspaper, or go online without coming across information about possible revisions to tax laws. If income, estate, and gift tax changes occur, it is important to consult with your advisors to determine whether you need to update your plans. That said, it is always important to have an updated will or trust in place along with current retirement plan and life insurance designations to ensure you provide for loved ones and charitable causes you care about most.

Fortunately, there are many gifts available to support the Aspen Institute that also can save you taxes:

- **Name the Aspen Institute as a beneficiary in your will or trust.** These gifts can be a certain dollar amount, specific assets, a percentage of your estate, or what remains after other distributions to loved ones have been made. It is also very simple to add a “codicil,” or amendment, to your current will.
- **Give through your retirement plan.** You can make the Aspen Institute a beneficiary of all or a portion of what remains in your retirement plan, such as a 401(k), IRA, or 403(b). This type of charitable gift does not require a change to your will—only a simple update to a beneficiary designation form.
- **Give through life insurance.** Many people have purchased policies in the past that are no longer needed for their original purpose. The Aspen Institute can be named as a primary or contingent beneficiary of such policies.
- **Give through a charitable remainder trust.** You can increase your retirement income, provide for your spouse, and reduce income/capital gains taxes while growing your assets tax-free. After your lifetime, the remainder of the trust will support the Aspen Institute.

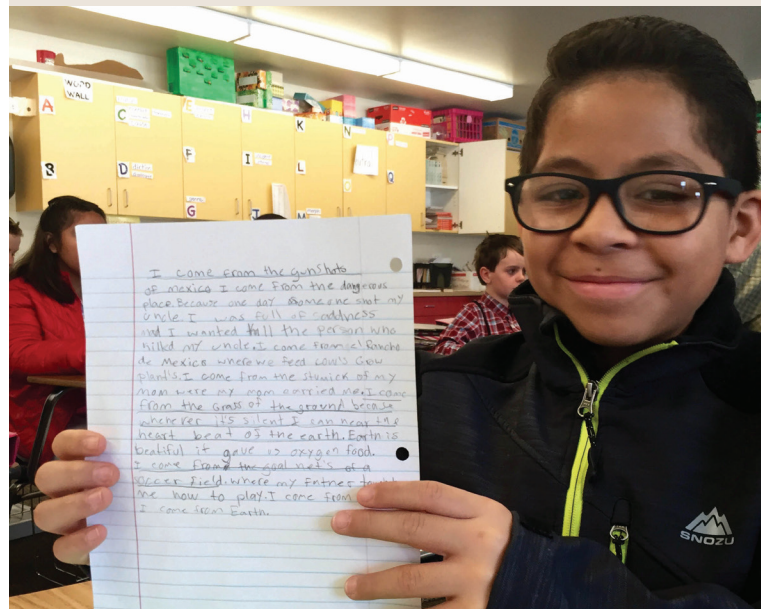
Please contact us with any questions or visit our website—www.aspeninstitute.giftplans.org—for more information.



Sample Bequest Language

“I give, devise, and bequeath ____% of my residuary estate, ____% of my estate, or \$_____ (fixed dollar amount) to the Aspen Institute, Inc. a nonprofit tax-exempt organization, qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code with federal tax ID #84-0399006, incorporated in the State of Colorado, and with its current principal business address of One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036 for its general purposes (or, to support its program Aspen Words).”

Photo credit: Aspen Words



Carbondale student with his poem, written during Aspen Words’ classroom visit with poet Logan Phillips

winning authors, helped Denny move from legal writing—with its focus on formality—to creative writing, which he finds much more liberating. Linda also enjoys taking workshops to write memoirs for their grandchildren. She is currently a member of the Aspen Words board.

“Whatever I learned about fiction, I learned at Aspen Words,” Denny says. “That is why I decided to name Aspen Words in my will. I wish to empower future generations of readers and writers—young and old—to delve into their creative side and connect with people who appreciate reading and writing.”

“Denny Vaughn has been an integral part of Aspen Words leadership for the past decade. We are honored and lucky to have the support of individuals like Denny and Linda who help us fulfill our mission with such impact.”

—Adrienne Brodeur, Executive Director, and Jamie Kravitz, Managing Director, Aspen Words

Photo credit: Will Grandbois/Post Independent



U.S. Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera speaks to a Glenwood Springs High School English Class in 2016

About Aspen Words

Founded in 1976 as a literary center and now a program of the Aspen Institute, Aspen Words’ mission is to encourage writers, inspire readers, and connect people through the power of stories. Its year-round programs include Summer Words, a writing conference and literary festival; Winter Words, a speaker series presenting the best of contemporary literature; the Aspen Words Literary Prize, a \$35,000 annual award for fiction with social impact; as well as Writers in the Schools and writing residencies.

Please complete the enclosed Reply Card or contact the Director of Planned Giving for more information on how to save taxes by including the Aspen Institute in your estate plans.

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