

Observer-Reporter

Stover Scholars meet influential leaders in D.C.

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WAYNESBURG – Waynesburg University’s Stover Scholars traveled to Washington, D.C., Friday and met with six influential leaders.

The nineteen Stover Scholars first met former U.S. Justice Department officials Gregory Katsas and Michael Carvin at the Washington, D.C., office of the Jones Day Law Firm, the largest law firm in the world. Both attorneys described their experience and strategy litigating the National Federation of Independent Business’s constitutional challenge to Obamacare.

Katsas thoroughly reviewed his legal strategy challenging the Affordable Care Act and the judicial decision upholding the statute. Carvin said that arguing before the U.S. Supreme Court with its strategic questioning by the justices sometimes seems like the stage intrigue of kabuki theater.

The group then visited Cardinal Donald Wuerl at St. Matthew’s Cathedral, where Wuerl expressed hope that the Stover Scholars would be leaders of change in the future and urged them to stay connected to America’s traditional values and moral foundations.

Current rating: NaN “Like the branch has to stay connected to the vine, we cannot risk being disconnected from our roots,” he said. “We need to be confident in the truth and not apologize for it.” Stover Scholar Rachael Sinis commented, “What resonated most with me was Cardinal Wuerl’s statement that our society is hungry for positive change with all the issues our society faces today. His confidence that people are looking for effective solutions was reassuring.”

The students then met retired Justice Sandra Day O’Connor at the U.S. Supreme Court. Justice O’Connor told the students that she “worked hard to set a good precedent as the first woman justice, not a bad one.”

“Justice O’Connor has been such an influence and inspiration to women throughout America. Her hard work set a great precedent on the Supreme Court for all women involved in law and related careers,” said Stover scholar Mollie Pugh. Stover Scholar Patrick Kopas commented, “Justice O’Connor was amazing to meet. She humored us with her old-fashioned, cowgirl personality.”

The Stover Scholars then visited former Chamber of Commerce economist Dr. Richard Rahn, chairman of the Institute for Global Economic Growth, at the Cato Institute. Rahn

listed the requirements for a prosperous economy such as the Rule of Law, free markets, reasonable levels of taxation, government, and regulation, sound monetary policy, respect for private property, and a cultural ethos of truth-telling.

“Dr. Rahn presented to us specific and realistic libertarian economic strategies that would help restore the nation to prosperity. I thoroughly enjoyed hearing his powerful and convincing condemnation of the nation’s current policies and how the nation has strayed from the founding principles that brought us success in the first place,” said Stover Scholar Jeremy Hinkle.

At the National Archives, the students viewed the actual Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, and Bill of Rights.

The students ended their D.C. trip by meeting former U.S. Attorney General and Pennsylvania Governor Dick Thornburgh at the Metropolitan Club.

Thornburgh related the challenges he faced upon losing his first wife in a car accident, the resulting disability of his son, the Three Mile Island nuclear catastrophe soon after becoming governor, election losses and victories, all with his faith in God.

Commenting on the D.C. trip, Stover Scholar J.R. Kautz said, “I can honestly say this trip has been one of the most influential and notable experiences of my life.”

Waynesburg University President Timothy R. Thyreen said, “We are grateful that Justice O’Connor, Governor Thornburgh, Cardinal Wuerl, and other public leaders opened their hearts and minds to the Stover Scholars. This experience will help to inspire the (them) to become prominent leaders in government, in the law and the church.

The Stover Center for Constitutional Studies and Moral Leadership is a unique Waynesburg University program dedicated to transforming the political sphere in the context of Christian Ethics and American constitutionalism.