

AMERICAN PUBLIC SQUARE AT JEWELL'S

*Evening* **AT THE** *Square*  
— 2023 —

DECEMBER 4, 2023

THE NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM OF ART



## ABOUT APS

American Public Square at Jewell is a community organization working to improve the tone and quality of public discourse so that communities can find actionable common ground for today's most challenging and polarizing issues.

Our supporters play an integral role in reconnecting American communities and creating a stronger nation equipped to deal with the social, economic and political issues of our time.

### American Public Square at Jewell's work involves:

- Convening groups and creating space for civil, fact-based dialogue.
- Educating about the importance of working together this way and how to do it well.
- Engaging diverse audiences to ensure multiple perspectives are explored and considered.

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# Welcome

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THE EVENING!

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### APS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

THE SIGNATURE

## SERIES

Complex issues explored through probing questions and expert dialogue.

KC AT THE

## SQUARE

Dialogue and deliberation centered on hometown issues.

AT THE SQUARE

## PODCAST

APS' podcast channel further exploring questions and subtopics from live programs.

COCKTAILS &

## POLITICS

Cocktails and conversation with those directly involved in policies and politics of interest.

FOR INFORMATION ON APS PROGRAMS,  
VISIT [AMERICANPUBLICSQUARE.ORG/EVENTS](https://americanpublicsquare.org/events).

American Public Square at Jewell, along with honorary co-chairs  
Mary & Mark Jorgenson and Stephenie & Rodney Smith,  
is pleased to present

# EVENING AT THE SQUARE 2023

hosted at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

## FEATURED GUESTS

## FOUNDER'S CIVILITY AWARD



**DAVID AXELROD**

Political strategist and commentator, former advisor to President Barack Obama



**MICHAEL STEELE**

Political analyst, former chairman of the Rep. National Committee and former Lt. Gov. of Maryland



**SUELLEN FRIED**

Bullying prevention activist, writer and educator

## MODERATORS



**AMB. ALLAN KATZ** (ret.)

Founder, CEO and board chair of American Public Square at Jewell; former U.S. ambassador to Portugal



**MARGARET TALEV**

Managing editor for politics at Axios, director of Syracuse Univ. Institute for Democracy, Journalism and Citizenship

## Thank you to our HONORARY CO-CHAIRS



**MARY & MARK JORGENSON**



**STEPHENIE & RODNEY SMITH**

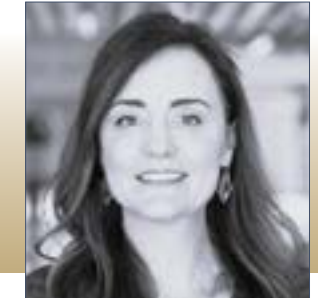
## PROGRAM EMCEE



**ALANA MULLER**

Community director, American Public Square at Jewell

## ROVING REPORTER



**CLAIRE BISHOP**

Executive director and COO, American Public Square at Jewell

## ORDER OF EVENTS

Welcome

Presentation of Founder's Civility Award

Remarks from Honorary Co-Chairs

Introduction of Featured Guests & Moderated Discussion

Closing Remarks

*A note from*  
**ALLAN KATZ & CLAIRE BISHOP**

Good Evening, and welcome to the 8th Annual APS Evening at the Square!

As we prepare to close 2023 and look ahead to 2024, American Public Square at Jewell recognizes that many in our community feel more divided than ever and are anxious about the political climate in the U.S. Because this community knows that an informed and engaged citizenry is the bedrock of a strong and functioning democracy, we remain committed to bringing people together for conversations like the one we will have tonight.

David Axelrod and Michael Steele bring valued perspectives on issues of national politics, and we are delighted to present them as our featured guests. They join us to share their thoughts on what they view as the biggest challenges and opportunities we face in the upcoming election year, how they feel about our two-party political system, and their advice about what each of us can do to support our country. As patrons of American Public Square and programs such as these, you are playing an important role supporting this work, and we thank you.

We are also so pleased to award our friend, SuEllen Fried, the 2023 Founder's Civility Award. There are certain people who, in the course of their day-to-day lives, embody the mission of building stronger communities by connecting with others – SuEllen is one such shining example. Those who know SuEllen, as well as those who have simply met her in passing, know she is an exemplar of civility, grace, and compassion. It is only fitting that she be recognized with our most significant award. Thank you, SuEllen, for your profound lessons on life and especially for teaching us all how to hug someone like we mean it.

On behalf of our co-chairs and the staff at American Public Square, we are thrilled you are here this evening. Welcome and enjoy!



Amb. Allan Katz (ret.)



Claire Bishop

**OUR LEAD SPONSOR AND ACADEMIC HOME :  
 WILLIAM JEWELL COLLEGE**



In alignment with the ideals set forth by American Public Square, APS' academic partner William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri, seeks to educate their community to ask reflective questions, apply critical thought, and act with purpose. Together, APS and William Jewell College offer joint programming, deliver educational opportunities, and foster civic engagement.

*Musical entertainment by*  
**WILLIAM JEWELL JAZZ COMBO**



The William Jewell Jazz Combo is a small ensemble with a focus on improvised music in a variety of styles including jazz, blues, funk, bossa nova, and more.

Evening at the Square's featured musicians include Ryan Beck (trombone), Lili Jackson (saxophone), Jonas May (vibraphone), and Preston Bigler (bass).



**WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO  
 CONNER SISEMORE**

Friend of American Public Square

American Public Square Civics Education Initiative participant, APS volunteer, and senior at Belton High School, Conner Sisemore is an aspiring filmmaker who loves to creatively express himself through various forms of media. Since he was "just a little kid," he has sought to try new things – from animation to live action puppetry – on his Youtube Channel, Loafcut Film Productions.

Conner is the creative talent and inspiration behind tonight's video tribute to the 2023 American Public Square Founder's Civility Award recipient, SuEllen Fried.

## FOUNDER'S CIVILITY AWARD

**The Founder's Civility Award is intended to honor the accomplishments of a remarkable leader who has demonstrated a commitment to bringing together Kansas City's diverse community to engage in civil, fact-based dialogue.**

### SUELLEN FRIED

Bullying prevention activist, writer and educator



SuEllen Fried is a long-time, passionate advocate for children and has worked with more than 75,000 students, educators, administrators, parents, and professionals in 37 states to prevent bullying. She is the founder of BullySafeUSA and has authored four books on the topic of bullying, including her latest publication, "SIBLINGS: Bullying, Betrayal and Bonding Across the Lifespan," which was released in 2022.

Additionally, SuEllen has been a volunteer with the Kansas Department of Corrections for more than 40 years and co-founded a self-help program for incarcerated men and women – Reaching Out From Within – which operates in Kansas, Missouri, and North Carolina.

In addition to having served on community boards such as Prevent Child Abuse America, AileyCamp, KCPT (now Kansas City PBS), Country Club Bank, the Kauffman Fund, and the Local Investment Commission, SuEllen was a founding Advisory Board Member of American Public Square at Jewell and works with the organization's Civics Education Initiative student participants – in fact, in 2022 she delivered a live tutorial on how to give a perfect hug! She is the recipient of numerous local, national, and international awards and recognition for her many accomplishments, and has appeared on CBS Evening News, Good Morning America, the TODAY Show, MSNBC, and has given two TEDx Talks.

Originally trained as a dancer, SuEllen is a Charter Member of the American Dance Therapy Association and had a career as a Dance Therapist in local psychiatric hospitals for 17 years. She attended Washington University in St. Louis and is a graduate of Park University.

Still dancing, singing, and advocating for others at age 91, SuEllen is the widow of Harvey Fried, the mother of three remarkable children – Jeff, Paula, and Marc – and the very proud grandmother to seven socially conscious grandchildren.

## OUR FEATURED GUESTS

### DAVID AXELROD

Political strategist and commentator, former advisor to President Barack Obama

David Axelrod is a preeminent American political strategist and commentator and the former chief strategist and senior advisor to President Barack Obama.

Axelrod was the founding director of the University of Chicago's non-partisan Institute of Politics.

He currently serves as a Distinguished Fellow at the University of Chicago and as a senior political commentator for CNN. He is the host of "The Axe Files," a top-rated podcast featuring in depth conversations with public figures across the political spectrum.

A former political writer for the Chicago Tribune, Axelrod produced media strategy and advertising for 150 campaigns across the U.S., culminating in President Obama's historic elections. Axelrod is also the author of The New York Times best-selling memoir, "Believer: My Forty Years in Politics."



### MICHAEL STEELE

Political analyst, former Chairman of the Rep. National Committee and former Lt. Gov. of Maryland

When elected Lt. Governor of Maryland in 2003, Michael Steele made history as the first African American elected to statewide office; and again, with his subsequent chairmanship of the Republican National Committee in 2009.

Steele is now a political analyst for MSNBC and the host of the Michael Steele Podcast. He is the author of "Right Now: A 12-Step Program for Defeating the Obama Agenda" and co-author of "The Recovering Politician's Twelve Step Program to Survive Crisis."

Born at Andrews Air Force Base in Prince George's County, Maryland, Steele was raised in Washington, DC. Upon graduating Johns Hopkins University, he entered the Order of St. Augustine where he studied for the priesthood. He is a graduate of Georgetown Law Center, an Aspen Institute Rodel Fellow in Public Leadership, a University of Chicago Institute of Politics Fellow and Chair of The Gwendolyn S. & Colbert L. King Endowed Chair in Public Policy Lecture Series.



Photo: Brendan Smialowski, Getty Images



Photo: Photo Access, Alamy Live News via Politico

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Dr. Valerie E. Chow, M.D., and

Judge Jon R. Gray (ret.)

Beryl Raff and Paul Russell

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## HOW WE DO IT

### THE APS APPROACH

The topics covered during APS programs often elicit strong emotions, whether for panelists or members of the audience. We believe that it is important to create a space where discussions of these issues can address different points of view while ensuring they are substantive, respectful and based on facts. We use “Civility Tools” to help keep things on track even when the dialogue gets challenging. They include:



#### MODERATED DISCUSSIONS

APS events are moderated by objective facilitators who ensure panelists are given time to represent their positions on tough but fair questions.



#### FACT SHEETS

APS compiles a fact sheet in advance of each panel, which is reviewed beforehand by the panelists and distributed to the audience.



#### ROVING REPORTER

Our Roving Reporter, usually a representative from a credible local media outlet, is engaged during the program to gather and curate audience questions.



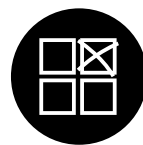
#### FACT CHECKERS

Programs feature real-time Fact Checkers to confirm the validity of comments made during the program.



#### CIVILITY BELLS

The Civility Bell is a symbol for engaging the community in our mission—to improve the tone and quality of civil discourse. These are provided to audience members to ring and “reset” when panelists wade into false, overly dramatic, or hyper-emotional territory.



#### SO WHAT? NOW WHAT?

At the end of each event, panelists are given the opportunity to make closing statements in the form of answers to these questions. This allows our experts to restate their position on the topic at hand in a way that is actionable for the audience.



#### NO APPLAUSE

No applause is allowed during a program except at the beginning and end of the event. This ensures perspective is not swayed one way or another in the midst of the discussion.

## APS MEMBERSHIP

### WHY BECOME A MEMBER?

American Public Square at Jewell Members join a community that finds value in engaging in fact-based, civil discourse about issues important to American communities. A Membership directly supports APS’ efforts to offer free programming showcasing fact-based insights and exposure to diverse and divergent perspectives.

#### STUDENT/EDUCATOR - \$25

- One (1) annual Membership
- Priority registration
- Access to Members-Only events
- Monthly Members-Only newsletter

#### FRIEND - \$75

- One (1) annual Membership
- Priority registration
- Access to Members-Only events
- Monthly Members-Only newsletter
- Annual Report recognition

#### PARTNER - \$250

- Two (2) annual Memberships
- Priority registration
- Access to Member-Only events
- Monthly Members-Only newsletter
- Annual Report recognition

#### PATRON - \$500

- Two (2) annual Memberships
- Priority registration
- Access to Member-Only events
- Monthly Members-Only newsletter
- Annual report recognition
- APS website recognition

#### MOVEMENT LEADER - \$1,000

- Four (4) annual Memberships
- Priority registration
- Access to Member-Only events
- Monthly Members-Only newsletter
- Annual report recognition
- APS website recognition

#### CIVILITY CHAMPION - \$2,500

- Six (6) annual Memberships
- Priority registration
- Access to Member-Only events
- Monthly Members-Only newsletter
- Annual report recognition
- APS website recognition



Join today at [americanpublicsquare.org/membership](https://americanpublicsquare.org/membership) or use your smart phone to scan the QR code here.

### CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

Is your organization interested in supporting the mission of American Public Square? Corporate Members receive annual Memberships for their staff, access to Members-Only programs, and special branding opportunities on our digital and print marketing materials.

To learn more, please contact APS Community Engagement Lead - Cindy Johnston at [cindy@americanpublicsquare.org](mailto:cindy@americanpublicsquare.org).

## OUR STAFF

Amb. Allan Katz (ret.)	Founder, CEO and Board Chair
Claire Bishop	Executive Director and COO
Cindy Johnston	Community Engagement Lead
Tricia Maxfield	Civics Education Program Manager
Alana Muller	Community Director
Robin Smith	Marketing and Communications

## WILLIAM JEWELL COLLEGE INTERNS

Jamie Schenck  
Alexander Walls  
Ian Wooldridge

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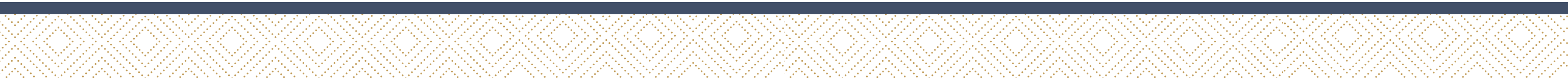
# *Looking Forward*

## CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF APS 2014 - 2024

In 2014, American Public Square hosted its first program, “The Price of Incivility.” In the subsequent years, the organization has hosted communities in conversations covering some of the most divisive and important issues of our time.

In 2024, we look forward to celebrating this milestone with you as we reflect on the journey we’ve taken and the important work that remains ahead. We are grateful for your ongoing support of our mission and look forward to seeing you in the audience for our 10th year of programming!

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