



NCF FREEDOM

2025 Impact Report



Executive Summary.....	1
Our Mission & Why Our Work Matters.....	2
2025: A Year of Action & Advocacy.....	2
Summary of 2025 Impacts.....	3
Legal Advocacy: Defending the Integrity of New College & Florida’s Higher Education Landscape.....	3
Research & Advocacy.....	4
New College Master Plan Update Advocacy.....	4
Tracking Changes to Florida’s Higher Education Landscape.....	5
Media & Op-Ed Highlights.....	6
Campus & Community Support.....	7
Financial Overview.....	8
Looking Ahead to 2026.....	9
Thank You to Our Supporters.....	9

Executive Summary

2025 was a productive year for NCF Freedom. Unprecedented political interference at New College of Florida and in the state of Florida at large compelled our organization to take targeted actions to defend academic freedom, force government accountability, and preserve the future of Florida's higher education system.

This year, our legal team fought for the constitutional rights of Florida professors in court, published a thorough analysis of the New College administration's problematic draft master plan, and influenced statewide narratives on the challenges to higher education through op-eds, interviews, press releases, and media engagement. Our work engaged state and city officials, journalists, faculty, alumni, students, and community members seeking credible information about ongoing changes to New College and state overreach into higher education.

None of this would have been possible without the generosity of our supporters and partners. Your belief in our mission has allowed us to respond with urgency and resolve to the myriad issues facing New College and institutions of higher education across our state.

Our Mission & Why Our Work Matters

NCF Freedom is dedicated to defending academic freedom, promoting transparent governance, and supporting the students, faculty, alumni, and community members who remain committed to New College's founding values. **While our mission primarily focuses on New College of Florida, our legal actions have wider implications across the entire state and even nationally.**

New College of Florida has been at the center of a state-led experiment in political control of higher education. NCF Freedom has stood against irresponsible decision-making, violations of established regulations governing higher education, and disregard for constitutional protections which have harmed students, faculty, and [Florida taxpayers](#).

In this chaotic environment, NCF Freedom has and will continue to serve as a dedicated watchdog, advocate, and source of trusted information and analysis.

2025: A Year of Action & Advocacy

January 6th, 2025 marked 2 years since the hostile takeover of New College. While many of the destructive changes to the school have been entrenched over the first two years of the new administration, there are still veteran students who came to the school pre-takeover to fight for historic campus structures, protect green areas, and preserve unique academic programs. Aside from our legal advocacy, NCF Freedom endeavored in 2025 to increase transparency and communication with the New College administration through public records requests; discussions with leadership on issues of student housing, land conservation, and campus planning; and in-depth analyses of changes to the school's governance structures, financial management, and academic experience.



Summary of 2025 Impacts

Legal Advocacy: Defending the Integrity of New College & Florida's Higher Education Landscape

NCF Freedom coordinated the filing of a lawsuit by three university professors alleging that recent legislation abolishing university tenure for professors at public Florida colleges and universities is unconstitutional under the Florida Constitution. The suit was filed on August 14th, 2024 in the Leon County Circuit Court in Tallahassee. [Read the full complaint here.](#)

On Tuesday, April 15th, 2025, our legal team argued our case in a hearing over the State's motion to dismiss our complaint. After an unfavorable ruling following this hearing, **our legal team has moved forward with an appeal, filing our initial brief in mid-October 2025.**

Our resolve is stronger than ever. **While the political and legal environment in Florida remains difficult, we believe that we will see the cumulative results of our legal actions and advocacy as the political tides shift.** They always do. In the meantime, we will continue to defend fundamental freedoms and make it known that political repression of Florida students and faculty's civil liberties will not remain unchallenged.

Thanks to your support, we are able to keep pushing forward. **We'll continue to update you as we advance this fight through the appellate courts.**

Research & Advocacy

New College Master Plan Update Advocacy

After 2 years of promises, the New College administration finally released their full Campus Master Plan Update in late June of 2025. New College planning leaders then scheduled the first required public hearing on the issue of the Campus Master Plan update only 2 weeks after the publication of the roughly 200-page document, giving the few community members, students, and faculty who remained in Sarasota for the summer little time to review it. This initial hearing

lasted only 10 minutes, and provided no public opportunity for attendees to voice their concerns. The rollout of this report and the administration's reluctance to consider community input enraged local stakeholders such as the Uplands Neighborhood Association, who will be directly impacted by many proposed changes in the Plan.

- **Comprehensive reporting:** NCF Freedom released a 150-page analysis concluding that New College of Florida's [draft 2025 Campus Master Plan](#) is procedurally flawed, legally questionable, and environmentally damaging. **The report, authored by NCF Freedom President Jono Miller, exposes major errors in the draft plan that undermine the credibility of the entire document.** It outlines serious procedural, financial, legal, and environmental concerns with a draft plan that, if approved, would have lasting impacts on New College's historic campus, student experience, and long-term viability. **Read the [full report here](#).** Read [24 key takeaways from the report here](#).
- **Rousing the community:** NCF Freedom partnered with the Uplands Neighborhood Association and Citizens to Save the Ringling to publish a joint press release detailing our major concerns about the plan. Through newsletters, community engagement, and strategic partnerships, we kept the community apprised of important milestones in the campus master planning process, encouraging stakeholders and concerned community members to attend public hearings and submit public comments to ensure they made their voices heard.
- **Meetings with key players:** Our staff conducted meetings with city planning officials, members of the New College administration, parties affected by the proposed plan, and environmental advocates to amplify calls for a more responsible, sustainable, and collaborative master planning process.

Tracking Changes to Florida's Higher Education Landscape

NCF Freedom frequently publishes essays, analyses, and reports to keep our community apprised of troubling changes to New College and the state university system at large. In 2025, we tracked:

Changes at New College:

- [How many faculty members hired before the takeover have remained at New College?](#)
- [Changes to grading and registration systems](#)
- [Changes to Alumni Association and Foundation](#)

SB266:

- [Restrictive changes to state General Education requirements](#)

Public records requests

In order to successfully determine future legal actions, communications, and advocacy campaigns, it is essential that we have current and accurate information on what changes have occurred at New College. The NCF administration has consistently rolled out massive changes to financial structures, campus planning, academic programming, registration, and leadership without providing proper updates and opportunities for comment from the New College community, making it difficult to know what is occurring behind-the-scenes at the school.

Some of our public records requests submitted in 2025 sought information on topics such as:

- Communications regarding privatization or plans for potential closure of New College
- Communications regarding the Campus Master Planning process as well as which city and state agencies have received the Campus Master Plan Update.
- Information and communications regarding the compensation of recently hired faculty members

Media & Op-Ed Highlights

In 2025, we published multiple op-eds in statewide media outlets and provided interviews, briefings, and data to reporters. **These communications covered changes to New**

College, state-wide issues in higher education, the student experience under the new administration, and failures in governance and strategic planning.

- NCF Freedom President Jono Miller's comments in [*The College That Conservatives Took Over*](#), written by Emma Pettit for the Chronicle of Higher Education.
- Op-ed by NCF Freedom Treasurer Kathleen Coty: [*Charlie Kirk's legacy doesn't deserve statue on New College of Florida campus*](#)
- Comments by Jono Miller in WUSF article entitled: [*New College's baseball 'field of dreams' hung up by lack of FAA approvals*](#), written by Kerri Sheridan
- NCF Freedom Executive Director Katia Diamond-Sagias's printed article in the Sarasota Herald Tribune: [*Honoring the Legacy of Lincoln Díaz-Balart*](#)
- NCF Freedom President Jono Miller's comments in University Press article: [*BOG approves revised general education requirements following anti-DEI legislation*](#)
- NCF Freedom President Jono Miller's comments in Guardian article: [*'He feels empowered': DeSantis kicks off takeover of second liberal Florida school*](#)

Campus & Community Support

While much of our work takes place in legal and media spheres, NCF Freedom remains grounded in the experiences of the students and faculty still fighting for the future and legacy of New College.

In 2025, we:

- Remained a source of support and consultation for faculty and staff facing unclear policies and constantly changing demands at local and state levels
- **Supported the launch of New College's independent student journal, [*Old School Catalyst*](#)**
- Put on bi-annual events bringing together New College faculty, alumni, and students

- Responded to 50+ inquiries from community members, local press, and organizational partners



Financial Overview

Your support has made this year possible. NCF Freedom depends entirely on generous donors to continue our fight for the integrity of New College and the broader higher education ecosystem.

In 2025, our expenses primarily supported 3 categories of work:

- **Operations and litigation – 66%:** The majority of our funding goes to attorney coordination, filings, research support, public records requests, responding to community inquiries, website maintenance, and report production.
- **Communications and advocacy – 32.4%:** This includes the production of press releases, newsletters, blog posts, op-eds, and analyses with the goal of keeping our community apprised of changes to New College and where collective action may be

needed. It also encompasses behind-the-scenes collaboration with our media partners and events.

- **Minimal operational costs – 1.6%:** This includes expenses that keep our operations running smoothly, such as our communication platforms, website, and annual registration fees.

Every dollar is used strategically to maximize our impact.

Donate to NCF Freedom to keep our work going through 2026!



Looking Ahead to 2026

Our work is far from over. In 2026, NCF Freedom will:

- Advance our constitutional lawsuit through its next phases
- Release new research on enrollment, finances, and governance at New College of Florida
- Monitor and challenge issues with the implementation of the Campus Master Plan
- Support students and faculty navigating uncertain conditions
- Continue shaping statewide understanding through op-eds and media engagement
- Build infrastructure for long-term accountability and restoration

We remain committed to ensuring New College, and higher education across the state of Florida, has a future grounded in integrity and public trust.

Thank You to Our Supporters

These past three years have been difficult for supporters of the old New College. Attacks on higher education at national, state, and local levels can create a sense of hopelessness for those still engaged in the fight for New College and Florida's higher education system as a whole. However, the future is not yet written. Our power lies in our passion for what's right, strong community ties, and ability to continue fighting despite the obstacles. We urge you not to give in to despair, or abdicate your power because it feels hopeless to use it. As Sam Gamgee once wisely said:

*"It's like in the great stories, Mr. Frodo. The ones that really mattered. Full of darkness and danger they were, and sometimes you didn't want to know the end... But in the end, it's only a passing thing, this shadow. Even darkness must pass. **A new day will come. And when the sun shines it will shine out the clearer.**"*

Thank you for your continued support for our work, and your unwavering belief in a new day.

The future of New College depends on people like you.

With gratitude,

Katia Diamond-Sagias

Executive Director, NCF Freedom

Contact:

hello@ncffreedom.org