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February 12, 2010

www.americancivilliteracy.org

Contact: Carol Houseal

(302) 524-6167

media@isi.org

Partisanship or Presidents?

New Study Discusses What Colleges Teach More Effectively

Wilmington, DE – While most retailers are focused on the “Hallmark” holiday of Valentine’s Day this weekend, President’s Day is again being ignored. Instead of a day to celebrate America’s heritage, it has become just another three-day weekend. Consequently, Americans are becoming further and further removed from the lessons and legacies of America’s founding statesmen.

A recently released study shows that there is a dangerous and growing epidemic of civic ignorance about some of our most significant presidents and their policies. **The Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI)** released this week its fourth annual civic literacy study, “**The Shaping of the American Mind: The Diverging Influences of the College Degree & Civic Learning on American Beliefs**,” and it reveals that not only are college graduates woefully ignorant of presidential history, they are subject to not-so-subtle political indoctrination on their campuses.

“In order to have proper respect for past presidential leadership, it goes without saying that first folks need to have some idea of what some of our great presidents said or accomplished,” **states Dr. Richard Brake** co-chair of the **Intercollegiate Studies Institute’s (ISI) National Civic Literacy Board**. “In addition to civic ignorance, there seems to also be a growing trend of political indoctrination on college campuses.”

Here is what ISI’s Civic Literacy Research has discovered:

- Only 24% of college graduates knew that the famous phrase “government of the people, by the people, for the people” comes from Abraham Lincoln’s *Gettysburg Address*
- 32% of college graduates believe that the Presidency, not Congress, has the power to declare war
- Only 36% of college students knew that George Washington’s famous Farewell Address warned the nation of dangerous foreign entanglements
- Only 46% knew that the famous phrase “We hold these truths that all men are created equal . . .” is from Thomas Jefferson’s *Declaration of Independence* (10% thought it comes from *The Communist Manifesto*)

The Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) is a non-profit, non-partisan, tax-exempt educational organization whose purpose is to further in successive generations of college students a better understanding of the values and institutions that sustain a free and humane society. Founded in 1953, ISI works “to educate for liberty” — to identify the best and the brightest college students and to nurture in these future leaders the American ideal of ordered liberty.

To receive a copy of the report and to schedule an interview with Dr. Richard Brake, please contact Carol Houseal at media@isi.org or (302) 524-6167.