

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Phil Singer, phil@marathonstrategies.com

Debora Del Valle, Director for Public Relations, 513-745-3925 (o) 513-304-3250 (c)

Survey: Devastating National Distrust of Public Institutions: Government, Business, Politics, and Media Plunge

*Results of Xavier University's Center for the Study of the American Dream
2nd Annual State of the American Dream Survey™*

Cincinnati, Ohio—The American people have lost faith in our nation's most significant public institutions, from the political process in general, to government, business, and the media, says a striking new survey by the **Center for the Study of the American Dream** at Xavier University.

Among the findings from the Second Annual State of the American Dream Survey™:

- ✓ 83% say of American adults say they have less trust in "politics in general" than they did 10 or 15 years ago;
- ✓ 79% say they have less trust in big business and major corporations;
- ✓ 78% say they have less trust in government;
- ✓ 72% report declining trust in the media.
- ✓ A surprising majority, 54%, "believe that my freedoms are being taken away."

"This remarkable level of distrust in America's leading public institutions charged with safeguarding the American Dream is deeply troublesome. The enduring power of the Dream depends heavily on public confidence and trust in our vital institutions," said Michael Ford, Founding Director of the Center for the Study of the American Dream.

"No partisan interests benefit from these findings. It's a resounding wake-up call for all political parties and everyone engaged in public life. To preserve the Dream, these institutions must win back the public's trust."

Among all public institutions, only our nation's military gained American's trust (60%).

"Public cynicism regarding government, politics, business, and the media is a long-run recipe for disaster," said Ford. **"A nation cannot function effectively without confidence in its institutions. We must rebuild the public trust in these shattered institutions."**

The Second Annual State of the American Dream Survey™ was conducted by Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz and Associates (FM3) from March 6-15, 2011. Telephone interviews were conducted with 1,003 adults age 18 and older. The margin of error for the sample is +/-3.1%.

***Xavier University's Center for the Study of the American Dream** generates original research and survey data regarding the American Dream. Its mission is to both define the American Dream and to help inspire the public imagination in our changing world to create new and better possibilities. In addition to serving as an information clearinghouse for the American Dream, the Center engages in dialogue and instruction in the classroom and in the community to promote the American Dream in every way possible.*

***Xavier University** is a private university located in Cincinnati, Ohio, providing a liberal arts education in the Catholic, Jesuit tradition. Founded in 1831, the university is the sixth-oldest Catholic university in the nation. U.S. News & World Report ranks it No. 3 among master's-level universities in the Midwest, and The Princeton Review names it as one of the "Best 373 Colleges in America."*