

Friedman Legacy Day

31 July 2013 marked the day that would be the Late Milton Friedman's 101st birthday. On a clear Wednesday night, academics, libertarians and students united to honour Friedman's impact and contributions to society through his ideas of freedom and free enterprise. With three guest speakers including Ron Manners, Yuliya Kocherhan and Jadranko Brkic, the guests listened as the speakers spoke of experiences, impacts and the continuance of Friedman's much needed vision today.

To begin the night, Yuliya Kocherhan, spoke of the impact that Friedman's values held over her country, Ukraine. Yuliya discussed the importance of Friedman's ideas explaining how Ukraine still has a low degree of economic freedom. Despite this fact, she spoke of cases where Milton Friedman's ideas were adapted and successful. One example was through the city of Lviv, where the private health services demonstrated how privatization and competition forced health services to becoming more efficient consequently producing more optimal economic results.

To continue the night, Ron Manners introduce his speech by sharing his personal experiences and engagements with Milton Friedman. Having met him twice, Ron shared a personal perspective on the renowned economists. Engaging the audience by giving a variety of stories, Ron included a vivid description of 'probing curiosity' in Friedman's Playboy interview as well as stories of his own personal meetings. With shared laughs and thoughtful thinking Ron spoke of his meeting during the 2001 San Francisco Economic Forum, which shed light of Friedman's "priority challenges".

Concluding the speeches, Jadranko Brkic, a Bosnia and Herzegovina entrepreneur, discussed communism's incompatibility with freedom, emphasizing the issues involved with the worker ownership and self-management model. Discussing former Yugoslavia, as a state of 'suspended animation', he showcased how it was independent but yet not free, due to the ignorance of freedom. Concluding the night, he finished off his speech by declaring Hong Kong as a "shining beacon" for economic freedom.

With three guest speakers and a new record of guests, Bill Stacey closed the event allowing everybody to bond over food and drinks. It was then that we united to revive the importance of his message today and how vital and crucial it was to keep his ideas alive. I have been very honoured to organize such an event that appreciates the values and ideas that have helped keep economic prosperity alive to this day!