



newsletter

TENLEY STUDY CENTER

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dear Friends of Tenley,

EVERY SUMMER MANY PARTICIPANTS of our *High School Seminar Series* get a chance to put into practice what they learn there by signing up to one of our summer programs. These programs help young men grow in generosity and intellectual curiosity.

Whether they want to stay local and participate in an inner city program such as *The Tenley Achievement Program* or prefer to go abroad to the Andes to help rebuild an ancient church as in *The Peru Service Project*, students get a chance to really work on improving themselves and those around them.

This issue of our newsletter focuses on two unique summer programs: *Making Things Happen* and *Aristotle's Ethics*. The first one is geared towards entering sophomores; the second, towards entering seniors. In both programs the focus is highly intellectual.

Making Things Happen, or simply MTH, seeks to help participants develop a sense of leadership among their peers and society at large. The way this is accomplished is by encouraging the young men to choose a current topic or event and take a stand on it. Then they carry out extensive research on the issue of their choice and prepare an oral presentation to be delivered on the last day of the program. In the following pages, Joaquim Brooks, a participant of last summer's edition of MTH, tells us—with insightful comments and examples—of his experience.

Joaquim's article is followed by one written by Daniel Ortiz. He relates his experience at this summer's edition of *Aristotle's Ethics*. This weeklong seminar, centers on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*—a book that has been the focus of intense philosophical study for many centuries. The participants get a chance to read the book carefully and discuss its meaning under the guidance of philosophy Professor David Gallagher. The purpose of this seminar is to help the boys acquire and develop the intellectual tools needed to defend their positions and combat relativism.

There are many other summer programs Tenley sponsors during the summer months such as *High School and Beyond*, *The Crotona Achievement Program* or *The Leadership Camp*, but we will have to wait for future editions of our newsletter to hear more about them.

Once again, it is thanks to your generosity and support that we can coordinate these programs that help so many young men grow in generosity and intellectual curiosity.

Sincerely,

Joe Cardenas, Director
TENLEY STUDY CENTER



Joe Cardenas, Executive Director of the Tenley Study Center leads a discussion during a Freshman Seminar. A typical Seminar evening consists of a study hall, a hearty supper, and the Seminar topic.

Tenley Study Center is dedicated to the academic and character development of men of all ages. Its activities encourage them to see their studies, work and family responsibilities from the perspective of character growth and service to others. The spiritual dimension of Tenley's activities is entrusted to Opus Dei, a personal prelature of the Catholic Church.

Making Things Happen Seminar

BY JOAQUIM BROOKS (HEIGHTS 2016)

WE, AS A SOCIETY, need competent leaders with good values if we are to

face the public policy challenges that exist today. This summer I attended a week-long seminar named *Making Things Happen*, in Pittsburgh, PA. The goal of the seminar was to teach young men how to be the leaders—leaders with a clear moral compass. I heard about this program through the Tenley Study Center, where I go weekly for circles and classes. During *Making Things Happen*, each one of us chose a topic after listening to an expert in his respective field, carried out extensive research on that topic, and, after careful consideration, took a stance. Finally, on the last night of the seminar, we each delivered a short presentation to a panel of the same experts on how we thought the issue should be dealt with. I personally defended the expansion of hydraulic fracturing of natural gas, or ‘fracking’, as a cleaner alternative to coal and petroleum, and as a great economic opportunity for the United States. Others addressed issues as varied as whether or not there should be caps on non-economic damages from malpractice suits or whether society needs a better strategy on the War on Drugs. With sixteen students in attendance, the seminar remained focused and interesting.

Besides the academic component, we did much more than specifically preparing our presentations. For example, we also received a crash-course in public speaking. We also had spiritual activities such as preached meditations and Holy Mass in the chapel. Finally, we received talks on the virtues that a leader in today’s society needs, including responsibility, fortitude, service, prudence, and professional excellence. After having heard about a particular virtue, we were individually invited for a meeting to discuss it with an assigned mentor.

Another fascinating portion of the seminar was the part centered on the book we were required to read, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, by Leo Tolstoy. This class, taught by the esteemed Mr. Flynn, sought to explore Tolstoy’s message in this rather complicated and nuanced book, including his definition of art and his view of family relationships.

But we did not spend all of our time indoors. We frequented the local basketball courts and played football,

soccer, and Ultimate Frisbee on the campus of the nearby Carnegie Mellon University. In conclusion, the program was highly applicable to the real world, but still very enjoyable. (It is my prediction that many of the students I met will go on to apply the concepts that we learned.)

The seminar was coordinated by the Tenley Center’s own Cory Larkin, with assistance from J. P. Mitchell, Pat Bohlin, and Ricky Ybarra.



Aristotle's Ethics

BY DANIEL ORTIZ (HEIGHTS 2014)

SPENDING A WEEK in mid-July wading through the dense tangles of Aristotelian philosophy does not, admittedly, seem like a particularly great time. I had thought the same, and found myself regretting my decision to sign up for the seminar on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* at the Warwick Center in Pittsburg. I was busy with other things, and it seemed something of a tangent in my life to worry about the various arcane disputes that had troubled philosophers more than 2,000 years ago.

I still had this attitude when I arrived at the center and actually began the seminar. Classes were taught by Professor David Gallagher. Mr. Anthony, with the help of James Herrick and Larry Bilelo, ran the seminar as a whole. We—there were about ten of us—had lectures in the morning on the *Ethics*, and, in the afternoon, discussion-based classes on Relativism. These later classes served as something of a counterpoint to Aristotle's philosophy—they showed us the dramatically different ethical theory

of Relativism, and, importantly, how to combat it.

When I lost a bit of my reluctance, however, and as Professor Gallagher methodically began to teach us, I began to realize the immense relevance and beauty of Aristotle's work. He begins the *Ethics* simply enough: Every action aims at some good, and the good is that at which all things aim. This, I thought, was fair enough, but from it Aristotle begins to construct a vast architecture of ideas, a cathedral, as it were, of rationality. He moves from his starting premise to consider politics, and happiness, and virtue, and friendship—he lays out what opinions are held about a given concept, and pieces together the truth of disparate schools of thought into a single, coherent whole.

For me, the most beautiful section of the *Ethics* comes near the end, in book ten, when he finally gives what he thinks full happiness is. The whole work had been leading to this point—Professor Gallagher had guided us through each concept as Aristotle built up his ideas and expounded his philosophy.

And then, Aristotle finishes by saying that true happiness resides in a life of contemplation. He turns around, we imagine, in this treatise that pursues happiness obsessively and says that we have found happiness, that happiness is the very type of philosophy that we had been practicing in reading the *Ethics*. It was not for nothing, I thought, that Dante declared Aristotle '*il maestro di color che sanno*,' 'the master of those who know'.

The seminar at Warwick was, in spite of my initial unwillingness, an important part of my summer because it provided an opportunity to appreciate Aristotle's work. This was in no small part due to Professor Gallagher, who had clearly had an almost uncanny grasp of Aristotelian philosophy and of many other subjects besides this. They were few—if any—arguments in which one of us managed to score any points against him. In the classes on Relativism, he would adopt the arguments of a relativist and challenge us to refute him. I was glad, after several particularly failed arguments, that he was not actually a relativist.

All of this—the classes on the *Ethics*, the debates about relativism—was interesting at the time, and, afterwards, gave me something to mull over through the long August days.



FROM THE DESK OF PHIL WEHLE

My dear Friends,

THE TENLEY ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL DONORS' RECEPTION, held on Sunday, 3 November, drew more than 50 faithful supporters to the Tenley Study Center. Joe Cardenas, the Center's Director, thanked all in attendance for their generous support and provided an overview of the many programs offered by Tenley. Joe's presentation was most informative and received enthusiastic feedback from those in attendance. The great spirit of generosity and self-giving shown by the first members of the Tenley Association when it was launched by Scotty Wright 30 years ago, continues to this day. Thanks to all the members of the Association and their extraordinary support, Tenley's programs and activities are flourishing. You are making all the difference.

For details on Tenley Center activities or to donate, please visit our website at www.tenley.org. Our address is 4300 Garrison Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016.

Your contributions to the Tenley Study Center, a 501 (c) (3) corporation, are tax deductible. If you wish to donate through the Combined Federal Campaign, the number is 37306. Our United Way number is 8870. The Center's federal tax identification number is 52-1545933. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, comments or suggestions.

With best wishes to you and your families,

Phil Wehle, Director
TENLEY ASSOCIATION, PWEHLE@TENLEY.ORG



FROM THE TENLEY STUDY CENTER ARCHIVES

THE TENLEY CENTER HIGH SCHOOL

Seminar series is the great academic jumping off point for the challenges facing our young men as they contemplate college and beyond. Contemporary topics cover pressing issues in law, medicine, philosophy, and political science. Led by experts in their respective fields, upperclassmen experience college-level discussions to help them better understand complex issues and how to explain their viewpoint to others. Recent topics include: Relativism: What is Truth; Secular Humanism: A Common World View; Bioethics: Euthanasia and Stem-cell Research; Issues in Constitutional Law; Freedom: From What? For What?; Marriage, the Nation and You; and Are Faith and Reason Compatible? Above, Michael Dana presents a seminar on the Legal Profession.

