

Since a little more than a century ago, the Telluride Association has always been standing at the forefront of experimental education. First established by L. L. Nunn for the purpose of training engineers for his company, the association has gradually extended its mission as to provide a liberal arts education to a wide range of talented students from all walks of life. Now, the Telluride Association stands at an important crossroads, one that would have far-reaching consequences: what should be the *purpose, promise, and practices* of the Telluride Association? How could the last hundred years translate into the next hundred years of the Telluride Association's history? The answer is rather simple, and could be summed up into three major pillars: education in high quality, equality of opportunity, and service to humanity.

Education in high quality, to begin with, is the first and the most important pillar that the Telluride Association have been embracing, and should continue to embody in the future. The association, with its long history and firm financial base, is able to provide an experimental form of education, one that is impossible to be carried out in traditional academic settings--for instance, public high schools. Such an education is imperative in that it gathers a group of talented students with great academic potential, and leads them to cultivate the ability to question, think, and argue, which would otherwise have been left undisclosed. As one of the association's landmark programs, TASP, for instance, gives sixty-four rising seniors a chance to realize their academic potentials through engaging in a college-level seminar on topics ranging from science to philosophy; such level of education is, in fact, only reachable by the Telluride Association.

Educating talented students, however, is not the sole reason of the association's existence, nor should this be its only focus; in fact, giving an equal opportunity to every student, regardless of his or her socioeconomic and ethnic background, stands at the kernel of the association's ideals. Unlike other educational institutions or summer camps that costs a tremendous amount for tuition and board, programs like TASS and TASP are entirely paid for by the association; even transportation fees and summer work payments are provided to students who are in need. This, in turn, signifies that the student's academic talent should be the only barrier in entering the Telluride Association's programs, and that no student should be discouraged from receiving a high quality education simply because of his socioeconomic status or ethnicity. This is part of the reason why there is so much diversity within the participants of the association's programs, including the TASP '15 that I have been a part of. The Telluride Association, even in the future, should never fail to embrace diversity and meritocracy as its core values in educating future leaders.

Last, but not least, of the values that the Telluride Association should strive to uphold is service to humanity. The aim of the association should be to educate students to become not only distinguished intellectuals, but also mature citizens; that is, the Telluride Association, with all its privileges, has a burden to return what it has received to the society, thus proactively seeking the greater good. Community service should stand at the core of this mission, as it's an important step for the association to interact with, and make a positive impact on, the neighboring community; on top of this, community service is an inevitable part of the ethical education that the Telluride Association provides to its participants, who would later grow on to carry out their service to a larger community--humanity. The more

educated one is, the more burden he has on his shoulders to return the privilege he has received to the society, and to improve the lives of others who share the world with him.

In short, the purpose of the Telluride Association should be to give any talented intellectual, regardless of his or her social, racial, economic background, an opportunity to immerse himself in a high quality liberal arts education; it is also to help youths grow into mature citizens and great intellectuals, under the dictum that the more talented he is academically, the more cognizant he should be of his own responsibilities to the world. Thus, the purpose, promise and practices of the Telluride Association should revolve around the three aforementioned values: education in high quality, equality of opportunity, and service to humanity.