

The Telluride Association fosters a commitment to a life of the mind rooted in care for the minds and experiences of others. This commitment finds its fuller purpose in a promise to social responsibility and activism through the association's foundational structures of self-governance and academics. Through mutual decision making in spaces of self-governance, closely collaborative academic study, and shared responsibility toward living environment, the rituals of Telluride provide an education towards a conception of leadership as service: towards alumni who will work for a more just and beautiful political order. The promise of Telluride is that this lifelong commitment begins with students learning to relate to one another with thought and care. The future of the association lies in demographic diversifying and increasing the number of students who can access these educationally effective and personally affective programs, efforts which will only be possible with a better organized alumni network and more ambitious continuations of the relationships began through Telluride.

Telluride's mode of self-governance educates students to care about and want to serve humanity. Self-governance constitutes an intensely immediate and local encounter with social change. An emphasis on collective decision and rule making asks students to work hard to account for how people unlike them think and feel as well as make choices about how to live together, the consequences of which are immediately evident. If a student dominates a conversation space, speaks unkindly, etc., the effects on those around her are clear. Theoretically and often in practice with Telluride, the moral imperative to change such behavior comes from friends and peers. Nunnian students learn to understand the broader project of social justice through the real, experiential context of relating to people their own age in a social situation.

Telluride programs' basis in close study of texts furthers this goal of building healthy human relationships with those around you as a basis on which to build a life of service. Classroom conversations put students into dialogues with thinkers from throughout history as they grapple with fundamental questions such as the nature of the good life. Students are asked to

detach from their received notions of how the world should be and instead consider the perspectives of diverse thinkers as well as their own peers' views. An academic environment allows students to form questions about the world and their role in it and then immediately begin the work of effectively communicating their thoughts to their peers. This is an essential component of the Telluridian model, for any significant social change begins in communication with others about how and why to act.

That these programs cost no money acknowledges the social inequities which they inspire students to change. The scholarship makes clear that, given the reality of financial inequality, great education belongs not simply to those who can pay for it, but to those with potential to lead significant lives of service.

From the present day, it can be tempting to see in LL Nunn and the organizations he founded only the flawed approaches to gender, class, and, more subterraneanly, race, which are found in the association's founding documents. It is easy to be cynical about our origins. One place where Nunn was certainly wrong was his insistence on a gifted few as the way to help better the world. History makes clear that there is no such thing as a fundamentally more capable elite, but rather that when a small group of people are given a rigorous education they usually seek to keep their power and perpetuate structures of inequality. A critical sense of where we come from is healthy. It continues to allow us to grow as a group and as individuals.

However, in a world beset by problems of social justice, facing a future defined by terrifyingly real issues of wealth inequality, climate change, and rapidly changing forms for human relationships, the importance of the association's continued work is clear. Educating students towards social responsibility through human relationships remains crucial for preparing the next generation to lead great lives of service. Internally, the most urgent work for Telluride is the expansion of this opportunity to a more diverse group. We must rigorously look at applications from the standpoint of what students have achieved in relation to where they come from and expand efforts to recruit students from underprivileged backgrounds. Externally, we

must work to create new Nunnian programs with the goal of reaching a wider and more diverse audience.

To further the considerable progress we have already made, we must better organize our alumni networks and draw on those relationships which are the substance of our educational programs. With a group of busy and overextended alumni, this can be hard. But the momentum begun in friendships, peerships, and student teacher relationships at Telluride Association programs is a considerable resource. Organizing around this resource toward the end of creating new opportunities for larger and more diverse groups of students could accomplish a great deal. The Telluride Association promises a humanistic education which cannot be divorced from its subject—humans. It practices its purpose: an education based on understanding ourselves, others, and the spaces in between, with a conviction that this work will help students create a more just and beautiful world.