

Turnaround America Project Summary Report

Introduction

This is a summary report regarding the recent “Turnaround America Project” (TAP) strategic planning session held from March 15th -17th, 2013 at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel near the BWI Airport. Forty-eight Americans and two Canadians participated in the highly interactive program with the aim to draft a strategic framework to best address the social, cultural, political and security crises that appear to be overwhelming America and the world.

The group included many of the original “Top Gun” AFC leaders, along with numerous professional experts, organizational heads, several second generation unificationists and Unification community leaders. This effort is foundational and anticipates the engagement of many committed people who could not be present for this meeting.

Outreach for the planning session included a special effort to engage and energize young adults who have an interest in social, cultural and political affairs. The time frame for the current planning was based on the 2020 scope of the next seven years. All participants covered their own expenses of travel, meals and accommodations.

Following True Fathers Seong Hwa along with the 2012 US elections, it became urgently clear that we must come together, develop a common vision and chart a sustainable course whereby first and second generation activists can effectively work together for the sake of America and the whole world. It was clearly understood that we all share the primary responsibility to be actively engaged with the growth of FFWPU based on a revival of teaching the Divine Principle. At the same time, as citizens who care for our nation, we must improve our capacities to make an impact in society. We also see the critical need and opportunity to connect, educate and activate allied organizations, leaders and concerned American people who represent the “Abel sphere,” which is likely more than 70 million individuals.

The TAP weekend grew upon the foundation of a series of working conferences held over the past several years in Las Vegas consisting of former AFC members primarily from Western states, together with more recent working sessions held in New York and New Jersey with UPF and other Unificationists from East Coast states. The common thread of all this work is to effectively organize in order to make impact on the local, state and national level guided by providential patriotism based on the many years of investment of True Parents in America. The hearts of all who attended were united through HDH readings, sincere prayers and spirited songs.

Program and Agenda

From the start, we agreed on the following ground rules:

- Alignment: Focus on what God’s Providence needs, how can we best coordinate our efforts.
- Responsibility and ownership: Be responsible as adult children of God and True Parents.
- Pro-active: We are here to address how to best move forward based on the foundation TP have established, not to complain about transition issues and conflict.

- Engagement: This will be a working meeting (and process) that requires everyone's genuine participation; no irrelevant presentations.

The desired outcomes and objectives for the TAP gathering included the following:

- Kick-off a process to develop a national "Turnaround America" grand strategy by using a trusted planning process
- Clarify needs to set forth a capacity-building hub to provide content, tools, training and support for individual and collective effectiveness
- Address the need to unleash creativity and upgrade the professionalism of our people and their networks
- Develop a sustainable, organizational framework that is solution-oriented, making positive impact in our communities/tribes, as well as throughout the nation and world
- Develop a relevant, comprehensive and compelling series of training and communications materials (consider "CAUSA for the 21st Century"), using a critique and counter-proposal approach, to address various areas of family, social, national and global breakdown along with America's global leadership role

The agenda of the TAP weekend was crafted by a coordinating team of committed folks from the West Coast and East Coast working groups through weekly conference calls. Below is a summary of what was covered throughout the course of the weekend:

Friday, March 15 – *Opening reception and fellowship, sponsored by The Washington Times*

Saturday, March 16 – *Day to gather intelligence & start shaping ourselves*
Opening comments and orientation

Personal introductions

We started our program with table-by-table discussions of each person's goals and their purpose for being here. These were all noted for all to see on a 4'x16' sheet of chart paper.

Field updates, critical issues, and framing a national agenda

Overview reports from Mike Smith on the work of the West Coast Group, from Lourdes Swarts on the work of the East Coast Groups, from CPAC attendees and from The Washington Times.

Aligning with providential priorities

Dr. Michael Balcomb helped focus the national church priorities:

1. Witnessing
2. Tribal Messiah effectiveness
3. 20/20 project
4. Moral Enlightenment
5. Civic Engagement
6. Unity of N/S Korea

The church will be focusing on the top three and the TAP group will focus on the bottom three, which can be defined as civic engagement.

Leveraging providential assets

We then had reports and discussion about the activities Providential Assets like UTS, Barrytown College, The Washington Times, The Times Foundation, UPF, AFP, ACLC, WFWP and ICRF.

Working lunch: Family and Social Landscape

Cheryl Wetzstein, a veteran reporter from The Washington Times, delivered an overview on family and social issues, including marriage, divorce, adoption, cohabiting, parenthood, teens, sexuality, mental health, substance abuse, abortion, welfare, poverty and family structure. Cheryl gave a compelling report on the state of marriage in the US and discussed upcoming Supreme Court decisions on DOMA and Prop 8 from California.

Capacity-building planning session

The next session discussed the importance of continuing professional development for each of our members and looked at the ideological content available to our members in the war of ideas.

Dr. David Burgess reported on 'headwing' development, Dr. Robert Beebe addressed the 'God or No God' debate and Dr. Panzer discussed *Relationship Intelligence* youth education, which supports the Principle perspective on man/woman relationships based on brain research, psychology, social science, as well as public health. This kind of education is also very fundable as he shared that \$8 million in grants were received from 1998 to 2013 for education in NY/NJ .

David Eaton gave an insightful critique and counterproposal of popular culture from a Unification Thought perspective. Jim Gavin outlined the development of a Freedom and Responsibility approach to address secularism and the unbridled growth of government. Tom McDevitt talked about the need to re-establish Americas true identity and leadership role in the world for the 21st century.

We discussed the many friends and partners we have cultivated over the years and the need to give them some way to solidly connect with and contribute to our work for the greater public good. The group discussed the development of technology in the recent years. (PowerPoint is dead according to 2nd Gens who were there) The ability to communicate and learn via the internet has made the power of Principle more available to more people than ever.

It was repeatedly stated, throughout the day, that the group was committed to develop a bedrock series of curricula and training tools, utilizing our best experts, and to work to monetize this into marketable programs, so we have needed resources to self-fund and amplify our core messages.

Dinner session: Global Security Threats

Bill Gertz, National Security columnist and author The Washington Times and the Washington Free Beacon gave a comprehensive and alarming summary of trouble spots around the world. His briefing included disconcerting trends in China, jihadist terrorism, Russia, the Middle East and security threats in Mexico and South America.

Evening reflection, fellowship and prayer

Tom McDevitt facilitated heartfelt songs, prayers, observations and testimonies, to close the day.

Sunday, March 17 – Day to further map out our game plans

Opening session – Dr. Michael Balcomb

On Sunday Morning, Dr. Balcomb spoke to us next with a heartfelt and frank presentation. He outlined the challenges of our movement, his commitment to help True Mother pull the movement together and his absolute focus to double membership of the church by the end of 2013. Dr. Balcomb also shared a special message from True Mother to the Top Gun group.

His discussion of True Mother's willingness to do whatever's necessary showed her commitment to spiritual care for members and real church growth results. Dr. Balcomb affirmed the American tradition of 'Voluntary Association' to proactively work to solve problems without waiting to be told.

He spoke at length about the role of the elder son in many cultures and especially in Confucianist cultures. True Father invested many years in America, repeatedly demonstrating how a highly effective, God-centered leader thinks and acts. American leaders have been blessed with more direct experience with Father and Mother than the leaders of most other nations. The 'Elder Son' is responsible to make sure the younger children understand the family ideals and to help if they are falling short. They are responsible to act as 'Dutch Uncles' to other families as well, speaking of their experience with Father and coaching them for the ideals.

How to use a strategic planning model

We followed a strategic planning model suggested by Peter Foss, former VP of Marketing for the FranklinCovey Company. These sessions were facilitated by Don Sardella, who has been working as a management consultant and business development coach for the past 25+ years.

The strategic planning process helps answer the questions:

- 'Where are we now'
- 'Where are we going'
- 'How will we get there' and
- 'How will we measure our progress'?

Step ONE: Where are we now?

The group conducted a comprehensive SWOT analysis process (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) in the morning and had a fast paced brainstorming process. The group also mapped the many high level contacts and organizations that are accessible to us.

Step TWO: Where are we going?

On Sunday afternoon, we worked on the 'Where are we going' question. Vision (what we see) mission (what we do), purpose (why we act) and priorities (what is most important).

Step 3 and step 4 will be conducted on line, after some further reflection and processing time.

Working lunch – Dr. Michael Jenkins

Dr. Michael Jenkins, who serves as director of business assets, briefed the group about our movement's businesses. He also expressed his deep concern that we support True Mother in this time after Foundation Day.

Reflections, closing prayer, fellowship and farewells for now

One important point should be noted, related to the spiritual atmosphere and core foundation for this meeting. This conference was suffused with an abundance of music and prayer. Unification Movement musicians/songwriters Dan Fefferman and Ricky Joswick were there, with guitars in hand, and brought back the early pioneering spirit of American Unificationists with their songs.

An interesting fact - most trees (especially interlinked redwoods) have as much of themselves below the ground as above. Their interconnected root systems connect together to nourish the tree above and allows for much greater collective strength and resilience. In the same way, we have appreciated the prayers that people offered for the preparation required to launch this effort.

Next Steps and Conclusion

The next stage of our work is to produce a draft of inputs and engage participants in prioritizing, then producing, a “strategic framework” to guide further development and its implementation. We invite, and hope that all interested parties will participate in this process.

Our next steps also include a report to True Mother (with photos and testimonies). We will also make our data available to the national council.

We intend to complete a thorough first draft written plan before March 31st, Easter Sunday. From there, working groups can be formed, designed to address key issues with serious practical impact.

This will include a more detailed inventory of all current and potential affiliations, alliance partners and key relationships, with whom we develop a strong coalition around shared values.

The coordinating team is committed to continue to conduct bi-weekly conference calls and/or online meetings to continue this work. For the balance of 2013, we are also considering a quarterly conference development process, to clarify, advance and energize the process.

Thank you to everybody and anybody who have contributed thus far to this developing initiative.