



murray hill institute

women transforming culture

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**Leading in Adversity: A Message from
the MHI President, Teresa Carale**

In the Seminar on *Developing a Personal Leadership Style* which we offered in the fall, we proposed that leaders need to have **Clear Vision, Competence, and Character**. A leader is forward-looking, leading those in the team towards a goal. With this vision of the future, concretized in clearly defined long term and short term goals, a leader evaluates tasks and organizes the team in such a way as to make the goals achievable. To get to the goal faster, a leader navigates to avoid obstacles and anything that could obstruct the achievement of the organization's objectives.

However, many things are beyond a leader's control. The tragedy in Japan, where a tsunami took thousands of lives, and the radiation threat risks the lives of thousands of others, is a case in point. Planning and organization of systems and responses do mitigate the effects of adversities when they occur. However, one cannot totally eliminate these external factors, as one cannot prevent an earthquake or a tsunami from occurring. When adversities are encountered, some will pull back, some will be paralyzed with fear, but a leader faces these adversities head on. This brings to mind a leadership trait that is seldom mentioned—and that is the virtue of hope. Through hope, one desires something (a goal, a benefit, a reward...), works hard towards that end, and anticipates achieving or obtaining that which is desired. A leader who is driven by hope faces adversities squarely.

Facing adversities can take various forms. One can wrestle with it directly as in climbing a mountain to reach a town on the other side; speaking directly and clearly with a person who is negatively affecting team performance; seeking professional help to eliminate a speech impediment. A second way is to “use” the adversity instead of going against it, similar to driving into the skid to regain control of a skidding car. Losing a job can be jarring, but some have chosen to see this as opening up growth opportunities— like exploring other career options, going back to school, starting a business. A performance evaluation form that identifies weaknesses and gaps in one's competencies can similarly be used to focus on improvement and growth, addressing the weaknesses and gaps to improve or add to one's competencies.

A leader does not pretend that adversities do not exist, as some persons are apt to do. These will not “go away” just because one refuses to acknowledge them or think of them. Thus reactions that leaders will not give in to are denial, discouragement, or despair.

Which brings us back to the beginning: the leader is a person driven by hope and optimism, someone who looks at a situation and sees opportunity, someone who is determined to look at the future with confidence and conviction.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Women Helping Women: The Rosedale Center for Girls



For the past several years, Murray Hill Institute has been in partnership with the Rosedale Center for Girls, a small non-profit educational outreach located in the Bronx. The women who participate in Murray Hill Institute's programs have contributed their time, talent, and financial support to help Rosedale's programs. Rosedale and Murray Hill Institute share similar goals: to help each person maximize her potential through developing habits and behaviors that can help her make a positive contribution to work, educational, cultural, and family environments. We asked Alice Trimmer, Director of Rosedale, to bring us up to date on current programs and projects at Rosedale.

What programs are currently held offered at Rosedale, and when are they held?

During the school year we offer one-on-one tutoring from 3:30 to 5:00 on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons. On Fridays, thanks to an outreach program at the Concordia Conservatory, a neighborhood music school in Bronxville, NY, we offer private music lessons in violin, voice, and piano lessons on a scholarship basis. The music students have opportunities to perform once a year in a formal recital, and can participate in additional coaching and performances if recommended by their music teacher.

Saturday is club day. In the morning, 4th through 8th graders come for three hours to participate in a cooking class, a character class, and an activity hour. The activity hour can encompass arts and crafts, drama, music, or writing projects. Test prep classes (SAT prep in the spring, high school entrance exam prep in the fall for 8th graders) are given in the early afternoon, and in the later afternoon the high school club meets. The high school club is part of the Career and University Prep program and includes career talks, writing workshops that focus on college application essays, cooking contests, and field trips. The high school students are encouraged to undertake a wide variety of independent projects. For example, this year, one of the high school seniors in the club who is interested in event planning as a career is organizing, with the help of the Rosedale Parent Council, a benefit for Rosedale in April. The event will be an international pot-luck dinner with entertainment by some of the Rosedale music and club students.

In the month of July, Rosedale offers an intensive four-week academic enrichment programs for 4th through 7th graders, a special Intermediate program for 8th graders, and a Job Training Program for high school students.

How many students do you serve?

During the academic year, we have about 100 students, and during the summer, about the same amount. Some students come only in the summer and others only during the school year, so all in all we have about 150 individual students in any given calendar year. Many of the students during the academic year come for both clubs and tutoring, and some additionally for music lessons, so we have a lot of people coming through the doors in any given week.

Where do your students come from, and how do they hear about Rosedale?

Most of the students come from the nearby Bronx neighborhoods: Soundview,

Parkchester, Morrisania, Castle Hill, Hunt's Point, West Farms, although some come from farther away. Parents hear about Rosedale largely through word of mouth, chance conversations at the pediatrician, moms of classmates, neighbors, or relatives. We have been at our current location for over 30 years, so we are getting second-generation students—alums bringing their own daughters. We also get referrals from nearby elementary schools.

What role do volunteers play in Rosedale programs?

Our programs are completely dependent on the help of volunteers. We have only one part-time and two full time persons on staff. The staff Program Directors plan and coordinate the activities, but the volunteers carry out the actual tutoring, leading the club activities, teaching the cooking and character classes in the clubs.

What is the neighborhood like? How do you get there? Is it safe?

The neighborhood is residential and rather quiet. Rosedale is located in a small row house about a 10 minute walk from the #6 train. The neighborhood is quite safe during the day, but is rather isolated at night. For this reason, we do not hold any activities past the late afternoon.

What is special about Rosedale and how does it differ from similar initiatives in the inner city?

Rosedale has a unique home-away-from-home atmosphere that derives from the acceptance and respect for each student's individuality as a person. At the same time, each girl is challenged to grow. We try to help each girl maximize her potential not only in academic achievement but, more importantly, in her growth as a person of character.

This is achieved through the overall atmosphere of respect and acceptance that is fostered in the group activities and also through individual mentoring that helps each girl learn to reflect on her actions and attitudes and take ownership of her behavior. The Rosedale students are between the ages of 9 to 18, a stage of life that encompasses rapid growth and change. The mentors work with each student, starting where she is. If they have evident attitude issues that are clearly holding them back, that is where they start. A student who is already "together"—earning good grades, helping around the house—is helped to explore new areas of growth and perhaps find avenues to grow in generosity in helping others. In short, each girl is encouraged to reflect, to get to know herself, to take responsibility for her decisions. This is very empowering to the girls, to realize that they do not have to go with the flow, that they can be leaders in making positive and healthy life choices.

Who mentors the students, and how do you ensure that the mentors are working in alignment with your mission as an organization?

In order to increase the effectiveness of the one-on-one interaction between mentor and student, the Rosedale staff offers professional development for the volunteers throughout the year. A large proportion of our volunteers are college students. Many of them have told us that the mentoring training they receive at Rosedale has encouraged them to examine their own potential for growth. It is impressive to see how much they care for their girls and how carefully they study their student in order to find creative ways to help her.

What kind of help do you currently need at Rosedale?

As a small and struggling non-profit, we are always searching for sustainable financial support. This is especially challenging in this era of economic

stress. We are always looking for foundations that understand and appreciate our mission and can help us with ongoing aid. We are also in search of new volunteers who can be club leaders, help with promotion and public relations, or do a one-time presentation on an interesting career or cultural experience for our Saturday clubs. And now that summer is right around the corner, we are once more looking for companies who would like to partner with our Job Training Program and host a part-time or full-time high school intern for a month. If anyone is interested in learning more, or would like to visit Rosedale, just email me at atrimmer@sbef.org

WOMEN TRANSFORMING CULTURE Do you have a minute?

By Allison Elliott

Interruptions can be one of the more irritable aspects of the workday. As someone who works in Public Relations, my job requires a lot of writing and it can be very hard to concentrate when there are constant interruptions from co-workers, clients and impromptu callers. I find myself jealous of my more senior colleagues who have offices with doors they can close when they need to hunker down and work. One of the things that helps me not get too stressed about interruptions is when I think of all the times I am interrupting someone else. When I call or email a contact, I have to keep in mind that my urgent need is not necessarily an urgent need of theirs. That's why it's always so happily refreshing and surprising when someone does take the time to assist me. I also know how frustrating it is to keep getting your message or question passed on and forwarded on because no one wants to take a few minutes to understand what you need and who best can help you. One of the first things I noticed when I started at my current job, is that one of the vice-presidents would always take the time to answer a survey or marketer

who was calling to get his response as a PR professional. I was impressed that instead of just cutting them off, he would take time to answer their questions, with answers that would ultimately benefit his industry. It showed that he cared about his work and he cared about people, even though technically he was handling an "interruption." I once read an article about a man who complained to his friend about interruptions at work and his friend responded, "Perhaps your interruptions are your work." Thinking about that response helps me to manage my annoyance at distractions and expand my idea about what work is.

Allison Elliott is an Account Supervisor at Gibbs & Soell PR in New York City.

Do you have an experience you would like to share about changing the culture in your workplace? Email us at info@murrayhillinstitute.org

CULTURAL CORNER

Coming This Spring: *There Be Dragons*
By Alice Trimmer

The film *There Be Dragons*, scheduled for release on May 6, 2011 in the U.S., will have special interest to Murray Hill Institute participants, because the Institute's programs are inspired by the thought and work of St. Josemaria Escriva and by the teachings of the Catholic Church. Who was this saint, you may wonder, and how did he come to found Opus Dei? These questions are partially addressed in the film, which combines actual events that took place in the life of St. Josemaria with a fictitious parallel plot. The film is set in the years prior to and during the Spanish Civil War. Opus Dei was founded in 1928, when St. Josemaria was a young priest of 26, and the country he loved so dearly was about to explode into war.

In late January I attended a pre-release screening of this film with a certain amount of trepidation. Although I never met St. Josemaria, I have read many accounts of those years and also viewed

several videos of St. Josemaria speaking to groups of people in the 1970s. For this reason, I had a lot of pre-conceived ideas about how I would like to see his life handled, as well as fears that the whole account would seem overly sentimental or unbelievable. The version of the film shown at the screening was not fully edited, so it would be premature to attempt a full review, but a few impressions follow.

The structure of the film is complex, but not difficult to follow. The life of St. Josemaria is counterpoised with the life of Manolo, a childhood friend of St. Josemaria whose life takes a contrasting path. The character of Manolo is entirely fictitious and serves as a kind of everyman figure who is swept up by the chaos found both in the political circumstances and in his own inner turmoil. The film is described by the producers as “An epic portrayal of faith, forgiveness and redemption.” It is all that and more—the kind of film that one can talk about a long time after it is over. A viewer familiar with the life and work of St. Josemaria will recognize many incidents in the film, even though they have often been adapted somewhat to fit the plot. Charlie Cox, the British actor who plays St. Josemaria, is charming and very natural. The incidents of a somewhat mystical nature are presented in a way that is neither overwrought nor understated. It is refreshing to see a film that deals with matters of faith in a straightforward and realistic way.

The screenplay was written by Roland Joffé, who also directed the film. Joffé gave a very comprehensive interview to the Catholic news service Zenit, in which he explains why he became interested in doing the film. It can be found at <http://www.zenit.org/article-31359?l=english>

For those interested in learning more, there are two engrossing published books that deal with that era: *Dream and Your Dreams Will Fall Short* by Pedro Casciaro and *It Is Worth While* by Pedro’s younger brother, Jose Maria Casciaro. Pedro

Casciaro was one of the young men who accompanied St. Josemaria throughout the years of the Civil War, and his book gives a first-hand account of the same period covered by the movie. Jose Maria was Pedro’s brother, eight years his junior. During the war he was a teenager, and his book gives an intimate account of the impact of the war on his family and how they dealt with it. Another excellent resource is John Coverdale’s *Uncommon Faith: The Early Years of Opus Dei (1928-1943)*. All are available through Scepter Publishers.

Alice Trimmer is the Director of the Rosedale Center and a member of the MHI Board.

NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Murray Hill Institute Leadership Seminars

“Bring Out the Leader in You,” the leadership seminar series launched last fall will wind up its inaugural season on Saturday, April 2, 2011. Karen Wagner, Director, Client Credit Group, Corporate and Investment Banking Division at Societe Generale, will lead a workshop on “Communicating with Confidence: Negotiating Based on Strengths.” Join us for a lively interactive workshop on a skill that is critical for nearly all professional situations. For information on registration, visit the Murray Hill Institute’s website at <http://murrayhillinstitute.org>.



The second seminar in the series, “Personal Finance: Taking Charge of Your Financial Future” was given on February 5, 2011. Arisleyda Riehl, a Financial Advisor for Merrill Lynch Wealth Management Group, spoke about the unique challenges to financial security that women face today. Women generally earn less than men, but live longer, which means their assets have to work harder for longer. This earning inequality puts women at a disadvantage

when planning for retirement because lower earnings mean lower contributions to retirement plans and therefore, less money for income at retirement. As longevity increases, the retirement years increase as well. The question then is: Will what you've saved support you throughout retirement? Another critical challenge for women is spending fewer years in the workforce. Women typically leave the workforce more often than men, and this can come at a financial cost.

Arisleyda identified concrete steps you can take to meet these challenges:

1. **Identify and prioritize your goals.**
2. **Develop a realistic budget.** Examine your spending habits. Ask yourself: What is my attitude toward savings and how does this attitude affect my spending patterns?
3. **Set aside some money as an "emergency reserve"** in case you lose your job, get sick, or have a large unexpected expense.
4. **Pay off your debts**, especially those debts from credit cards with high interest rates.
5. **Develop a savings strategy.** Make a commitment today to regularly invest some part of your income, no matter how little, into your long-term future.

For more information on financial planning, visit Arisleyda's [website](http://www.totalmerrill.com/TotalMerrill/system/ViewFAPage.aspx?pageurl=arisleida.riehl): <http://www.totalmerrill.com/TotalMerrill/system/ViewFAPage.aspx?pageurl=arisleida.riehl>

Plan now to attend the seminars in Year 2 of this series. Topics covered will be: Strategic Approach to Time Management (September 2011), You Can Achieve Work-Life Balance (November 2011), Winning Workplace Dress and Style (February 2012), and Create a Welcoming Apartment Look (April 2012). Final dates will be posted on our website soon.

Culture and Core Beliefs Series: Jennifer Bryson



Jennifer Bryson, Director of the Islam and Civil Society Program at the Witherspoon Institute, Princeton, NJ, will speak on "Islam: Basics and Beyond" at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, May 11, 2011 at Murray Hill Institute. In her talk, Dr. Bryson will give a basic introduction to Islam, including the key historical events, basic doctrines, and core values. She will include an overview of some of the trends in modern Islam, and the debates about interpretation and practice of Islam. This lecture is the 11th in MHI's popular Culture and Core Beliefs Series. For further details, including a downloadable flyer and information on reservations, visit the Murray Hill Institute's website at <http://murrayhillinstitute.org>.

Young Professional Activities

Marie Dulev spoke to the MHI Young Professional group on November 17, 2010, on "Eating for Beauty." Marie, a health coach, shared her holistic approach to wellness goals. She covered a wide range of issues that affect us each day. She stressed that everyone is unique and therefore, some diets may work for some but not others. It's important to listen to your body to see what is working and what is not. By noting patterns of cravings, we can learn to pre-empt them with healthier snack options. She recommended avoiding extra sugar and chemicals in foods and using all-natural beauty products.

The MHI Christmas Musicale, hosted by the MHI Young Professional group and now in its third year, has grown by leaps and bounds. On December 10, 2010, a group of nine professional and amateur musicians enjoyed sharing over an hour of solo and chamber music. The evening ended with Christmas carols and an informal reception.