

THE CLASSICAL ACADEMY EXISTS TO ASSIST PARENTS IN THEIR MISSION TO DEVELOP EXEMPLARY CITIZENS EQUIPPED WITH ANALYTICAL THINKING SKILLS, VIRTUOUS CHARACTER, AND A PASSION FOR LEARNING, ALL BUILT UPON A SOLID FOUNDATION OF KNOWLEDGE.

PALMARIUM

Largest Match Ever at \$60K

For the month of December any donations to TCA will be matched up to \$60,000 (our largest match ever). Please take advantage of this great opportunity to have your donation dollars doubled for this one month. Click here to donate today: Our Kids, Their Future, Our Challenge.



Brothers Karamazov & Pancakes

Senior teachers Michelle Hindman and Jeremy Reed make pancakes for the senior students on December 5th. The breakfast was a celebration of the completion of reading and writing about the 700-page novel *The Brothers Karamazov* in early December. Not only was the breakfast fun, but thematically appropriate. Dostoevsky acknowledges in the book that beauty and sorrow are often wrapped up together, that joy and pain co-exist in this experience of life which moves forward regardless of the trials and triumphs of test-taking. Even after the loss of a friend, the character Kolya remarks with wonder on the strangeness of “such sorrow and then pancakes after it!” (Dostoevsky 699).



Twenty Years



GRATITUDE

“None is more impoverished than the one who has no gratitude. Gratitude is a currency that we can mint for ourselves, and spend without fear of bankruptcy.” - Fred De Witt Van Amburgh. This month our Director of Student Support Services, plus a TCA parent and students, share some thoughts with us about *gratitude*.

The Editor



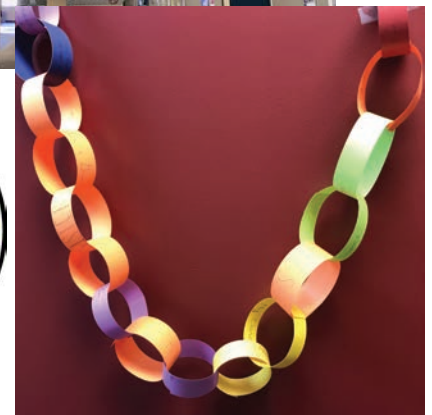


Core Values 101

The TCA Core Values document was the culmination of a two-year process involving a TCA board subcommittee comprised of board members and administration. The committee sought input from TCA's original founding board, past and present board members, and all of TCA's current administrative leadership (at the time). The document was adopted and approved in December 2010 by the TCA Board. The Core Values document was intended as a **compass and guide for keeping TCA on its originally intended course** in the present and future. As we approach 2018, we mark ten years since the Core Values process began and it will be the intent of this column, as we move into the new year, and continue our twenty year celebration, to touch on a key component of this important framing TCA document.

TCA Wellness Task Force Update

In early December, our high school Titan Teams watched a short student directed video introducing the **Sources of Strength** program and the Sources wheel. A student member from the Sources of Strength group then led each Titan Team in a *gratitude* exercise. The exercise consisted of students picking a colored strip of paper and writing something they were grateful for. The colored strips of paper corresponded with the different sections of the Sources of Strength wheel. *Family Support* = orange, *Positive Friends* = yellow, *Mentors* = green, *Healthy Activities* = blue, *Generosity* = grey, *Spirituality* = purple, *Medical Access* = light blue, *Mental Health* = red. The rings were linked and are on display in our high school hallway to remind our students and staff of those things we should be grateful for.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT:



On January 10 at 6:30 pm, in the North Gym, **Mike Donahue** from **Value Up** will be speaking to parents, building upon the message he has been sharing with our secondary students this year. His first assembly received rave reviews from our students. He'll be talking with them again in an assembly that same day. Please make plans to attend and hear his important message for parents.

**** Parent Event ****

Mike Donahue

VALUE UP

January 10 @ 6:30 pm

North Gym



Gratitude Turns What We Have Into Enough

by **Jenny Combs**, Director of Student Support Services

During the holidays, some people tend to focus their intentions toward the idea or concept of Gratitude more than during other times of the year. As I embarked on the journey of writing this article, I started reflecting on gratitude along my own path in life. I had to take an honest look at myself and my perceptions of the world around me. Over the course of a few weeks, I came to the difficult realization that I was not proud of. I found that my previously strong daily connection with gratitude had become less present in my way of thinking over the past few years. Life's challenges, frustrations or disappointments can often slowly chip away at a person's connection with this concept, and I was no different. I discovered that I had lost my connection that was once so strong and present in my life. Upon this self-reflection, I realized that I was grateful for the honest insight, and opportunity to rediscover my connection with Gratitude. I was given the opportunity to redefine my relationship with it.



Gratitude isn't that difficult when you're reminded about it daily, especially during the month of November. But what I have found is that over time, it becomes part of the fabric of who I am, and helps equip me to overcome life's daily challenges. Challenges as small as being stuck in traffic, to as large as any life changing event you can think of. A small shift in our mindset can often contribute toward building resiliency, and allows an individual to reframe a negative perspective or situation, into a more positive one. The silver lining in all situations, so to speak. This mindset used to come so naturally to me, and now, through writing this article, I was given the opportunity to find its connection in my daily life again. In a few short days of being intentional with finding the gratitude, or reframing some of my common everyday perceptions, I noticed a positive change in my mindset.



Dr. Robert Holden states that, "The miracle of gratitude is that it shifts your perception to such an extent that it changes the world you see." Gratitude allows an individual to be present and thankful in all things. As you choose to live in or focus your daily intention on Gratitude, you will notice a shift in your energy. You may even discover that the circumstances don't determine the quality of your life or career, rather your attitude does. Simply put: Gratitude goes a long way toward living a life filled with happiness and success, despite the challenges confronting you. Gratitude transforms jobs into joy, small everyday things into blessings, and turns what we have into enough. What a powerful message and a valuable life skill to infuse our children with! Everyday I get the opportunity to make an impact on impressionable young minds here at The Classical Academy, and as a mother. Through writing this article, I was given the opportunity to walk along my path in life with a deeper connection to Gratitude again. If I'm lucky, it might inspire others to discover, rediscover or redefine their own connection.

A Few Thoughts on Gratitude

Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it. *William Arthur Ward*

The deepest craving of human nature is the need to be appreciated. *William James*

Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom. *Marcel Proust*

Thankfulness is the beginning of gratitude. Gratitude is the completion of thankfulness. Thankfulness may consist merely of words. Gratitude is shown in acts. *Henri Frederic Amiel*

GRATITUDE AND GENEROSITY

by **Ginger Klein**, Project Reasons Board Member, **Cody Adair-College Pathways Junior**, and **Matt Doole-TCA North Junior**

Have you ever been a part of running a non-profit? If you have, you know from personal experience that gratitude is a friend-- a best friend, of the non-profit organization. We must thank, thank, thank and thank again, the people who give of their time and money to promoting and furthering the mission-- from board members, to donors, to people who give an encouraging word or lend their ear to our mission if only for a moment. Truly, generosity and gratitude are two sides of the same coin. Generosity is the outpouring of an inner spirit of gratitude. As quoted by the Dalai Lama, gratitude is "generosity of the heart" and quoted in the Bible, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It is because of gratitude for the gifts in life, gratitude for life itself, that a group of students from around this city spend countless hours pouring into the mission of eliminating silence and encouraging open dialogue about self-harm, suicide and mental health and wellness issues.

Project Reasons is a teen driven 501(c)(3) organization that partners teens and adults, mobilizing teens to be a driving force behind change in the teen culture. Culture change generally comes from within a culture itself (rather than from outside) and because of that, having teens be central to the change in their own peer group is most likely to be effective. Here is what Project Reasons' Student Board members had to say about why they spend their time sitting in a board room discussing the next event or speaking opportunity instead of doing something else on a Sunday evening:

"In order for the tides to change...teens have to be part of the solution. We mainly do this because we care about bringing a stop and a solution to these mental health issues in our community. Each one of us (on the Student Board) has been impacted in some shape or form by the loss of a dear friend or the constant battle of self-harm." – Cody Adair, TCA College Pathways Junior & Project Reasons Student Board Member.

"I wanted to do something, I wasn't sure what, but I wanted to do something, and when I heard about Project Reasons, I knew that was it. Project Reasons gave me a way to do something." – Matt Doole, TCA Junior & Project Reasons Student Board Member.

And do something they have! Since the inception of Project Reasons in February and the designation as a 501(c)(3) in August, Student Board members have participated in well over 20 separate events, meetings and community events.

Running a nonprofit with only a little amount of money and a limitless amount of unquenchable passion that refuses to be quieted, creates an energy that is contagious. A young sibling of one of our board members asked the question: "If it doesn't make you rich, why would you do it?" The answer to this question is that gratitude makes us do things that can't be explained in terms of a personal benefit. That same sibling has watched as the teen leaders of Project Reasons have met with governors, senators, superintendents, school board members, grant makers, and watched them receive support and donations from local businesses that are moved by this generosity of the heart, and who experience much gratitude themselves for a generation of young people that want to be at the center of an important movement to change a prevalent problem in the community.



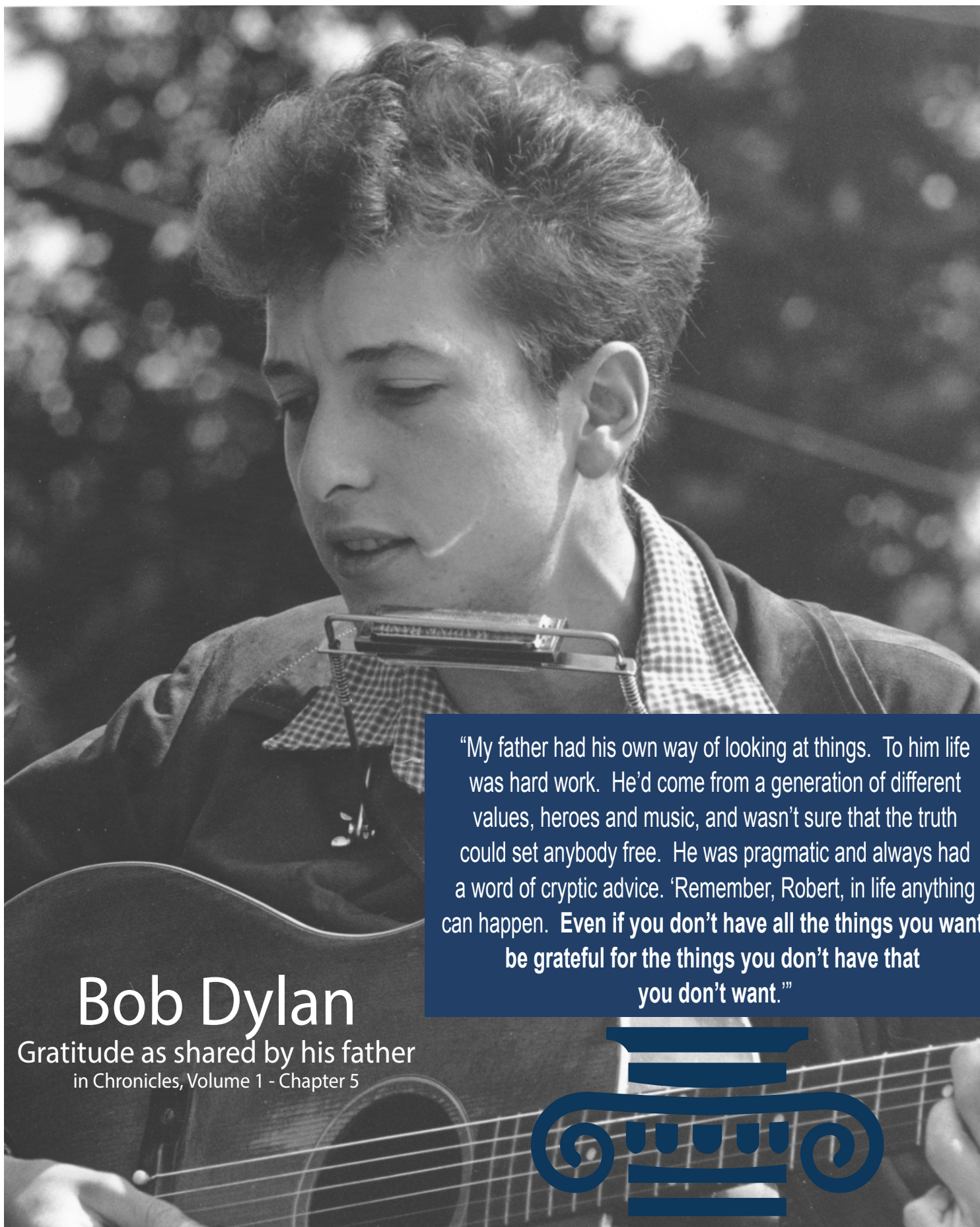
Help TCA continue moving forward in our 20th year. Please consider donating to our kids future.



Our Kids.
Their Future.
Our Challenge.

20 Years and Counting

Click on the image above to donate now!



Bob Dylan

Gratitude as shared by his father
in Chronicles, Volume 1 - Chapter 5

“My father had his own way of looking at things. To him life was hard work. He’d come from a generation of different values, heroes and music, and wasn’t sure that the truth could set anybody free. He was pragmatic and always had a word of cryptic advice. ‘Remember, Robert, in life anything can happen. **Even if you don’t have all the things you want, be grateful for the things you don’t have that you don’t want.**”

