

Nonstop Antioch Proposal to the Antioch College Alumni Board

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Compiled by Ad-Hoc Committee: Hassan Rahmanian, Beverly Rodgers, Chris Hill, and Susan Eklund-Leen, Nonstop Executive Collective; Chelsea Martens, Community Government; Carole Braun, Nonstop Staff; Jean Gregorek, Nonstop Faculty; Jeanne Kay, Nonstop Student.

Part One: Proposal

We request that the Antioch College Alumni Board collaborate with the Nonstop Liberal Arts Institution to further develop the following ideas with the intention of presenting them to the Antioch College Board of Trustees Pro Tempore as a proposal for the reintegration of Nonstop into Antioch College.

I. History and Rationale: Where We Are Now

In February 2008 Antiochians first began to seriously consider the idea of taking Antioch College into Exile if negotiations between the College Alumni and the University Board of Trustees did not yield an independent college. When the Alumni Board and College Revival Fund directors met over a weekend in early March, they developed a plan in conjunction with the College faculty to ensure that the soul of the College would remain in Yellow Springs even if the worst happened and the University proceeded to shutter the campus. By the end of that weekend, the College Revival Fund voted to commit major financial support to this plan and Antioch in Exile, also known as Nonstop Antioch, was born. Thanks to the dedication and hard work of the Alumni Association and the College Revival Fund, CRF President Ellen Borgersen's promise that "Antioch College will be open in Yellow Springs next year, no matter how the ongoing negotiations between the University Trustees and the Antioch College Continuation Corporation (ACCC) turn out," was brought to fruition.

A year later, Antioch in Exile, eventually renamed the Nonstop Liberal Arts Institute in response to a cease and desist letter from Antioch University, has succeeded in keeping the values and heritage of Antioch College alive in Yellow Springs. Now that the Board of Trustees Pro Tempore (BPT) is at last preparing to sign the Definitive Agreement to secure the independence of Antioch College, Nonstop is committed to working in collaboration with the Alumni Board to create a proposal for its reintegration into Antioch, in the best interests of the future college, and in accordance with the vision of the Board Pro Tempore.

II. Nonstop Next Year

This year Nonstop Antioch faculty and staff have launched and managed a 'start-up' educational initiative. Clearly Nonstop has faculty and staff who possess the expertise to perform the vital functions that must begin almost immediately if Antioch is to reopen in 2010, or even 2011. Nonstop currently employs 14 faculty (Full Time Equivalents) and several adjuncts.

Potential Faculty Contributions:

- Collaborating to Build Curriculum. The Antioch faculty has proved its flexibility by constructing numerous curricula and adapting to multiple curriculum changes in the past ten years. Their experience as well as their exceptional versatility can be a resource to the BPT. They can conduct faculty searches, collaborate with a president and new faculty to create curriculum and programs, organize conferences and colloquia, pursue Institutional Research, and use their professional development to further promote the College; in general, to assist in the restoration of Antioch to prominence in the world of higher education.

- Teaching Multigenerational Students. The Nonstop Antioch faculty can continue to offer courses, workshops, and summer institutes to traditional and non-traditional age students. These courses also serve as vehicles for recruitment.
- Re-engaging Co-Op employers. A strong Co-operative Education Program takes years of relationship building and resource cultivation. If Antioch College is to open in '10 or '11, it must begin to rebuild its Co-op program now. Nonstop faculty have the experience and connections necessary to fulfill this important mission.
- Recruitment and Admissions Functions. Prospective students will need to interact with counselors familiar with Antioch's values and history. Nonstop faculty can interface with these students, as well as communicating their inside knowledge of the college and its impact to the new professional admissions staff. Faculty could, moreover, be paired with students and counselors to travel to college fairs, high schools, alumni events, sites where home schooled students gain information, and places where prospective Antiochians congregate.
- Degree Completion Support. Returning students from the classes of 2010, 2011 and 2012 will need their faculty mentors to complete their senior projects and graduate. A student graduation--possibly during Reunion?-- would constitute a symbolic bridge from the Antioch alumni knew and loved to the new Antioch.
- Cultivating Increased Diversity. The faculty of Nonstop are positioned to reach out to people who have been underrepresented and underserved by the Antioch of recent years. One example would be the expansion of our existing Co-op relationship with Daybreak, an organization which provides housing and other services to homeless youth in the Dayton area. Faculty also have ties to migrant worker communities in New Carlisle and Dayton, and Antioch students have completed senior projects and co-ops with these groups. Short term projects have already been initiated by Community Government and former Antioch faculty with the local Historically Black Colleges Wilberforce and Central State—these collaborations could serve as a useful starting point.
- Outreach and Relationship Building. Nonstop faculty have developed courses, programming, and projects deliberately designed to build strong relationships in the Miami Valley and in the Village of Yellow Springs, and can continue to do so. Nonstop Presents!, our well-attended series of visiting academics, artists, and mediamakers (most of them Antioch College alumni) is but one example of successful outreach which has enriched the artistic and intellectual life of the area. We have also partnered with academics in town to offer a seven-part series of forums on the policies of the Obama administration. We are collaborating with local practitioners of sustainable agriculture and environmentally conscious food production. Relations between Antiochians and the Village of Yellow Springs have probably never been better.
- Grant Writing. Most grants require the demonstration of a successful track record. In creating a nonprofit start-up, the Nonstop faculty has established a valuable track record that can be used to secure grants in the coming year. Several faculty and staff have considerable experience with the grant writing and application process, as well as with the continuous administration of grants already awarded.

*Please see the Nonstop Institute Website for Faculty Biographies and Areas of Specialization
nonstopinstitute.org*

Potential Staff Contributions:

The Nonstop Institute employs 7 staff and 2 Community Managers; these staff members are professionals with many years of experience with Antioch College and have repeatedly proved themselves an exceptionally hardy, reliable, and resourceful group. Nonstop staff include several alumni of the College. Staff perform a wide range of vital tasks and services, including admissions, registrar, student services, housing, physical facilities, business office, press releases, events planning, and the development and installation of cutting-edge information systems and technology. From the first online inquiry through graduation and the maintaining of transcripts in perpetuity, the current staff of the Nonstop Institute are able to serve the needs of a typical student. Our staff have repeatedly proved that they can work with serious infrastructural and resource challenges. The presence of this highly experienced and well-trained staff would allow the new college to hit the ground running.

There are also former Antioch College staff who have remained in the area, a few of whom currently work for the University, at the Olive Kettering Library, at Antiochiana, at the University Registrar, in maintenance, etc. We would hope that when the College returns that some of these loyal Antiochians could be taken into account.

See Appendix for a full list of the many skill sets of our staff.

Potential Student Contributions:

The Nonstop student body is composed of returning Antioch students, first-year students, and people from the Village of Yellow Springs. Current students are a highly-motivated, highly-engaged, energetic and thoughtful group whose contributions to Nonstop have been invaluable.

Current students and many former Antioch students have expressed interest in being in Yellow Springs next year so as to be able to complete their degree when the college recovers its accreditation. Students have proposed that the 2009-2010 academic year be an opportunity for one or two Co-ops. Co-op jobs they have suggested include:

* Student recruitment. Responsible, high-quality students are invaluable for the recruiting of other high quality students. Student recruiters can travel nationally to college fairs, youth conferences and events, develop outreach materials, and maintain contact with prospective students.

•Fundraising. Students are eager to help the Institutional Advancement staff with the Phonathon, and with organizing Alumni Chapters events. They have been deployed in these ways in the recent past with great success.

* Networking. Students can initiate and cultivate outreach to a number of communities (local, on-line, etc) and network with student and youth groups. They can continue this year's work of collaborating with the Yellow Springs Youth Council for the purposes of recruitment and to contribute to the building a vibrant youth community in Yellow Springs. They can also continue partnerships which they have begun with local labor organizations and with nearby Central State University.

•Communications. Students hope to remain in close contact with alumni and to keep them informed through the *Record* (now on-line), the *Antiochian*, and various media arts and arts projects.

* Staff and Faculty Support. Students can serve as teaching and research assistants for faculty; and provide various kinds of administrative and technical assistance for staff. These could range from computer repair to answering phones to assisting with the daily operations of administrative offices work.

* Manual Work. Students have helped build and paint and maintain the Nonstop space at Millworks this year, and are interested in being trained to participate in the green rebuilding of the campus.

III. Recruiting for the New College

Activity on campus in the next year is crucial to a successful recruitment campaign. Prospective students and their parents need to see a lively and dynamic campus community in order to be attracted to the program offered by the revitalized Antioch College. This is our opportunity to showcase our curriculum in action. By enacting the 3 Cs of the Antioch curriculum--classroom, co-op, and community--we'll be able to engage prospectives with a living community. Current Nonstop Antioch students, as well as former Antioch students who have transferred, have expressed a strong interest in being on campus next year and are excited about the opportunities to join in the rebuilding of Antioch College.

If we are serious about diversifying the faculty, staff and student population of a new Antioch, we first have to make ourselves relevant to various underrepresented populations. We have to reach out to junior high and high schools, forge alliances, and cultivate partnerships with other institutions. We need to be able to offer concrete educational opportunities which appeal to these underserved populations and to demonstrate to people that they are important to Antioch beyond what they could bring in tuition or federal revenue. Achieving this goal calls for the united efforts of a faculty, staff, and students, and, as in the case of Co-op, it is important to begin strategizing on this front immediately.

IV. Nonstop as an Investment

Nonstop has proved a solid economic investment. Our original 12-month budget of \$2.1 million (projected net expenses = \$1.9 million), approved in July 08, sustained 23 FTE faculty and staff. However, our current projections revolve around \$1,438,000--nearly \$470,000 less than our original projections and \$150,000 less than our October projections. Sustaining the current faculty and staff an additional year, along with the infrastructure and facilities that we have developed, would require an estimated further investment of \$1.4 million. This could represent a quick return on investment through more expedient recruiting of an entering class and the possibility of re-opening the College sooner than previously planned.

The Antioch College Alumni Board, through its support for Nonstop Antioch, has played a critical role in pressuring the University to negotiate for the independence of the College, fighting to ensure that the heritage of Antioch would not be lost to future generations and demonstrating that Antiochians are not disposable. The next several months will determine the foundation of the new college. Close collaboration between Nonstop and the Alumni Board would be consistent with our shared mission and recent history, and would prove an invaluable asset for the Board Pro Tempore as they set out on their formidable task.

Part Two: The Logic of Nonstop Antioch

I. Nonstop Antioch: An Experiment in Strategic Localization

Central to our educational philosophy at Nonstop is the assumption that education is an inherently social mission. We have expanded Antioch College's form of community governance, abolishing administrative positions (now held collectively by four faculty), flattened pay scales, and foregrounded democratic participation. Our goal at Nonstop has always been "transformative education," an education in which students reflect critically upon their own learning, becoming aware of their own tacit assumptions and those of others, and move to act upon their new knowledge. An Antioch education is a catalyst for individual growth.

Our curricular innovations have come both from necessity (our classes meet in churches, coffee shops, the houses of Village residents) and from our deliberate attempt to apply the insights of recent movements for relocalization and bioregionalism to our educational project. This curricular and philosophic turn to the local has been inspired by larger concerns about environmental sustainability in the face of global climate change and resource depletion, and by the efforts of environmental and visioning groups in the Village of Yellow Springs. We consciously set out to design interdisciplinary courses, linked courses, workshops, speaker series, arts events, and joint projects aimed at meeting the needs and interests of members of the Village of all ages, as well as of traditional-aged students. Following the network-organization models of bioregionalist and 'slow food' movements, Nonstop seeks a more dialogical and sustainable relationship to land, place, and the surrounding local community. Instead of seeing itself as an isolated entity, Nonstop grounds itself in the existing resources of the Village of Yellow Springs. Like a rhizome spreading horizontally while firmly rooted in the earth, Nonstop stands for the seemingly paradoxical notion that the most fruitful re-creations and adaptations are those which draw upon existing memories, traditions, shared values, and a commitment to bottom-up processes.

Toni Murdock's plan to close Antioch College and open a new unit of the University in its place in 2012 would appear to be based on the higher education version of the strategy Naomi Klein's calls "neoliberal shock therapy." In Klein's analysis, drastic actions are deliberately taken to displace people, demoralize resistance, erase established traditions and patterns, and generally 'clean house' in order to rebuild a national or local economy from the top down and render it amenable to external penetration. In our own example, a standardized, sanitized "Antioch Yellow Springs" was to be superimposed on the former Antioch College; a more 'efficient' clone of the University's anti-labor, tenure-less, administrative-heavy model with little room for dissenting voices was to replace the College and its messy self-governance. Nonstop Antioch emerged as a quintessentially Antiochian invention and intervention, part bridge to the future, part resistance to the present. As a political movement it challenges the imposition of neoliberal economic assumptions on higher education. In recognition of the immediacy of this struggle, over a thousand scholars and academics, including Noam Chomsky, Gayatri Spivak and Fredric Jameson have signed a petition critical of Antioch University and supportive of Nonstop Antioch. The American Association of University Professors, the leading national organization defending academic freedom, is currently conducting an investigation of the University's closure of the College. As neoliberal economic policies and their accompanying managerial logics have been thrown into question by the recent economic crisis, the national mood has become more receptive to progressive ideas and the new Antioch will be particularly well-situated to be a model of innovative high quality liberal arts education. And Nonstop, following the best Antioch

tradition, is already at the forefront of this growing anti-corporatization movement.

Deriving strength from the local and the small in scale is a response to the standardization and homogeneity which accompanies the imposition of economies of scale as well as an attempt to use resources more wisely and collaboratively. Nonstop's nurturing of a relationship with the Yellow Springs community and its careful stewardship of the College in Exile stands as a marked contrast to the University's treatment of historic College assets-- particularly Antioch Hall, The Theater Building, and South Hall.

II. The Preservation of Antioch Values and Community

Antiochians have a 156-year history of cultivating core values that shape our beliefs, practices, and engagements. Such values--commitment to social justice, intellectual rigor and critical thought, democracy, cosmopolitanism, activism, community service, diverse learning environments, and a supportive learning atmosphere--define the community we strive to create. These values and beliefs, or our Antiochian culture, will not be maintained and further developed if we lose our community in this next year. Culture and tradition by definition cannot be created from scratch.

The academic year 2009-2010 will be absolutely crucial in the continuation and transmission of Antioch College's institutional memory, traditions, and governing practices and principles. The thoughtful institutions and traditions which Antiochians across generations have worked so hard to develop are clearly at risk: their preservation relies on those persons with direct experience and knowledge of this priceless heritage. The staff and faculty of Nonstop carry with them literally decades of experience with Antiochian traditions and values, while the students from the classes of 2010 to 2012 have consciously sustained Antioch's distinctive and vibrant student culture, which includes such legacies as Community Government, *The Record*, Independent Student Groups (IG's), and DIV.

Community Government and the elected managers of the community have played a key role in the last two years. A particularly significant example can be found in the leadership displayed during the '07 Reunion where past and current Community Managers spontaneously organized 600 alumni into focused committees aligned with the Alumni Board, facilitated constructive community meetings, and enabled the launching of an effective resistance movement. Recent CM's have modeled exemplary leadership, diplomacy, and community-organizing skill during this tumultuous period in the College's history and they are well-positioned to continue CG as the nexus of shared governance on campus.

The Nonstop Community as a whole has carried forward the legacy of shared governance during this past year in a way that continues to be recognizable to alumni. Administrative Council--long the central pillar of the College's governing structure--has existed as a predominantly oral tradition, without written bylaws, making the participation of our current community essential to the continuity of this core Antiochian practice. Nonstop's Adcil-in-Exile, or ExCil, has served as the placeholder for Adcil this year; within this structure for collaborative decision-making, policy is debated and recommended to the Executive Collective.

III. Nonstop Cost-Effectiveness and Return on Investment

Nonstop has been a responsible collaborator in sustaining and reviving the College. From our original 12-month budget of \$2.1 million (projected net expenses = \$1.9 million), approved in July 08 and representing currently 23 FTE faculty and staff, we have worked through a difficult year that has been marked by uncertainty regarding both the Task Force negotiations and CRF fundraising. In October we revised our budget to a 10-month budget with \$1,596,000 in expenses, and currently are coming in at around \$1,438,000, nearly \$470,000 less than our original projections and \$150,000 less than our October projections.

Substantial cost savings have been accomplished by securing equipment donations such as computers from Lexis Nexis and a server from an alum that runs open source programs for scalable email and phone services (these programs could be expanded to serve an entire campus). We were also successful in attracting over \$500,000 in less than one year of in-kind professional services from regional professionals, alumni, faculty and staff. Over the last 6 months we have worked closely with villagers on projects that range from the 58 Nonstop Presents! public events (with around 1200 attendees) to the development of the Millworks space with our landlords, respected and engaged Yellow Springs business people.

Among the number of front page stories and editorials that have covered and commented upon Nonstop is a letter from physician and alum Carl Hyde who described Nonstop as "Moses," and *Yellow Springs News* editor Diane Chiddister in a December 08 editorial wrote that, "Nonstop reminded us that the magic of learning has little to do with expensive buildings or high-tech equipment, and everything to do with dedicated teachers and passionate learners, engaged in exploration and critical inquiry...This Saturday...Nonstop is throwing a party to thank the community. But this tiny group of teachers and learners are the ones who deserve *our* thanks. Most of all, Nonstop enriched the village by inspiring us with their example of audacity, perseverance, and the glory of winning a victory for humanity."

As we proposed, we have kept Nonstop, a strategic educational initiative, in the regional news, carrying the important subtext of resistance to the University's closure of the College. In so doing, we have drawn upon not only our academic and institutional experience but also on our professional working lives with not-for-profits, businesses, and as consultants. Furthermore, we have established a valuable track record upon which to build new initiatives, local and national, that can be used to secure and administer grants in the coming year that would serve the ongoing agenda of an independent Antioch College, led by the BPT.

We presented this profile of Nonstop to the BPT recently, and stated at that time, as we have remarked repeatedly over the past year, that we look forward to working together closely with all of the other bodies working to revive the College—the BPT, the AB/CRF, many Yellow Springs villagers, as well as alumni across generations and current students—as the revival efforts continue.

It's clear that whether the BPT intends to re-open the College in 2010 or 2011, it will be cost effective and pragmatic to invest in our expertise, acknowledged accomplishments, and the human and physical resources that we have developed. We recommend annual funding, starting July 1, that would represent expenditures of \$1.4 million, in order to sustain the current faculty and staff along with infrastructure and facilities. At this point we anticipate a similar ratio between staffing and operational/programmatic expenses as with this year's Nonstop budget. However we have not broken out specific programmatic expenses as we do expect to work closely with the AB/CRF and BPT in planning specific activities, programs, and conferences for the next year. As we have stated many times over the

past year, we welcome collaborating with a BPT-appointed interim president and other academic and business consultants during this transitional period.

No matter when accreditation is established, the presence of a living educational project in Yellow Springs will directly support the recruitment of new students for an independent Antioch College. Clearly, accreditation is more attractive to students and parents, and enables students to receive loans that in turn support student housing and tuition income. A former budget manager at Antioch College pointed out that under normal circumstances, where Antioch College students paid on average \$18,000/year, 50 students delivered about \$1 million. Surely an ongoing educational initiative in YS with faculty working closely with staff and students over the available lead time—traditionally 18 months minimally, and much shorter if a 2010 opening is projected—could expect to deliver at least 50 students for the first incoming class. Of course other students might find their way to a renewed Antioch College through other channels. But if the \$1.3 million invested in a continuation of the Nonstop project could specifically be responsible for attracting 50 students, then those students would be expected to deliver \$1 million in tuition revenues in the first class, and, with a retention rate of 70%, another \$1.5 million over the following 2 years. Sustaining Nonstop faculty, staff and students to focus informational outreach and recruitment along with other transitional tasks would alone pay back the investment in the project after 2 years.

Nonstop has also built an inviting 4500 sq ft. office and meeting space in the Millworks complex ("Campus North"), one of the only large spaces available and zoned appropriately in YS. If the Antioch College campus was again accessible, Nonstop's presently decentralized campus could be expanded to include some of the buildings on campus (such as the former Coretta Scott King Center and nearby Units) with separate heating, requiring relatively little investment. Units could serve as classrooms, offices or dorms. Additional raw space in Millworks could be developed for other Antioch College functions while other former campus buildings are renovated.

IV. Beyond the Antioch Campus

Antioch College is most successful when it is integrated with the Yellow Springs, and Nonstop and its programs have certainly broadened and deepened this relationship. Recalling the spirit and inventiveness of Arthur Morgan, opportunities abound for further important future collaborations between the town and the College. A few possibilities include the installation of Village-wide fiber-optic cable to promote economic and entrepreneurial development and enable media self-sufficiency, an economical and environmentally safe power plant which powers both the College and the Village, shared organic gardens, shared art and theater facilities, affordable housing projects, service learning and Co-ops with Village organizations and many more.

V. Conclusion: Can't Stop/Don't Stop/Nonstop Antioch

It has often been noted during the past 18 months that Antioch University did not know who they were dealing with when they decided to close down Antioch College. The College Revival Fund charged Nonstop Antioch last March to "keep the legendary Antioch College alive and open in Yellow Springs, Ohio for the next academic year and beyond," and that is exactly what we have accomplished. First-year Nonstop student Rose Pelzl, a fifth-generation Antiochian, was quoted in the *Yellow Springs News* as saying: "I want to stress that people don't build a college in three months, but that's what we've been doing. I can't imagine another group of people able to pull this off." Antiochians are endlessly

creative, constructive, tenacious, and resourceful, and they take seriously the words of Dr King that "the arc of history is long, but that it bends towards justice." Against all odds we have made it this far. Our triumphant return to the Antioch campus after long exile will serve as a major source of inspiration and hope for incoming students, future faculty and staff, our alumni community, the Village of Yellow Springs, and progressive educators across the nation, and will stand as yet another indomitable Antiochian Victory--dare we say--for Humanity?

Appendix

List of Nonstop Staff Skills:

Administrative Support

Professional best practices, legal, liability knowledge in DOS and Registrar's office
Local legal, government and community ties
Executive and DOF support
Accounts payable and receivable
Travel and event scheduling
Management of employee records for retirement, health insurance, contract letter, searches
Notary public
Budget management in academic depts., DOS, Registrar, Library
Developing phone system
Developing information network, websites, email
Developing barcoding system
Maintaining audio-visual department
Computer repair
Supervising student and nonstudent workforces
Instructional support
Group processing
Office management

Admissions and Registration

Developing and maintaining all student databases
Calendars, crediting, course listing, regulations, enrollment data, veteran's certification, senior check and graduation in Registrar's office
Planning new student Orientation
Administration of scholarships

Student services

Researching and managing student health insurance and health information
Managing parent contact
Coordinating and administrating health and wellness information
Student health education
Coordinating and administering work study
Mediation and conflict management
Supervising and training resident assistants
Housing management

Communications and Outreach

Representing the institution to professional organizations in Student Services, health, business, village, labor and educational organizations

Writing, coordinating and distributing press releases and news
Updating websites
Grant writing
Video, photography, audio, filmmaking and editing
Using OhioLINK and Millennium in the Library
Library support
Ordering textbooks
Ordering art, media, and chemical supplies
'Green' building, carpentry, plumbing, painting, forklift operation