

Documentation of Notre Dame's involvement with summer internships of pro-abortion organizations.

Compiled by Bill Dempsey, Executive Director of Project Sycamore, the sole organization devoted to nourishing and preserving the Catholic identity of Notre Dame.

We are relieved to report that we are not alone in drawing unfriendly fire for calling attention to fault lines in Notre Dame's Catholic identity.

Herewith a somewhat agitated, shall we say, [unedited message](#) from a Notre Dame professor to [TFP Student Action](#) about its disclosure that a Notre Dame department has listed pro-abortion organizations as potential summer intern employers for students:

*back off, you monsters. I teach at the UNiversity of Notre Dame and we are a finer university than you know. Of course we announce internships to organizations like Center for American Progress
Emily's List
Feminist Majority Foundation
Human Rights Watch
Institute for Women's Policy Research
National Women's Law Center
Think Progress
United Nations Population Fund*

Why wouldn't we? These organization each and all do fabulous work. And this university is a university - it participates in all dialogue. That's what a good university does.

Back off -- you should be ashamed of yourselves, with your bullying "oral" tactics. Wake up. Do you think only Christians like you have a purchase on morality? Remember the Inquisition. Remember the Holocaust when your Pope refused to protect Jews and collaborated with the Nazi. Remember your priests who even today choose to fondle little boys with no choice in the matter. And the superior priests who moved them from one parish to the next... and kept their secrets.

Back off with your morality. You wouldn't know what it was iof it was poured over your head.

TFP charitably did not disclose the author's identity, and at their request we are following suit. She will have this bulletin and can comment if she chooses.

Judge the professor's fulminations for yourselves. Here are the facts:

Political Science Department Internships. TFP's disclosure, which exploded on the Internet and generated almost 11,000 signatures on a petition to Father Jenkins, initially represented that the Political Science Department was "offering" summer student internships to eight pro-abortion organizations.

We promptly urged the University to remove these organizations from the Department's website to prevent the problem from metastasizing. The University responded that the University was not "offering" these internships and that the list merely named organizations that had granted Notre Dame students internships in the past.

TFP subsequently struck "offering" and simply said that the Political Science Department "has live links to these organizations on its website" and that they "are listed under the title "summer internship opportunities."

In the response of the "Office of the President" to protests, the Office condemned TFP's initial "false claim" that the University "offered" these internships; asserted that Notre Dame "does not encourage students" to apply to the listed organizations; characterized the list as simply "a list of internships students have taken" in the past; and said that "no academic credit was given nor were university funds used" for these internships.

The University here meets mischaracterization with mischaracterization. While the University was of course right to object to the erroneous initial TFP allegation that Notre Dame was "offering" these internships, to suggest that this listing is but a harmless record of past events verges on the risible.

What, really, could be the reason for listing these organizations if not to direct students to them as possible employers?

But one need not speculate. The Department's website makes the purpose of the list quite clear. As we pointed out in our message to the Department Chairman, these organizations are listed under the heading "Summer Internship Opportunities," and the "How To Find a Summer Internship" guide specifically draws attention to this list of potential employers..

We add that, even if one could somehow imagine that the list is intended merely as an historical report, the implication respecting the Catholic identity of the University would be little better. How pro-life is a university that insists on spreading the word that its students have been in the service of pro-abortion organizations? If Notre Dame students had served internships with the Ku Klux Klan or the American Nazi Party, would this have been dutifully publicized?

Gender Relations Program internships. Then came an even more disturbing

[revelation](#) by Catholic blogger Kathy Schiffer.

As Ms. Schiffer discovered, Notre Dame's Gender Studies Program at Notre Dame *has* funded internships to pro-abortion, pro-gay marriage, and pro-embryonic research organizations. They are described in some detail in [a report](#) by the Cardinal Newman Society.

It suffices here to note that a [2008 grant](#) went to a student interning with the notoriously pro-abortion [National Organization for Women \(NOW\)](#). NOW describes itself as the "largest organization of women feminists" in the country and lists "championing abortion rights" as a top priority.

The University's reaction. These disclosures and protests and, we hope, our communications had some effect, though it is impossible to tell whether in the end any significant improvement will result.

In brief, one organization, Emily's List, was removed from the list, a study will be made and a policy established for internship matters, and [a disclaimer](#) was attached to the list. ("Listing here does not constitute an endorsement of the mission of [sic] agenda of these organizations.")

While these actions are welcome, they fall well short of remedying the current problem and they trigger concern respecting the outcome of the study.

The list is still headed "Summer Internship Opportunities" and students are still directed to the list in the "How to Find a Summer Internship" section. And the fact that only Emily's List was removed is both troubling and perplexing.

We are told that Emily's List was removed because it is a single-purpose organization. If that is to be the criterion, the emerging policy will be a bane rather than a boon, for it will license a host of organizations hostile to Catholic teaching.

One need merely look at some of the organizations that remain on the list. They are every bit as objectionable Emily's List.

- Consider the Feminist Majority Foundation ("FMF"), an especially pernicious organization because of its focus on students. It [is dedicated](#) to promoting "abortion, contraception, and family planning, including Medicaid funding and access for minors" (as well as "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights)."
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- And to advance that program, FMF "[started the Campus Program](#) to inform young feminists about the very real threats to abortion access, women's rights, affirmative action, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights posed by

right wing extremists.”

Arguably even worse is the [National Women’s Law Center](#) because of its anti-Catholic agenda. One of its [principal goals](#) is “to ensure that women have access to abortion care by protecting and advancing this fundamental right.”

In pursuit of that goal, [the organization assails](#) the Church’s *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services* and Catholic doctors and hospitals for following it. They thereby deny pregnant women, the Center asserts, “a range of reproductive health services including surgical sterilization, family planning, infertility treatment and abortion.” More, of current interest [the Center supports the Obama contraceptive mandate for religiously affiliated institutions](#) such as Notre Dame.

There might be legitimate questions as to one or another of the remaining organizations, but the extent of the University’s tolerance is to be tested by the most, not the least, objectionable that it is willing to list.

And the reason for not delisting is unfathomable, at least for us. There is no issue of academic freedom, the organizations have not asked to be listed, Notre Dame owes them nothing, and the students are free to take internships wherever they wish.

There is nothing at stake, that is, except Notre Dame’s reputation as a Catholic university, which has suffered another blow.

A word about the Political Science Department. Our criticism should not be taken as directed to the department, a solid academic unit that has significant strength in terms of Catholic identity. We have no reason to believe that the matter was committed to faculty vote and believe it is not of the sort that ordinarily would be.

Indeed, the department deserves high praise for bringing to Notre Dame next year from Georgetown an outstanding Catholic Scholar, Dr. Patrick Deneen, the founder and director of Georgetown’s splendid [Toqueville Forum](#). As his arresting [open statement](#) explaining his decision shows, the move will be a serious loss to Georgetown and a major gain for Notre Dame.

On the other hand, we do not suppose the chairman acted on his own. Both Fr. Jenkins and Provost Burish received copies of our letter to the chairman and doubtless were familiar with the matter from many other sources. In addition, since the prospective policy evidently will govern all Arts & Letters departments, Dean McGreevy was probably involved. In short, the disposition of the matter can, we believe, properly be assigned to the university.

Let us hope that this works out well in the end.

Notes:

The Deneen statement: Read the [Deneen statement](#) and take heart. In part: “Notre Dame has recruited me explicitly because they regard me as someone who can be a significant contributor to its mission and identity, particularly the Catholic identity of the institution. . . . It has been a hard and disappointing conclusion to acknowledge that my work at Georgetown was more appreciated and supported by the leadership and a broader swath of faculty in the Notre Dame community than by that of Georgetown.”

Komen and Notre Dame: Several years ago we spotlighted the basketball team’s fund-raising for the Komen fund and Komen’s support of Planned Parenthood. So far as we can tell, the team shifted to a different beneficiary the next year.

But Komen is not so easily shaken at Notre Dame. Despite Komen’s recent notorious divorce from and shotgun remarriage to Planned Parenthood, the [University is advertising](#) the lacrosse team’s April 28 fundraiser for Komen and is inviting donations. (With a different voice, the Center for Ethics and Culture [lamented](#) Komen’s spiritless retreat.)