

Princeton Tower Club

Report to the Princeton Prospect Foundation

November 12th, 2015



Education

Tower actively supports intellectual life at Princeton, both by providing a clean and well-maintained space for studying and by offering the clubhouse as a venue for academic gatherings. The Woodrow Wilson School continues to hold precepts in the building—this semester, Tower is hosting three precepts for the department. To best accommodate these classes, our Woodbridge Precept Room has just been renovated; we have added a new set of chairs as a new table which better fits the room such that the instructor can more easily use the blackboard.

Our membership currently includes 3 SHARE peers, including Colleen O’Gorman ’17—SHARE’s President—and Marie Siliciano—SHARE’s Vice President for External Development. In the spirit of its emphasis on sexual harassment awareness, Tower will also be requiring its current officers, Bicker Committee, and (when they are elected in February) new officers to attend SHARE training. We welcomed 15 new members to the club this fall, bringing us to 229 members overall.

Tower will continue its roundtable program allowing members to meet important figures on campus and discuss various issues with them over dinner in our Precept Room. The club’s Roundtable Coordinators, Richard Peay ’17 and Naman Jain ’17, scheduled a lineup of speakers, including Marc Fleurbaey and Jonathan Hafetz—the latter a major lawyer working on torture cases involving Guantanamo Bay, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia.

Civic Engagement and Community Service

Tower furthers its civic engagement mission by making itself available as a building and space available for the use of Princeton’s student groups. A variety of campus groups have already reserved rooms within the building for organizational meetings, including Princeton Faith in Action, All-Nighter with Eliot Linton, Mock Trial, and Orange Key. Tower members also have the opportunity to reserve the Woodbridge Precept Room for study groups when there are no precepts or meetings taking place, an opportunity of which the membership takes avid advantage near midterms and final exams—during this past midterm cycle we had study groups for WWS/MAE 353, MED 227, and COS 451.

In addition, Tower’s community service chair, Romie Desroge ’17, has greatly increased intra-club visibility of the Street’s CSICC projects. We had higher participation from the membership in TruckFest than we’ve had at least the past two years, and the Princetoween donation project garnered donations from the majority of our membership. Looking forward, Tower will partner with a Trenton soup kitchen later this semester to cook, deliver, and serve a full meal to struggling families. The membership will “give up” a meal so that the kitchen can re-allocate its funds and time to cooking this meal, and then a small group of members will transport the food to the soup kitchen and serve it.

Sustainability

In order to discourage wasteful behaviors, Tower has been following a policy of eliminating the availability of to-go containers. Members and guests who want to take their food with them must ask for tinfoil, and Tower's officer corps has found that this policy has significantly decreased waste associated with meals. Tower also has a successful initiative to recycle food waste, putting out a bin for every meal to collect excess food. The waste is then transported to a farm where it is repurposed as food for pigs.

Furthermore, Tower's current Sustainability Chair, Jeffrey Liebenhaut '16, has begun several initiatives to decrease food waste. To call membership attention to the amount of food left uneaten after each meal, Jeff has begun a system of weighing the food waste containers. After several weeks tracking this information, Jeff plans to share this data with the club through email and in the form of charts and graphs posted near the containers. Additionally, the Officer Corps is partnering with Jeff's project to offer a social benefit to the membership if they achieve a set goal for minimal food waste.

Looking forward, our Sustainability Chair is partnering with our Activities Chair to look into "green gear"—waste substitutes such as washable coffee cups and water bottles that Tower members can use instead of paper or plastic ones. The Officer Corps is also in conversation with our kitchen staff about whether we can offer a washing station for these re-usable cups, because a quick poll of our membership revealed the major reason students may not buy such gear is because they feel they will not keep them sanitary through regular washing.

Structurally, Tower has recently opened a new addition featuring energy efficient windows and lights that can be individually controlled to save energy and reduce use. The addition also has an air-conditioning system that is independent from the rest of the club to allow it to stay cool without losing air to non-ventilated areas of the club. Tower continues to install LED bulbs throughout the club as well as new dimmers to keep up to date with the most recent technological advances. Finally, our bathrooms and certain study rooms feature motion-sensor bulbs, such that the room is only lit when a person enters and automatically shuts off when the room is empty.

Technology

Tower's Technology Chairs, Henry Lu '16 and Ryan O'Shay '16, have made significant breakthroughs in the club's technological capacity, including the successful installation and maintenance of a Cluster Printer in the club. They are also maintaining a feature on the club's website that provides scheduling information for the various rooms in the club, making it easier for members to see how the club is being utilized and reserve various facilities. The Technology Chairs have been working tirelessly with the University to try to improve Tower's spotty access to puwireless, the quality of which has declined even further this fall to the dismay of all of us on the Street.

Finally, Tower's Technology Chairs have created an online matching game in which new members' pictures are presented and the player must select the correct name from a multiple-choice list. This game is engineered so that members can get to know each others' names and faces quickly, encouraging club cohesion as we incorporate the sophomores into the membership. The Technology will continue a further adaptation of the game with all members instead of only new members, so that new members can also learn the names of the rest.