

September 23, 2006

Fellow Board Members,

To begin, it is for this reason that I supported a different individual for the chair position of the Ohlone College Board of Trustees this past November. I write this letter for two reasons: 1) to address a wrong committed against the president of the college, Dr. Doug Treadway, and 2) to address the standards of conduct for board members. I take both issues very seriously. Additionally, after all this time has passed, I find it wrong that the board has to work on an apology for his behavior. I have yet to see a written apology from Mr. Brunton.

After contacting the college and confirming that in fact Dr. Treadway's contract was never discussed, I then realized what was going on. It was just another opportunity for Mr. Brunton to overtly discredit the president of the college and in doing so, cast a cloud over the college and its image. This continued unhealthy behavior is absolutely unacceptable!

After reviewing the meeting on-line, I find it interesting to note that Dr. Treadway had to stand up for himself, his family, and his career. Not one of the board members stood up for Dr. Treadway in how he was treated by Mr. Brunton in the press, which was essentially an unprovoked attack. The tone of Mr. Brunton's responses in the entire article demonstrates that his choice of words was in fact intended. As a three-term member of the board of trustees, and having undergone several contract negotiations each year, there is no doubt that he knew better and knew the message that he was trying to send. He knew the connotation and implication in his choice of words. Again, not one board member stood up for Dr. Treadway. Wow!

Regardless of whether two individuals at times maintain opposing opinions, the public expects that as public officials, whether elected or appointed, we act responsibly and professionally. In all my dealings with Dr. Treadway, he has always treated each board member professionally and with due respect, to include Mr. Brunton. Mr. Brunton's most recent slight against President Doug Treadway is just the latest in a series of public statements and innuendos directed towards the President. It is apparent that whatever professional difference Mr. Brunton has with the president, he has made this personal and seized the opportunity to take a cheap shot against the president.

Of all the times that Mr. Brunton has caused controversy through public misstatements, the college is yet to hear a sincere apology, without excuses, explanations, or caveats, for either his actions or the damage caused as a result of his actions. The following are some of his unethical actions that have gone unanswered:

- Initiated a non-existent Sex for Grades controversy to capture headlines, without thinking of the consequences (his apology was not an apology). Crossed the line.
- Made light of the Ohlone Indians by remarking that we should put casinos on the Ohlone College land to generate revenue. Crossed the line.

- By trying to bring his personal business into a delegation from China, then referring to foreign exchange activities as “junkets”. This was after approving the strategic goals, which includes expanding the international education program. Crossed the line.
- By asking for the personal home addresses for the faculty senate in an overt attempt to discredit their opinion since some may have made their homes outside of the voting district. Crossed the line.

As public officials, we are charged with ensuring public agencies are held accountable, but we must also be held accountable for our own actions. It is not about “getting away with it” or “no one said I couldn’t”, it is about being above board.

As public officials, we serve not only the public, but we are charged with serving the students, faculty and staff. If we do not, then we are not serving the public. We must ensure that our human capital remains strong. Yes, the Board of Trustees must also serve the public servants that do their job so well. As leaders, our job is not to berate the employees, but to help create a healthy environment for them to work. Yes, that’s our job, and we do this through the president of the college.

Fellow board members, we all unanimously selected Dr. Treadway to lead the Ohlone College District. By the turn-out of the staff and the volume of emails that I have received, I have no doubt that he has re-invigorated this college campus and has served the students well. Enrollment is up and we can see progress around the campus. If you ask almost anyone on campus whether we made the right decision three years ago, I’m sure they will tell you yes. It is too late to stand up for him because the time has passed, but we still need take appropriate action and defend an individual being bullied rather than remaining politically safe.

I ask that Mr. Brunton take at least one honorable action and voluntarily step down as board chair of the Board of Trustees. If not, I ask the rest of the board of trustees to admonish Mr. Brunton and remove him as board chair.

Garrett Yee

Post Script: I realize that my position in itself, and the way I have attempted to make my point, may cause you to disagree with me. However, to date, no action has been taken by the board to apologize to Dr. Treadway. A letter to the editor is not an apology to the individual wronged. Some of you may think that technically no “legal” wrong may have been committed, but we all know better. If this happened to you, we might view it differently.