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June 9, 2009

Direct Phone: (310) 825-2284
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Email: ablum@conet.ucla.edu**VIA FACSIMILE (916) 932-2851**Heather Gebelin Hacker, Esq.
Litigation Staff Counsel
ADF Center for Academic Freedom
101 Parkshore Drive, Suite 100
Folsom, CA 95630Re: Your June 5, 2009 Letter to Chancellor Block and June 8, 2009 Letter to
Chair Banerjee

Dear Ms. Hacker,

Chancellor Block has requested that I respond to your letters. As Vice Chancellor Reed already advised you, your client, Christina Popa, will have her original statement read as part of the "Words of Wisdom" commencement program of the Department of Molecular Cell and Developmental Biology.

The reading of "Words of Wisdom" at the Department of Molecular Cell Development and Biology involves graduating students' submission of a short message to be read onstage at Commencement by a member of the University Administration. Because the reading is by the University, not the students, the department wanted to ensure that that it did not appear that the University was advocating one religion over the other.

The Department and the University support the First Amendment and in no way intended to impinge upon any students' rights. Thus, when Ms. Popa raised the issue -- and before the University even received your letter -- the department changed its position and agreed to allow Ms. Popa to read her statement as originally submitted. The Department will continue its efforts to make clear that all of the statements read are the personal statements of each student.

Heather Gebelin Hacker, Esq.
June 9, 2009
Page 2 of 2

I trust that this resolves this matter. Thank you.

Sincerely,



L. Amy Blum, Esq.
Senior Campus Counsel

cc: Chancellor Block
Chair Banerjee
Vice Chancellor Reed