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# 'Affirmative-action bake sale' restored

## But college officials call parody 'inexcusably hurtful,' 'abusive'

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A student group at the College of William & Mary fought successfully for restoration of their "affirmative-action bake sale," a satirical event designed to show harmful effects of race-based admission policies.

Around the nation, a number of similar protests by conservative campus groups have been shut down after raising the ire of school officials and some students. At Southern Methodist University in Dallas, for example, a bake sale was shut down after the Young Conservatives of Texas posted a sign saying white males had to pay \$1 for a cookie. White women, on the other hand, were charged 75 cents. It was 50 cents for Hispanics and 25 cents for blacks.

A June ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court said universities can use race as a factor in admissions under limited conditions. In Texas, a 1996 lower-court decision had banned universities using race as a

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**Page 2 News**

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factor.

The Sons of Liberty group at William & Mary said it was public exposure and pressure from a group called the [Foundation for Individual Rights in Education](#), or FIRE, that caused officials to reverse their position after shutting down the the Nov. 8 event.

"We are pleased that W&M has realized that under the First Amendment free speech belongs to all students on its campus," said Greg Lukianoff, FIRE's director of legal and public advocacy. "We are appalled, however, by W&M's continuing efforts to distort the truth about its actions and to evade responsibility for what it has done."

William & Mary allowed the group's bake sale to proceed without incident Jan. 27, but school President Timothy J. Sullivan issued a statement denying his administration acted improperly when it halted the event in November.

Sullivan denounced the bake sale as "inexcusably hurtful" and "abusive," insisting the Sons of Liberty's fall event "did not meet the administrative requirements we routinely impose on such activities."

Sons of Liberty claimed this statement came as a surprise to them after having sought an explanation from officials for nearly three months.

The group insists it had heard no mention of any violation of "administrative requirements."

"They couldn't answer our questions because they couldn't come up with a reason that wasn't unconstitutional," said Sons of Liberty President Will Coggin.

FIRE's Lukianoff said, "One can hardly imagine such tactics being used to shut down a protest that administrators found more to their liking politically."

Organizers of the bake sales say they are intended

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only to spark debate, not raise money.

Last week's sale at William & Mary prompted supporters of affirmative action to organize a counter-protest and engage the Sons of Liberty in a debate.

"As is so often the case, administrators need to learn the basics of living in a free society from their students," said Lukianoff.

Lukianoff said FIRE began a nationwide campaign of public exposure Dec. 12 after suppression of protests at Southern Methodist, the University of Washington, Northwestern University and the University of California at Irvine.



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