



Foundation for Individual Rights in Education

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January 7, 2010

Richard F. Celeste
Office of the President
14 E. Cache La Poudre Street
Armstrong Hall
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903

Re: “The Monthly Bag” case and FIRE’s Red Alert list

Dear President Celeste:

I am writing to draw your attention to the full-page advertisement that FIRE ran in the most recent “America’s Best Colleges” issue of *U.S. News & World Report*. The advertisement appears on page 89, immediately adjacent to the rankings of the top 100 national universities, in the same position our advertisement appeared last year. We have enclosed a copy of the issue for your information. FIRE plans to continue its advertisements in *U.S. News* each year to bring attention to the colleges and universities that make up our “Red Alert” list. The increased traffic the advertisement brings to FIRE’s website, thefire.org, as well as the negative attention it draws to Colorado College’s public image, make it all the more disappointing that FIRE must include Colorado College among the “worst of the worst” for protecting campus liberty for a second straight year.

FIRE takes no pleasure in keeping Colorado College on its Red Alert list. As an organization that prides itself on its ability to quickly resolve disputes, we find it especially disappointing that Colorado College has continued to stand by its unjust actions and willingly imperil the free expression of its students. FIRE is no less determined, however, to continue to expose and fight abuses of liberty on America’s campuses and at Red Alert institutions most of all.

As we have said repeatedly in our letters to Colorado College as well as in numerous press releases and entries on FIRE’s blog, *The Torch*, all that Colorado College needs to do to ensure its removal from FIRE’s Red Alert list is to bring justice in the case of the two students found guilty of sexually related “violence” for their publication of the satirical flyer “The Monthly Bag.” While it is too late to reverse the damage done by placing disciplinary letters in the now-graduated students’ files, it is not too late for Colorado College to reverse their false and chilling convictions and live up to its stated commitments to free speech. Such a degradation of free expression and

academic freedom cannot be allowed to stand, and FIRE will continue to publicly call on Colorado College to remedy this wrong until it does so.

Taking this step will cost Colorado College nothing and will only save the college from the further embarrassment of having to publicly defend its indefensible disregard of student rights. Colorado College has both a moral and a legal obligation to protect these rights, and it is past time that the college lived up to them.

I would, of course, be happy to speak with you personally about this matter. You may reach me at 215-717-3473 or at robert@thefire.org. Thank you for your attention to this crucial issue. I sincerely hope that FIRE will not be sending this letter in another year's time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert L. Shibley". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Robert L. Shibley
Vice President

Encl.

cc:

Jane Turnis, Director of Communications

Steven Elder, Vice President for Advancement