

Arkansas State University
OPEN LETTER TO THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY
October 25, 2010

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Dear Colleagues:

Recently, some questions were raised on campus about my participation as a member of the Board of Trustees for the American College of Education (ACE) and related matters regarding my relationship with Higher Education Holdings, LLC (HEH) and Academic Partnerships, LLC (AP). In association with my unwavering commitment to shared governance and transparency, I believe that is important for me to share my answers to all of the questions posed to me about this matter with the entire campus community. Accordingly, I offer the following.

I felt honored to be asked to become a member of the Board of Trustees for the American College of Education, which is regionally accredited by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC), located in Chicago, Illinois, and owned by HEH. Distinguished members of this Board include: Dr. Mike Moses (former Commissioner of Education for the State of Texas); Dr. Don Mc Adams, President, Center for the Reform of School Systems, Houston Texas; Admiral Thomas B. Hayward, USN retired, former Chief of Naval Operations and Member of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff; Dr. Rod Paige, former U.S. Secretary of Education, U.S. Department of Education; Dr. Robert Peterkin, Francis Keppel Senior Lecturer on Education Policy and Administration and Director of the Urban Superintendents Program at Harvard University; Dr. Walter Bumphus, President/CEO, National Community Colleges Association; Dr. Glan Mario Besana, Associate Vice President for Academic Technology and Distance Learning, DePaul University; and Dr. Deborah M. Jewell-Sherman, Director, Harvard University, Graduate School of Education. Prior to accepting this invitation to become an ACE Board member, I sought and obtained the approval of the ASU Chancellor who granted approval with the understanding that I would follow my standard and unvarying practice of accepting board memberships and consultancies only on a voluntary basis with no compensation whatsoever (except for reimbursement of expenses), and that the amount of time that I would invest in this endeavor would not interfere with fulfilling my primary duties and obligations at ASU.

With the aforementioned in mind and in accordance with my agreement with the Chancellor, I accepted the invitation to submit my name and credentials to the ACE Board for its consideration and received a unanimous vote approving me as a new member in February 2010. The ACE Board meets regularly 4 times per year (twice in person and twice by telephone conference call for approximately 3-4 hours). Unquestionably, I have learned a great deal interacting with other ACE Board members and ACE staff with regards to matters including issues related to accreditation, marketing academic programs, assessment and evaluation of academic programs, improving student retention and graduation rates, continuous quality improvement, effective use of technology, and cutting edge approaches to education and training. Clearly, I am indebted to my colleagues on the ACE Board and the ACE leadership team for

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this learning opportunity and I have called upon this knowledge to perform more effectively at ASU. My intention and hope was that I would be able to contribute positively to ACE Board deliberations, policy formulation, fiduciary oversight, and other related matters to provide some value added benefit for the confidence that they placed in me when I was selected as an ACE Board member. I have not received any compensation of any sort for my participation as an ACE Board member (except for reimbursement of properly receipted travel expenses).

With regards to my relationship with HEH and AP, it relates exclusively to fulfilling my duties and obligations at ASU in association with the License and Distribution Agreement (as amended) between HEH (originally)/AP (through the amendment) and ASU approved by the Board of Trustees for Arkansas State University and the associated Memorandum of Understanding for the Collaborative Delivery of Academic Courses and Associate Degree Programs and Associated Academic Services between Arkansas State University-Jonesboro and Arkansas State University-Mountain Home. I have never sought, been offered, or received any compensation (salary, bonus, stipend, annuity, stock option, payment for the number of students enrolled, or other such benefit) whatsoever from either HEH or AP, and hold no stock or financial position in either corporation.

Although I have gained personally and professionally by participating on the ACE Board of Trustees and I am convinced that ASU has benefitted from the lessons I have learned and applied in my position and the positive exposure that the institution receives with highly influential individuals by my serving on this board, I have decided to submit my resignation as an ACE Board of Trustees member because of concerns expressed that this could be perceived as a conflict of interest because of ASU's business relationship with ACE and HEH/AP. I do so willingly and without pressure, and I hope that any remote perception of conflict of interest or conflict of commitment that could be attributed to me with regards to ACE, AP, or HEH will be eliminated.

I am optimistic that this Open Letter to the Campus Community addresses fully all of the questions posed and shows that I have acted in a professional manner and in good faith. Thank you so very much for your understanding and support.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Daniel Howard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

G. Daniel Howard, Ph.D.
Interim Chancellor