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JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, April 13, 2012

Departments of Justice and Education Reach Agreement with the University of California, San Diego to Resolve Harassment Allegations

The Departments of Justice and Education reached a settlement agreement with the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), to resolve an investigation into complaints of racial harassment against African-American students on campus. Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 each prohibit harassment based on race.

The complaints alleged multiple incidents of racial harassment on campus, including public displays of nooses and a Ku Klux Klan-style hood, and the hosting of an off-campus party where students were invited to dress as stereotypes of African-Americans. After conducting an extensive investigation into the alleged incidents, and following the receipt of additional complaints of racial discrimination and harassment on campus, the Departments of Justice and Education worked collaboratively with the university to address concerns regarding racial hostility on campus.

UCSD voluntarily entered into a resolution agreement with the departments. Under the terms of the resolution agreement, UCSD will take steps to prevent racial harassment on campus, respond appropriately to harassment that occurs, and eliminate any hostile environment resulting from harassment. The university has agreed to revise its campus policies and procedures related to racial harassment to ensure they are consistent with federal civil rights laws; maintain an Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination to receive, investigate, and resolve complaints of harassment and discrimination; and provide mandatory trainings for staff and students on the university's anti-discrimination policies and procedures. The university also voluntarily initiated a number of additional programs to address campus climate issues, and the departments will monitor the implementation of those programs to evaluate their impact on resolving the departments' concerns.

"Students have a right to seek and obtain an education without facing racial harassment. UCSD, like all colleges and universities, has an obligation to make clear that racial discrimination and harassment on campus will not be tolerated, and this agreement is a significant step in the right direction," said Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "We commend the university for working with us to address this matter, and we recognize the importance of this agreement in the context of larger efforts by the UC system to create supportive and inclusive learning environments for students. We look forward to working with UCSD as it implements the measures and programs called for in the agreement."

"We salute UCSD for taking these steps and we hope the entire school community learns from this experience and works together to overcome ignorance and intolerance," said Russlynn Ali, Assistant Secretary for the Education Department's Office for Civil Rights. "America is a country that has always celebrated its diversity. Nowhere is that more important than in our classrooms and schools – at every level – from the earliest grades to our colleges and universities. The Department of Education and the Department of Justice will continue to work cooperatively with UCSD to ensure that all students are safe from harassment and discrimination."

The enforcement of Title IV and Title VI are top priorities of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. Additional information about the Civil Rights Division is available on its website at www.justice.gov/crt. Enforcement of Title VI is also a top priority of Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Additional information about the Office for Civil Rights is available on its website at www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html.

12-471

Civil Rights Division



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