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Student claims CCAC stifled conceal-carry advocacy on campus

School says it has no intention of limiting political discussions

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By Bill Schackner, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

A Community College of Allegheny County student today publicly accused the school of trying to stop her from organizing a group advocating the right to carry concealed firearms on campus.

Christine "Christa" Brashier, 24, of Squirrel Hill, who is studying to be an elementary school teacher, said she feels unsafe on the school's Allegheny campus and would like the right to carry a gun while on school property.

In a phone interview and in statements by an advocacy group that is representing her, Ms. Brashier today said she was trying to organize a CCAC chapter of the national group, Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, when she was summoned to a meeting April 24 with student development staff.

She said she was told her efforts amounted to "soliciting," was ordered to destroy fliers she had created and warned she risked sanctions if she pursued the matter further on campus without the administration's okay.

"I think I'm being deprived of a great many things," she said in a phone interview. "Clearly my right to free speech is being infringed upon."

David Hoovler, a spokesman for CCAC, declined to respond to her specific allegations, saying the issues raised by the student and the Philadelphia-based Foundation for Individual Rights in Education are under review by the college and the Allegheny County solicitor.

"Pending the full response, two brief points may be mentioned," the school said in a statement. "First, the student who was advocating creation of the group has never faced any disciplinary action from CCAC and remains in good standing at the college."

The statement said the student is welcome to follow appropriate CCAC procedures to seek recognition of the proposed group. "CCAC does not have any intention to limit the student's involvement in the group or her ability to discuss her own political viewpoint."

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