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# College GOP Group Derecognized for Anti-PC Stunt

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(CNSNews.com) - The student senate at a Rhode Island college has drawn fire for disbanding the school's Republican group after the group refused to apologize for a satirical stunt designed to highlight political correctness on American campuses.

The College Republicans at the University of Rhode Island (URI) established a satirical scholarship to ridicule the notion of scholarships based on race, gender or nationality.

It offered a \$100 grant to a student who was white, heterosexual, American and male.

In the application, applicants were asked, "In 100 words or less, what does being a white heterosexual American male mean to you? As a white heterosexual American male, what adversities have you had to deal with and overcome?"

**If you had Spider-Man's powers, what would you do?**

- Keep it a secret       Fight crime  
 I'm not sure

Unamused, the senate's Student Organizations Advisory and Review Committee (SOARC) accused the group of breaking the school's anti-discrimination bylaws.

The committee then prohibited the group from awarding its "scholarship" and demanded that it publish an apology in the school paper. University officials and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) criticized the attempt to force an apology.

URI President Robert Carothers informed members of the senate that they overstepped their powers, but despite his admonition SOARC voted Monday to derecognize the College Republicans for failure to comply.

"We're clearly upset... there will no longer be a voice on campus to challenge the leftist status quo that has become the commonplace," URI College Republicans President Ryan Bilodeau told Cybercast News Service.

"The [university] president agrees with us, and the First Amendment confirms that any punishment given to us which compels speech upon us is unconstitutional," he said.

"Nonetheless, the rogue student senate SOARC committee has decided to go against both President Carothers and the First Amendment in first telling us we need to apologize ... and most recently in derecognizing us," he added.

Bilodeau said the scholarship was meant to be a political statement on "the absurdity in giving scholarships on the basis of the color of one's skin, sexual preference, etc."

He said he found it ironic that when he ran into Carothers after the decision was made, he found the school president was on his way to a Black Scholars Award Night.

"[This] summarizes and symbolizes everything that is wrong with the American university. When conservatives try to come to the table of the free marketplace of ideas, it comes at a heavy price," Bilodeau said.

"The mandatory apology is an attempt to force the College Republicans to publicly deny beliefs that they hold deeply - a clear violation of the College Republicans' First Amendment Rights," said Tara Sweeney of FIRE.

"The student senate seems unwilling to recognize any authority higher than its own, and that presents a real problem not only for the College Republicans, but for any student organization over which the committee wields control," she told Cybercast News Service.

FIRE is now calling on Carothers to overturn the decision, saying in a letter to the university president that "URI administrators have a legal duty to step in where the student senate has failed and to check its attempt to trample upon students' most basic freedom of conscience."

The president of the student senate, the chair of SOARC, and Carothers did not respond to multiple invitations to comment on Wednesday and Thursday.

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