

LAWSUIT: Martinez v. Darris

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According to the lawsuit, filed Oct. 11 in Clackamas County Circuit Court, it all started in 2009 when Martinez and Darris were part of the faculty bargaining team for CCC. In December, Dean Darris was not present at the bargaining team meeting. The suits states that Martinez was overheard talking about her lack of confidence in Darris to "refrain from speaking out during the negotiations." That information was then relayed to Darris himself, and at the next bargaining meeting Darris requested to talk about Martinez's comment. Martinez did not want to go into further detail since it was her personal opinion.

Darris has had a colorful past with the college. He reported the college for violating the election laws for the May bond election. He also had a physical confrontation with a student in February of 2008.

From January 2010 Martinez claims that both Darrises began making oral and written false and defamatory accusations against her.

According to the lawsuit, the Darrises made Martinez's personal opinions public, "casting them in a false light intended to portray her statements as malicious, false and defamatory attacks on Darris personally and professionally."

The suit states that the Darrises sent emails to people claiming that Martinez had made a violent, vicious, and malicious attack on Darris defaming his personal character and professional reputation and intentionally causing him emotional stress and duress. They also claim that Martinez "conducted a smear campaign against Marshall Dean Darris in her capacity as a counselor by telling students that Darris was unprofessional, homophobic, a bigot and a pedophile seducing his young female students."

Emails then followed from Tara Darris to faculty, administration, students and then republished to the school and the community. The emails claimed that since Martinez is a Mexican-American US citizen, she has "gotten by as a diversity hire her entire life," she has been playing the victim card as an "oppressed" Latino woman, "that just because she uses a fake accent when she says 'Latino' does not make her ethnic." The lawsuit continues to say that "she is a psychopath and incapable of shame; that many working class students have been defrauded by being advised to take her 'stupid' classes; that she is a pseudo intellectual Latino, and that she is a liar."

Martinez also claims that Dean Darris enlisted fellow faculty members, students in his classes and veterans that he counseled asking them to support him by speaking in his favor, and by sending emails, and letters to faculty, administrators, students and Martinez.

It continues to say that they knew that Martinez would be subjected to severe emotional distress or that such distress was substantially certain to result from their conduct. Martinez continues to claim that they were successful by dam-

aging her reputation. She states that she suffered severe physical and emotional distress including loss of hair, humiliation, stress, depression, unproductivity at work and fear of people who could be incited to violence by the defendants' "false and misleading statements about her."

When asked about the lawsuit Martinez stated to contact her lawyer and that she was advised to not talk about it.

When her lawyer, Tait, was contacted, he would not send over the evidence of emails.

"This is pending litigation and I don't feel comfortable to talk to anybody at this stage," he said. "There has been enough damage by what things that have been published about this matter already."

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... we believe it is baseless, frivolous, and an outrage against American jurisprudence and the courts of law of Oregon ."

Tara Darris
Defendant in lawsuit

When asked at what stage the lawsuit is in, he said, "They (Darrises) have yet to make an appearance," Tait stated.

When asked about the lawsuit the Darrises stated in a email, "We have no comment on it, other than that we believe it is baseless, frivolous, and an outrage against American jurisprudence and the courts of law of Oregon. In fact, it is our contention that this lawsuit was a strategic lawsuit to financially exhaust us so that we could not afford to seek legal remedy for what we believe to be civil rights violations committed against Dr. Darris by agents of CCC."

In response, Courtney Wilton, vice president of college services, said, "That is absolutely not correct. We have no involvement in this whatsoever."

He continued to say, "It is not fair for the college (for Darris) to make statements like that when it is absolutely not true."

When asked what the college tried to do to resolve the issue between Martinez and Darris, Wilton said he was unable to go into detail since it is a personnel issue.

"It's frustrating and I would love to give you everything but I can't." When asked how he thought the lawsuit makes the college look he said, "I don't see it having a big impact on our image; I see it as a lawsuit. It is not against the college; it's a lawsuit between two individuals. I really don't see us really being involved in this."

Tait said he expects the lawsuit to be closed in a year.

College gets a lump of Cole

By Nora Goodman
The Clackamas Print

The idea of transferring transcripts from one college to another is often simple but in the case of Brandon Earl Cole, a former student at Clackamas Community College, this was not a simple transaction. Cole filed a lawsuit against CCC on Dec. 29 in the amount of \$10,000 at Clackamas County Circuit Court in Oregon City. Cole's claim is that CCC willingly violated the college academic policy by not transferring his "C" average or better grades to Portland Community College.

According to Kandie Start, an enrollment services specialist with the admissions and records department at CCC, there is a simple process. The process is done by mail and usually takes 72 business hours from the date the request was received. The transcript may be delayed if the student's transcript is incomplete or there is a "hold" on the amount due to unmet obligations such as outstanding balance owing, fines or

lost books to the college. Otherwise college courses usually transfer easily.

College courses usually transfer as one of three types of credits: elective credits, general education credits or major field of study credits. When a student is ready to have their classes and credits transferred to a four year school or a different community college, he needs to request an official transcript to be sent to the college or university they will be attending.

Courtney Wilton, vice president of college services is confused about the case.

"We simply don't understand the reason for Brandon's small claims action. I've called him twice. Each time I spoke to him directly and each time he promised to call me back. He never did. The college has denied his claim and requested a hearing," stated Wilton in an email.

Wilton will represent CCC since the case will appear in small claims court, which doesn't require an attorney. The case should go to court within 30 days.

Cole declined to comment.



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