

Please forward to the Phi Theta Kappa Board of Directors, with the exception of Dr. Rod Risley

From: Toni Marek [REDACTED]

To: Cindy, Susan, Jennifer, Monika:

I have emailed you all because I do not have the email addresses for Kip Johnson, Dr. George Boggs, Dan Bailey, or Dr. Walter Bumphus.

I have attached a letter that I would like forwarded to those members of the Board, minus Dr. Rod Risley, as this matter pertains to him.

I request that this email and the attached letter be kept confidential and only to be read and seen by yourself, Kip Johnson, Dr. George Boggs, Dan Bailey, and Dr. Walter Bumphus.

I would like to keep this matter as private and confidential as possible.

Thank you,

Toni Marek
[REDACTED]

Attached letter is below:

April 2, 2014

To the Board of Directors, Jennifer Stanford, Monika Byrd, and Susan Edwards,

I am writing to you all because as of today, my requests for information regarding my suspension and subsequent forced resignation from the International Officer Team have gone without reply from Rod Risley, Susan Edwards, Monika Byrd, Jennifer Stanford, and the International Officer Team.

I have requested multiple times, via email and phone calls, for definitive answers be given to the question: Why was I suspended on January 11, 2014 and forced to resign during a meeting with Rod Risley and Deidra Daws?

I was told by the Chairman of the Board, Kip Johnson, Susan Edwards, and Jennifer Stanford that only Rod knew the reasons why I was suspended. The only response I have gotten is a cease and desist letter from the law firm that represents Phi Theta Kappa, and even my reply to that letter went unanswered.

During the meeting in which I was suspended, Rod Risley told me that if I couldn't understand the scope of what was happening to me, that I needed to seek mental assistance. I asked to call my advisor, because I was completely blindsided by the meeting and forced resignation. I was told that I could not speak with my advisor, or anyone for that matter, as the decision had been made.

The next day, after I was home, I called Debbra Esparza, the Texas Regional Coordinator, to seek some sort of explanation for the whirlwind of confusion that I was in. She spoke with me and was completely shocked at the news. After a very long phone call, she asked me if there was anything that had

happened between Rod and I that would have caused something as severe as being blindsided and fired. She reassured me that I was in a safe place and I could be completely honest.

I trusted Debra, and after she reassured me that I could be honest with her, I was. I told her that in May 2013, at an orientation in Jackson, MS for the International Officer Team, Rod Risley touched my body in a very inappropriate and sexual matter. She was silent and then thanked me for being honest.

The night before I was suspended, the entire International Officer Team had dinner with Mia Ramos, Rod Risley, and his wife. During this dinner, I happened to get seated next to Rod. During this dinner, Rod again touched me in a very inappropriate and sexual manner multiple times.

I have chosen to write you all and tell you about this incident because it is the only reason I have as to why I was suddenly, without any previous warning or reprimand, suspended and given no reason as to why. After the incident in May, I turned to Rod Risley and in a firm voice, told him “no.” He smiled at me and nodded. During the incident that happened the night before I was suspended, I moved away from Rod Risley and eventually excused myself from the table 3-4 times to get away from the inappropriate rubbing and touching he was doing to me. Both of these times, I was fearful of not only making these incidents known, but fearful of the power that Rod Risley could have had over the rest of my academic journey.

You are the Board of Directors and employees that have high ranking and overarching responsibilities to Phi Theta Kappa, its mission, and the students that encompass this organization.

I have filed a formal complaint with the EEOC, as I was never made aware of a formal process within Phi Theta Kappa. At least one member of the International Officer Team has admitted to witnessing these events and I informed an advisor of the event in May 2013, when it happened.

In the best interest of the students and the mission of Phi Theta Kappa, I ask that you investigate these claims internally and privately. I beg you to take a close look at inappropriate conduct surrounding Rod Risley, because during my time as an International Officer, I was made aware (by a now former staff member) of similar incidents with other students and Rod Risley. I do know that my experiences have shown a complete disregard for the privacy of my body and an absolute abuse of power by Rod Risley.

I will also forward any information or documentation that I receive from the investigation that the EEOC is conducting. I have chosen to keep this matter private, as I believe that Phi Theta Kappa is an amazing organization for students, alumni, and the others who serve its mission. I request that this matter be kept within the confines of only the people that this letter was addressed to and kept private and confidential.

Sincerely,

Toni Marek

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]