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Emily Balzer - Candidate for Membership in the OSUMB

As everyone knows, it's been a very difficult week for the OSU band program. I have yet to make a personal statement in the heat of events, and I believe I have finally found the words I've been searching for. Tonight I experienced what it was like to truly be involved in the Ohio State Marching Band's program. As we fell in for Sloopy, around 100 alumni were there cheering, singing, and clapping with all of the sweaty, worn-out participants at tonight's session. Yes, we were worn out, but if you think that had any influence on how hard we push to perform Hang On Sloopy, you are terribly mistaken. You see, when you are a part of something as strong as the Ohio State Marching Band, no matter how bad you feel, how scared, sick, exhausted you may be, you drive through it. You focus on striving towards a perfect arc on Sloopy with parallel legs and crescendos in the correct places. And tonight, as we finished, and I screamed "Yeah!" with my horn out proud showing off how hard we just worked, I didn't feel my shoulders throbbing or my arm aching. I stood there, staring straight forward at all of the alumni going crazy for the song they love to hear. I stood there, a part of something more powerful than I will ever be able to fathom. I stood there, a proud candidate trying out for The Best Damn Band In The Land.

The pride and excitement continued through 3 ramps and POPSICLES (THANK YOU TBS!!) along with a good "O-H, I-O OHIO!" with the alumni assisting us, of course.

And just when I thought it was all over, when I was walking back to my section, a familiar melody rang through the air triggering a goosebumps sensation down my arms. I stopped everything and turned to see those 100 people, arm in arm, swaying to Carmen Ohio. The 5 people around me wrapped their arms around me and swayed with me. I don't know their history, I don't know where they're from, but we are all a part of music and The Ohio State University. At that very moment I realized what it means to be a member of an organization as powerful as The Ohio State University Marching Band.

I would like to thank all of the alumni, especially Stephanie Renae and those of E and R rows who brought us candy and cookies! And I want to thank all of the fantastic Vets, Rookies, and Squad Leaders for being the most amazing group of people I have ever met. You are my heroes.
So, to President Drake and all those appalled at what appeared in the report, this is who we are. This is why we do what we do. We are regular people holding regular jobs all over the country. We are parents. We are outstanding members of our community. Most of all, we are TBDBITL, and we are PROUD to be.

Welcome to Ohio State. Hope you enjoy your stay.

Sorry for the long post. WB!
President Drake,

First, let me say no director in the history of the OSUMB has had a more positive impact on the Ohio State University and its marching band than Jon Waters. Second, any marching band, as-a-rule, is a tight-knit group with traditions and beliefs that transcend political correctness. The idea that one man can change these is absurd. What is disturbing is so-called scholars can’t see this fact. The next director will have the same challenges and will not be capable of changing it over night. Will you fire him/her too? ...and the next?

I am taken aback when I read the accounts of the previous few weeks. I am also surprised at your lack of thorough investigation when it comes to an employee of this magnitude!?

I realize you have placed yourself in a difficult position that makes backing down difficult for you. You are not weak for doing what is right. You are only weak for defending that which is unjust! Being wrong is not a bad thing... Many before you have made mistakes.... The good news is you can still fix this mistake! (There will come a time when you are stuck with this mistake and it will haunt you for the rest of your tenure. Too many of these kinds of mistakes and your tenure will be short-lived.) It is not easy to be a leader, and this is the time for you to fight the good fight!

Please do the right thing and reinstate the best candidate for the job as director of the Best damn band in the Land!

Thank you,

Greg Belle
864-787-3977
Mr. Belle,

Thank you for sharing your concerns. At The Ohio State University, we take the responsibility of ensuring the safety and well-being of our students, and other members of the university community, very seriously. The marching band is part of an academic unit, and its leadership and students must adhere to the standards we expect.

After receiving a series of complaints, including specifically one about the environment of the marching band, the university thoroughly reviewed and assessed the situation before taking action. We remain in full support of the band and in building a culture and environment where all members of our community can thrive. Furthermore, we are committed to maintaining what makes the band great—its passion, music and innovation.

For more information, please visit http://www.osu.edu/bandculture.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

Michael V. Drake, MD
President

From: Greg Belle [mailto:gc belle@ charter.net]
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2014 11:28 AM
To: President Michael V. Drake
Subject: Jon Waters
Darryll R. Bauchert to the Ohio State Board of Trustees

August 2, 2014
Jeffrey Wadsworth, Chair
Board of Trustees
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
Attention: Secretary for the Board of Trustees
210 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, Ohio 43210

RE: Firing of OSUMB Director Jon Waters.

Dear Mr. Wadsworth:

Please allow me to begin by acknowledging that you are receiving a huge amount of mail due to this most unfortunate situation. Given that, I will attempt to be as brief as possible, but still try to get my points across, hopefully promoting a compete and full re-evaluation of the situation, which should lead to a totally different end result.

I first attended The Ohio State University during the Fall Quarter of 1969, immediately following my graduation from Brookhaven High School in Columbus. All of my family were lifelong Columbus residents, most born and raised there. I entered that quarter as a music education major, following my total ambition at that point in my life. This is important because, as a music major then, I was discouraged by the School of Music, from trying-out for the Marching Band; music is your only priority and you should avoid such distractions, I was told.

For a number of reasons, money and indecision being primary, I decided I could not continue to attend Ohio State. Please remember, the Vietnam Conflict was in full force during that time. Following my completion of that quarter and to assist my financial ability to attend OSU later under the GI Bill, I decided to join the military. I considered two branches – Air Force and Marine Corps. The Marine Corps was “on my list” for two basic reasons, 1. My dad had served in the USMC and 2. They had a very respectable Marine Music program. Long story short, I enlisted for a four-year term in the United States Marine Corps. Thankfully, I did not get sent to Vietnam, but did, eventually, end-up in the Marine Corps Music Program, attaining the rank of E-5 Sergeant (granted meritoriously during my fourth year) before my Honorable Discharge from active duty on December 11, 1973. I then returned to Ohio State to continue my studies in music education.

I graduated from Ohio State with a BA in General Administration Winter Quarter 1976, in the same class as Archie Griffin. Along the way I had made a decision that I was better suited for a career in Human Resources than music. But something else had happened along the way which, somewhat like my service in the United States Marine
Corps, had a major, life-changing effect on me – I tried out and made, on the first attempt, the Best Damn Band in the Land, The Ohio State University Marching Band. As somewhat of an aside, I believe I was the first person who ever tried out and made The Band on what we call "Effer", Eb cornet. This is an instrument usually reserved for senior trumpet players who had somewhat of a "gift" playing in the upper range. I had that from my Marine Band experience. Why is this significant in this situation?

I came to TBDBITL generally older and, perhaps, more mature from my military experience than the normal "rookie" coming to the band. Did I still participate in, what some have termed, "sophomoric behavior". Yes I did. It was fun. It was participating in harmless pranks, song singing, behavior that was fun but DID NOT pose any threats or bodily or mental harm to anyone. Here I was a 23 year old, Marine Veteran, married with one child, being able to have a great time and performing music at an extremely high level, on par with what we did in the Marine Corps, perhaps even higher in some ways. Were some of those things probably unacceptable by today's standards of always being "politically correct"? Probably so. Through it all we performed together, played together and carried on traditions together, but all and always in the highest regard for our beloved The Ohio State University. It was honor. It was our pride. Much like what I learned and carry with me today as a proud veteran of the United States Marine Corps, The Best Damn Band in the Land and a graduate of THE Ohio State University.

This brings me to the disgusting situation at hand. In my opinion, a decision was made by someone who does not really understand Ohio State, had only three weeks on the job, was hired by a Board who, also in my opinion, did not fully vet the candidate based on what we have now seen. He made a decision based on a report which, at best, is flawed at its most basic levels and contains unfounded and misguided information, perhaps to serve one's own purpose. There is at least one of my marching band colleagues who has done a much better job of analyzing the report from a technical and legal standpoint than I. Based on what that person and others have said concerning the report, I totally believe their analysis and conclusions; it all makes perfect sense to me. At best, the report is not good science.

I can tell you, based on my specific area of expertise in Human Resources Management (I hold an MBA from the University of Toledo in this area and a Lifetime Accreditation as a Senior Professional In Human Resources) the method and consideration Dr. Drake gave to this decision was totally inconsistent with appropriate management practices.

I promised I would try to be brief and I know I am not doing a very good job of that, but I cannot complete this without interjecting one other opinion I have, which I believe has merit for consideration. This opinion deals with the current Athletic Director, Gene Smith. I know Archie gets mad at me every time I bring this up, especially on social media, but I must state what I truly believe. In my opinion, this situation can be shown to mirror, in many aspects, the same situation which occurred in the Coach Jim Tressel situation. Coach Tressel was, in my judgment, made a scapegoat for Mr. Smith's lack
of supervision and appropriate management behavior, like this situation, the 
unwarranted termination of Jon Waters. Please consider who directly supervises the 
Office of Compliance – AD Smith. But he “skates” (sorry for the Marine term, yet totally 
appropriate here), while others have their careers and family lives destroyed. Then we 
get a guy from outside of Ohio, making this “game changing” decision very early in his 
tenure. I might also point out here that I have heard on more than one occasion that Mr. 
Smith is not a fan of the Marching Band and that he even made the statement, “We 
need to get more skin on the field”. Sexism? From the Athletic Director of the 
prestigious The Ohio State University? I say there’s much investigation still to be done. 
Not with Jon Waters, who was actually trying to do something about the questionable 
things, but others. Please see the attached document, marked as “EXHIBIT 1”, which I 
believe written by Mr. Waters in an attempt to show how he WAS trying to change 
things, and was “mysteriously” deleted from the report. Obviously not just a convenient 
omission!

Before I end, I must make something perfectly clear: Jon Waters is my friend. My wife 
and I had the pleasure of spending significant time with Jon and his wife, Molly, while 
traveling with the TBDBITL Alumni Club in England several years ago. He is one of the 
most decent, family-oriented, innovative and professional people I have ever met. It is 
important that you know I say these things working closely with judges, attorneys, 
mental health professionals, fellow mediators, financial professionals and other 
professionals on a DAILY basis. I knew Jon was “all Ohio State” years before he 
became Director, while he served as Assistant Director under Dr. Jon Woods and 
basically wrote and directed the marching portions of the TBDBITL Reunions. I knew 
then we could not stand to ever lose Jon Waters from Ohio State. Not only was he 
totally committed to us, he knew what he was doing and he WAS, and still is, Ohio 
State. We can’t stand to lose him now either.

During his brief tenure as Director, Jon Waters has taken, not only OSUMB, but music 
and marching band education to new, unbelievable heights. This has, without a doubt, 
brought more prestige and funding to Ohio State. But you already surely know that. 
Accordingly, you MUST do the right thing, however difficult it may be.

I sincerely apologize for not upholding to my promise of brevity. I am most hopeful you 
understand. I totally support the reinstatement of Jonathan Waters as Director of 
The Ohio State University Marching Band, retroactively, with back pay and 
benefits, and an official apology being released by the president of Ohio State. 
The Marching Band deserves this, the TBDBITL alumni deserve this, the alumni of Ohio 
State deserve this, but mostly Jon Waters and his family deserves this.

I formally request confirmation that you have received this correspondence and that I 
receive a specific, not canned, response from you. I appreciate, in advance, your 
attention to this matter.

Respectfully submitted,
Darryll R. Bauchert, Sr., MBA, CFP®, CDFA™
President
Certified Family, Civil Circuit, Dependency & Appellate Mediator in Florida

Encls.

xc: David Axelrod, Esq.
August 2, 2014

Dr. Michael Drake
President
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
205 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, OH 43210

RE: Firing of OSUMB Director Jon Waters.

Dear Dr. Drake;

Please allow me to begin by acknowledging that you are receiving a huge amount of mail due to this most unfortunate situation. Given that, I will attempt to be as brief as possible, but still try to get my points across, hopefully promoting a complete and full re-evaluation of the situation, which should lead to a totally different end result.

I first attended The Ohio State University during the Fall Quarter of 1969, immediately following my graduation from Brookhaven High School in Columbus. All of my family were lifelong Columbus residents, most born and raised there. I entered that quarter as a music education major, following my total ambition at that point in my life. This is important because, as a music major then, I was discouraged by the School of Music, from trying-out for the Marching Band; music is your only priority and you should avoid such distractions, I was told.

For a number of reasons, money and indecision being primary, I decided I could not continue to attend Ohio State. Please remember, the Vietnam Conflict was in full force during that time. Following my completion of that quarter and to assist in my financial ability to attend OSU later under the GI Bill, I decided to join the military. I considered two branches – Air Force and Marine Corps. The Marine Corps was “on my list” for two basic reasons, 1. My dad had served in the USMC and 2. They had a very respectable Marine Music program. Long story short, I enlisted for a four-year term in the United States Marine Corps. Thankfully, I did not get sent to Vietnam, but did, eventually, end-up in the Marine Corps Music Program, attaining the rank of E-5 Sergeant (granted meritoriously during my fourth year) before my Honorable Discharge from active duty on December 11, 1973. I then returned to Ohio State to continue my studies in music education.

Dr. Michael Drake
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I graduated from Ohio State with a BA in General Administration Winter Quarter 1976, in the same class as Archie Griffin. Along the way I had made a decision that I was better suited for a career in Human Resources than music. But something else had happened along the way which, somewhat like my service in the United States Marine Corps, had a major, life-changing effect on me – I tried out and made, on my first attempt, the Best Damn Band in the Land, The Ohio State University Marching Band. As somewhat of an aside, I believe I was the first person who ever tried out and made The Band on what we call “Effy”, Eb cornet. This is an instrument
usually reserved for senior trumpet players who had somewhat of a "gift" playing in the upper range. I had that from my Marine Band experience. Why is this significant in this situation?

I came to TBDBITL generally older and, perhaps, more mature from my military experience than the normal "rookie" coming to the band. Did I still participate in, what some have termed, "sophomoric behavior"? Yes I did. It was fun. It was participating in harmless pranks, song singing, behavior that was fun but DID NOT pose any threats or bodily or mental harm to anyone. Here I was a 23 year old, Marine Veteran, married with one child, being able to have a great time and performing music at an extremely high level, on par with what we did in the Marine Corps, perhaps even higher in some ways. Were some of those things probably unacceptable by today’s standards of always being “politically correct”? Probably so. Through it all we performed together, played together and carried on traditions together, but all and always in the highest regard for our beloved The Ohio State University. It was honor. It was our pride. Much like what I learned and carry with me today as a proud veteran of the United States Marine Corps, The Best Damn Band in the Land and a graduate of THE Ohio State University.

This brings me to the disgusting situation at hand. In my opinion, a decision was made based on a report which, at best, is flawed at its most basic levels and contains unfounded and misguided information. There is at least one of my marching band colleagues who has done a much better job of analyzing the report from a technical and legal standpoint than I. Based on what that person and others have said concerning the report, I totally believe their analysis and conclusions; it all makes perfect sense to me. At best, the report is not good science.

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Dr. Michael Drake
August 2, 2014
page 3

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behavior, like this situation, the unwarranted termination of Jon Waters. Please consider who directly supervises the Office of Compliance – AD Smith. But he “skates” (sorry for the Marine term, yet totally appropriate here), while others have their careers and family lives destroyed. I might also point out here that I have heard on more than one occasion that Mr. Smith is not a fan of the Marching Band and that he even made the statement, “We need to get more skin on the field”. Sexism? From the Athletic Director of the prestigious The Ohio State University? I say there’s much investigation still to be done. Not with Jon Waters, who was actually trying to do something about questionable things, but others. Please see the attached document, marked as “EXHIBIT 1”, which I believe was written by Mr. Waters in an attempt to show how he WAS trying to change things, but was “mysteriously” deleted from the report. Obviously not just a convenient omission!

Before I end, I must make something perfectly clear: Jon Waters is my friend. My wife and I had the pleasure of spending significant time with Jon and his wife, Molly, while traveling with the TBDBITL Alumni Club in England several years ago. He is one of the most decent, family-oriented, innovative and professional people I have ever met. It is important that you know I say these things working closely with judges, attorneys, mental health professionals, fellow mediators, financial professionals and other professionals on a DAILY basis. I knew Jon was “all Ohio State” years before he became Director, while he served as Assistant Director under Dr. Jon Woods and basically wrote and directed the marching portions of the TBDBITL Reunions. I knew then we could not stand to ever lose Jon Waters from Ohio State. Not only was he totally committed to us, he knew what he was doing and he WAS, and still is, Ohio State. We can’t stand to lose him now either.

During his brief tenure as Director, Jon Waters has taken, not only OSUMB, but music and marching band education to new, unbelievable heights. This has, without a doubt, brought more prestige and funding to Ohio State. But you already surely know that. Accordingly, you MUST do the right thing, however difficult it may be.

I sincerely apologize for not upholding to my promise of brevity. I am most hopeful you understand. I totally support the reinstatement of Jonathan Waters as Director of The Ohio State University Marching Band, retroactively, with back pay and benefits, and an official apology being released by the president of Ohio State. The Marching Band deserves this, the TBDBITL alumni deserve this, the alumni of Ohio State deserve this, but mostly Jon Waters and his family deserves this.

Dr. Michael Drake
August 2, 2014
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I formally request confirmation that you have received this correspondence and that I receive a specific, not canned, response from you. I appreciate, in advance, your attention to this matter.

Respectfully submitted,
Darryll R. Bauchert, Sr., MBA, CFP®, CDFA™
President
Certified Family, Civil Circuit, Dependency & Appellate Mediator in Florida

Encls.

xc: David Axelrod, Esq.
Richard A. Berry  
5294 Eisenhower Rd.  
Columbus, OH 43229  

August 27, 2014

President Michael Drake  
The Ohio State University  
205 Bricker Hall  
190 North Oval Mall  
Columbus, OH 43210

Dear President Drake,

This letter is written to you and others in support of Jonathan Waters. I have known Jonathan since the early 1990s. He has always impressed me as a fine and Christian young man. In addition, I have never met a person more full of the Buckeye Spirit as Jonathan. Jon, Chris Hoch and our son have been like brothers since they met in the 890s and were graduate assistants with the Marching Band together later.

Jon's career has always appeared destined for greatness. He became a protégé of Dr. Russell Mikkelson and soon thereafter, Dr. Jon Woods. Watching Jonathan conduct is like watching Mikkelson's clone. It is truly a thing of artistic beauty. Dr. Woods developed Jonathon's heart for Ohio State and the Marching Band. At the mentorship of Dr. Woods, he became a skilled drill writer and an outstanding teacher and rehearse.

First, we have situations caused largely by the parents of two female students. One young woman is claiming sexual assault at an off campus row party. Another drunken woman followed a drunken young man into his hotel room at a tournament basketball pep band trip not associated with the Marching Band which is a violation of policy. Jonathon followed the correct course of action first by calling the VP of Athletics who advised Jon to send them home. Both guilty students were sent home. The University Title IX office chose to rescind the punishment “of the girl” and send her back to the pep band. How did this happen? What possible explanation did the Title IX office use? How does Jonathan have any culpability in either of these two off campus events? How do these two isolated incidents translate into a sexualized culture in the Marching Band? Published articles in local news sources are indicating a cover up of the Athletic Administrator's involvement.

Unlike California and other coastal parts of this country, Ohio tends to be a conservative state that believes in God, fairness, honesty, truth, integrity and the rule of law. You, sir, have discredited this once proud university beyond measure, nationally and internationally. Mr. Waters was not properly given his due process under the law. He was not provided an opportunity to defend himself. He was not even given an opportunity to see the incriminating report until after his dismissal. Your recent press conference was filled with inaccuracies, untruths, and exaggerations. It is now being
reported that it has become necessary to employ a public relations company to clean up your mess and hide the facts. Your integrity is being measured by your actions, sir. I still believe you are misinformed and unprepared. Today's press release reacting to the squad leader's letter smacks of arrogance.

I fail to understand how a person who was a large part of the band culture in the 90s, can now possibly and fairly adjudicate Title IX today without prejudice one way or another. Was there not more staff during the 2013 season? Were there not other protégés of Mikkelson, Blatti and Woods involved with the Band Culture during the 90s, the 2000s, and last year? Why is there no shared culpability?

Gustav Bruder, Manley Whitcomb, Jack O. Evans, Charles Spohn, Paul Droste, Jon Woods, Jonathan Waters, Chris Hoch, David Woike, Brad McDavid, Mark Hosler, Charles Bates, David Leppla, Frank Tracs, Barry Kopez, Lisa Galvin, Scott Jones, many fine band directors, and thousands of Marching Band Alumni across the globe have been painted with the same broad swatch of injustice. We have now all been labeled sexual deviants. I was a high school band director for 37 years and sent at least 20 students to march in the OSUMB. Am I now to assume that I was wrong and that I somehow survived and perpetuated a culture of sex and abuse?

I must tell you honestly that I remember hard work, hours spent and stern discipline more than anything during my time with the band (1966-70). Yes, I was initiated. Yes, I had a nickname. Yes, I went to row parties. Yes, I initiated my new rookies and gave them nicknames. And yes, to this day, I have numerous songs committed to memory. All of this was wonderful fun. To this end, Jonathan has been working diligently with current band members to change these generations of rowdy behavior and has been praised and applauded for his efforts in recent evaluations by Professor Blatti.

I have always had enormous respect for Betty Montgomery. She has always been tough but a straight shooter and someone Ohio could trust. However, there are already well documented reports this she has been seeking to interview only students who have something bad or negative to say about Jonathan and the Band. Since her job description is to dig up more “dirt,” I am not surprised but disappointed at her actions.

Please remember Dr. Drake that your Board of Trustees has this penchant for firing great people especially after bad and inaccurate reports have been released from the Athletic Director's Compliance Office. Jim Tressel is a fine man and great coach. Bob Todd was the Dean of Baseball Coaches. Jim Foster was developing a fine women's basketball program and, Ohio State had its most beloved President in E. Gordon Gee. All of these wonderful people were sacrificed at the feet of your Board of Trustees. Jonathan Waters's scenario is quite similar but even more unfair and illegal. This arrogance and injustice has now become even more apparent by the Board of Trustees’ negative response to Jonathan’s recent request.
I feel badly for you in many ways. You are only a month into your presidency and already mired in the muck of a controversy that did not have to happen. I prefer to think you were ill-advised. It is no secret in the Columbus community that the School of Music and the College of the Arts and Sciences has been trying to dismantle the band for years. Out of envy and jealousy, it has become the station in life for several high ranking officials. It is the reason E. Gordon Gee took the actions that he did in order to protect the band. What amazes me is that Jonathan is a product of Dr. Mikkelsen and Prof. Blatti. Where was the loyalty and mentorship? Why was it decided to publicly assassinate Jonathan’s character as has been done? Why did they not come to his aide when the report was first being researched? Why did OSU send Jonathan all over the country to speak on behalf of the university months prior to spitting him out? Now we know through published reports that it was necessary to get Jonathan out of the way in order to reassign the intent of the $30 million from Apple.

Governor Kasich, this letter is being sent to you as well. You are a man of great integrity and moral and ethical values. In my opinion, the good people of the State of Ohio should in no way pay for this folly of misjudgment. Tax payer money, tuition and fee money, privately contributed money to the University, nor money derived from ticket sales should not be permitted to pay the likes of Ernst and Young nor public relations companies, nor attorneys, nor Betty Montgomery’s expenses. I am asking you to involve yourself in this process.

I have prayed a lot about this and cried too. There are so many so deeply hurt by your actions especially Jon’s wife, children, and parents. I do not have a sense of how this will turn out but feel if you would all sit down all together, everything would be resolved. I am hoping you give serious consideration to Jonathan’s reinstatement. More than likely, all of you will at some point appear very foolish, the University will face more humiliation and discredit, and Jonathon will become a very wealthy man at the expense of tax payers, student tuition dollars, and athletic ticket sales. It did not have to happen.

I stand ready to speak with you or the Board of Trustees at your convenience. I pray that positive thinking, integrity, humanity, care for one another, wisdom, and the rule of law will prevail. Kindly send acknowledgement of this letter at your earliest convenience.

Our honor defend,

Richard Berry
614-620-4211
BA 1966, MA 1975

Cc: Mr. Chris Glaros
Secretary for the Board of Trustees
Mr. Archie Griffin

Governor John Kasich
Mr. David Axelrod
Professor Richard Blatti
Mrs. Betty Montgomery
August 12, 2014

Hon. Betty D. Montgomery
MacMurray Petersen & Shuster, LLP
6530 W Campus Oval STE 210
New Albany OH 43054-7069

Dear Ms. Montgomery,

This is the second time that I have written to you, and I wanted to relate a personal story about a change that occurred in the percussion section (J-I Row) back in the early 80’s. First however, I would like to express to you and the committee, that in over 30 years involvement with The Ohio State University Marching Band, as a student and now an alumnus, that the report by the compliance office characterizing the Band as having a “sexualized culture” is further from the truth than what IS the true culture of the Band.

The true culture of the Band to me is one of family values, caring for each other, and respect of one another; despite taking 225 college age students from all backgrounds, ethnicities, walks of life, high school experiences, income differences, that share a common interest of musicianship and wanting to be in the best marching band in the world. Then you put them all together for a common cause, to be at their very best in representing the University as a part of The Ohio State University Marching Band, and performing at a level of excellence that marching bands across the country are envious. What the University has done with their irrelevant report from the compliance office, and the actions taken by the Provost and President Drake, is tantamount to treason, dismissing more than 7,000 plus members, and alumnus of the Band, and denigrating us to a level that is not befitting of respect of what we have become; Judges, Attorney’s, Doctor’s, Congressmen, Business Owners, and most of all Successful and Respected Citizens in our communities. This is the true culture.

Now, my personal story.

I was in the Marching Band in 1981-1985 under the direction of Dr. Paul Droste and Dr. Jon Woods.

Each game day, J-I Row would report an hour before the rest of the band. We would play through our warm-up exercises, cadences, and show music for the day. From there we would go out into the Stadium to practice the Ramp entrance. To the percussion, the Ramp entrance is the single most important event of the day, and it had to go perfect every time. We would go on the field to check our spots, file back up in the ramp tunnel, and practice at least twice, maybe three or four times. Depending on the game and the expected crowd noise, we would also practice going out on a silent count in case we were drowned out by crowd noise.

After we practiced the Ramp, we would gather all of our gear and head up into the overhang of the tunnel right before it opened up to the field. All 29 of us would gather for a moment of prayer and reflection. We would pray for the safety of both of the football teams that there would be no injuries. We would pray that everyone in attendance would be safe. We prayed that the band would have a great performance that day. And we would say any personal prayers for family members or friends that might need help or were recovering from an illness or other. After our prayer, we would say a row cheer before we exited the stadium back to the band room.
The last line of the row cheer was “Let’s get the (blank) out of here before it rains”. I don’t know why we said it, we just did. It was funny.

I believe it was my second or third year, when someone asked the question, “Why do we say a prayer, and immediately follow it up with a cheer that has a swear word in it?” Nobody had an answer; it was just the way that it had always been done. So, we decided as a group of 29 students, that we would change the end of the cheer to be, “We’re outta here”, thereby eliminating the swear word. And as far as I know, that tradition still continues today.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Why, is because traditions, cultures, and other long shaped events do not change overnight. In life, sometimes you can take a big swing at changes, and sometimes you have to make changes in small steps. Often times, it takes one person to ask the question, “why”.

This is exactly what we have seen Jon Waters do from the moment he stepped into the role of Director of The Ohio State University Marching Band. He started asking “Why” to those traditions that he thought were questionable, both during his time as a student, and his time Assistant Director under Dr. Jon Woods.

Jonathan Waters is taking the most positive steps that he can make for the better of the band. Sometimes he can take a big swing, and sometimes he probably takes several baby steps to affect the same positive change.

I urge you and the committee to recommend the reinstatement of Jonathan Waters as Director of The Ohio State University Marching Band. He needs to be there to further strengthen the band culture that has been present for 136 years which is Family Values, Caring and Respect for one another, all the while helping to shape each one of us into a valuable citizen in our community.

Respectfully,

Bradley N. Betts
J-1 Row 1981-1985
OSU Alumni, Life Member

1405 Deeds Rd.
Granville, Ohio
740-814-6910 cell
Bbetts1@columbus.rr.com

Cc: David F. Axelrod
Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP
Huntington Center
41 S High St STE 2400
Columbus OH 43215-6150
Janine Schmelzer Bock  
K-L Row 1981-'85  
'i' dotter vs Iowa Sept '84  
First woman to dot a single script at a home football game.

I am an alumni of tOSUMB from 1981-1985. During this time I was one of (up to) four (4) women in the Sousaphone section of the band.

My husband and I were fortunate to be able to serve dinner to the Sousaphone section last year and three years ago. I made big pans of lasagna and they ate it so fast that I felt like the Italian grandma, proud that they liked my food!

The first time we served dinner (Jon Waters was not the director yet) we learned that they had given Freshman nicknames and they had to do 'tricks' when Squad Leaders would prompt them. They were great nicknames and great tricks! I really don't remember what the one member's nickname was but he was a big guy and his trick was to sing a song from Broadway. His song was like "Tiptoe Through the Tulips" or something like that—it was hilarious to see that big guy singing such a 'dainty' song! Plus, he was a good singer! They did other tricks which I do not remember but I wish that I had gotten a nickname and had to do 'tricks' when I was in the band! And I told them that at that time.

I remember back to my time as a first year band member. While I was very athletic and could easily memorize my music, my roommate (who was a Freshman, in the same section, and woman as well) was the opposite. She faced many hurdles as a member of the band. One of the perks of playing the Sousaphone was that we knew that if we stuck it out for being in the band for four (4) years, we would get to dot the 'i' in the Script Ohio. As you can imagine, this really drove us to put our best forward, through thick and thin.

We went through what many students would go through emotionally during those years. We spent our time as new members and did things that we might not normally do. For instance, the Freshman in our section (8 of us) had to make up a new row song that we would sing before we would enter the stadium for our pre game ramp entrance. It felt more like an English assignment than anything. We did not put anything in those lyrics that was sexual or had foul language—none of us liked that idea and (many of us) were very religious and were offended at the idea. So we did the best that we could and came up with an acceptable product that I would say was very clever. Thank goodness that my other row mates were better at that kind of thing than I was and I depended on them for that and other things. We grew as a team.

My roommate ended up at the stadium practicing both marching and playing through the years way more often than I did. She had gained weight and she had to work at her ability to march very fast. She spent many hours at the stadium memorizing music and practicing her marching during the season. One day I went to the stadium about an hour before practice (I was probably a Junior) and was astounded at the number of people spread out through the stadium memorizing their music! I never had to do that and I would say 1/3 of the band was there.

My roommate spent many times being challenged for her 'spot' and many times was an alternate
through those times. But both of us got to dot the 'i' and I was the first woman to dot a single script at home (so everyone thought I was the first woman to do so but was actually the 5th- I had the 'i' all to myself).

People weren't always nice to my roommate so when the report about the 'sexualized culture' came out, I thought she would be the first to stand in line and say that those people were getting their due. But she did not! She had another point to say about all of it, and that was this, "I learned a lot of life lessons from those experiences... all valuable lessons, mostly about how to treat other people if I wanted to be able to live with myself." She is now (and has been) a sixth grade teacher in the Columbus City Schools. I guarantee you that she is a great teacher to those kids because of many of her experiences in tOSUMB.

If I had to sum up the 'culture' from my time in the band then I would have to describe it as 'driven,' 'be the best you can be,' 'it's not OK to not be prepared,' and 'going for excellence is how to support your friends.' Sure, some members of my row made sexual comments about my body (like I said, I marched every game and was very athletic) but I never went to practice avoiding that subject or scared and afraid that it would be the topic of the day. I would expect that many of those people had my back, as well as my roommate's, because that's the way most of them seemed to me.

And finally, I would give anything for my daughter to be in the band. She was the Homecoming Queen her Senior year of HS and the King of that year wanted to dance with her inappropriately and sexually at the dance. She stomped home, pretty mad at him. Did any principals get fired for that happening on school property with underage students? No. Plus I liked that she made the decision that she did. Had she been in tOSUMB, she would have had to make decisions like that, but she would've been an adult, making those decisions on her own, without me.
August 13, 2014

Dear President Drake,

I am writing to you to request that you reinstate Jonathan Waters as the Director of Marching and Athletic Bands at Ohio State. I was a student at OSU and in the Athletic Band from 1985-1990 and in the Marching Band in 1989. I have been a participant in the OSU Marching Band Alumni organization since I graduated in 1990, including being a member of the TBDBITL Board of Governors for 24 years, a founding member of the Script Ohio Club volunteer fundraising committee (that has raised millions for OSU), the volunteer Steinbrenner Band Center fundraising committee (that raised over $3 million) and the performance groups of the TBDBITL Alumni Club. I am the volunteer Editor of the Skull Session program where I work with Jon Waters and the OSUMB staff on a weekly basis. In my leadership roles in the TBDBITL Alumni Club I have also organized hundreds of alumni band events which have supported Ohio State, including alumni performances at OSU non-conference away football games across the country from Syracuse to Seattle to Pasadena to Miami and several others. I have a degree from the Fisher College of Business – double major in Computer Science and Production Operations Management.

I have known Jon Waters since 1995, and I personally know hundreds of alumni from both the Marching and Athletic Bands since 1985. I do not know of anyone inside or outside the OSUMB or Athletic Bands who does not think Jon is an individual of high quality and integrity who strives for continuous improvement in all of the aspects of the Ohio State experience. (Please note that I stated OHIO STATE EXPERIENCE, not just OSU Band experience – Jon improves not just the band but all of Ohio State.)

I recognize that there are areas for improvement in the Band program, but the one-sided Investigation Report and the course of action Ohio State has taken is contrary to the positive steps Jon Waters was taking to improve the culture of the band. The firing of Jon Waters has disrupted improvements to the band culture and caused enormous harm to Ohio State, OSU alumni, and future OSU endeavors (donations decreasing and stopping).

Mr. Waters stated last year, "The OSUMB is not just about the marching and playing on the field but we want to make the student a better person by having been in the OSUMB."

I have witnessed Jon’s progression through the ranks of leadership of the Band from Squad Leader to Director and he has continuously brought positive changes to the bands not only on the football field but also to the student’s daily life. Not just the students, but the band alumni and the greater community are better from Jon’s actions.
• One recent example: A band alumni from the late 1970s who has Parkinson’s disease contacted Jon about bringing his class of Parkinson’s patients to Spring Athletic Band practice this year and Jon said, “Yes bring them over.” Jon and the students voluntarily worked with the patients and the physical actions of being on the practice field in a musical experience had positive effects on the Parkinson’s patients.

• When he became Director, Jon instituted a new program in the OSUMB of giving back to the community through service projects called “March to Pay Forward” including performing at Honor Flight, visits to Children’s Hospital, and performing at assisted-living centers over the holidays (when most students take a break). Jon explained to the alumni Board that some of these are Pep Bands with limited size and he has to turn away students for these, they really like to do community support. In following years Jon explained that the service projects had Row competitions among the students as they support the Girl Scouts, the Boy Scouts, Children’s Hospital, OSU Wexner Medical Center, Gladden Community House, Honor Flight, and more. Giving back to the Community: Paying Forward!

• Jon created the TBDBITL Parents Association to involve the parents and allow them to be part of their student’s experience in the band which includes a picnic at the beginning of the season and a banquet. Jon has big plans for this group that is in its infancy.

• Jon partnered with the Gladden Community House (which serves the low-income Franklinton community and its surrounding neighbors. Franklinton is a three square-mile neighborhood on the near West side of Columbus which contains 35,000 residents in about 13,000 households). Since 2009 the Marching for More benefit with the OSUMB has raised over $567,000 for Gladden House.

• Jon has worked tirelessly with the Ohio State School for the Blind Marching Band to improve their ensemble to the level that they have marched in the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California and performed a Braille Script Ohio in Ohio Stadium with OSUMB. He told our alumni Board “It is a joy to work with this group and a life changing experience.”

• There are OSUMB Alumni women who hold Jon Waters in such high regard as a person that they have named their children after him.

• The students continue to be high quality, polite, and courteous examples that Jon clearly has had an impact to mold them into fine young adults. They would not be able to perform on the field and in the classroom at such high levels if the atmosphere in the OSUMB were not one of respect and integrity. The cumulative GPA of the 2013 OSUMB was 3.50

• For the Drum Major Tryouts in the Spring Jon’s continuous improvement included adding an interview of each Drum Major candidate before tryouts and a new leadership category added to the evaluation of the Drum Major.

• Jon reorganized the student staff and added cross training which has improved efficiency.
Jon's continuous improvement benefited the Squad Leaders as he set up pre-season leadership training at Aileron in near Dayton and their facilitator was the CEO of La Rosa’s pizza (Cincinnati) in 2013.

Jon's demeanor with the alumni band at our annual rehearsal before our performance in Ohio Stadium is one of respect, polite and cheerful expression, and it exudes the true love that Jon has for the Band and the University. A more welcoming presence cannot be found on campus in the Fall and his wave of positive polite attitude permeates the alumni band and makes us better for coming back to Ohio State.

To dismiss such a high quality individual with such a one-sided inept investigation and resulting inaccurate report does not reflect well on The Ohio State University and I am shocked and disgusted by such behavior and the message that this sends out to the world about Ohio State. The act of publishing documents in the Exhibits of the Investigation Report that Jon had nothing to do with and have existed for decades is further action that the current OSU Administration is one that I cannot support or be even remotely associated with. I am suspending my volunteer fundraising support of Ohio State and channeling my energy and resources away from Ohio State and I am advising others to do the same as I can no longer support such an institution.

The only exception to this may be Pelotonia in 2015 which I will evaluate in January. I have been a multi-year participant in Pelotonia but I will find another cancer research movement to participate in if Ohio State does not reinstate Jon Waters. Disconnecting myself is not an easy decision for me as I have enthusiastically promoted Ohio State since 1985 in Ohio, the USA, Japan, Germany, Ireland, across the internet and to generations of people. Not to mention sacrificing my own resources to support Ohio State by data processing hundreds of donations, organizing trips to perform at away non-conference football games, and countless other activities.

Please make the decisions necessary to rectify the action taken against Jon Waters – reinstate this fine man - and put Ohio State back on the path that we all hope it can be on for a bright future.

Respectfully

Pete Borin
Vice President, TBDBITL Alumni Club
6491 Northland Road
Worthington, Ohio 43085
Dear OSU Board of Trustee member and President Drake,

I am writing to request that you reinstate Jonathan Waters as the Director of Marching and Athletic Bands at Ohio State. I was a student at OSU and in the Athletic Band from 1985-1990 and in the Marching Band in 1989. I have been a participant in the OSU Marching Band Alumni organization since I graduated in 1990, including being a member of the TBDBITL Board of Governors for 24 years, a founding member of the Script Ohio Club volunteer fundraising committee (that has raised millions for OSU), the volunteer Steinbrenner Band Center fundraising committee (that raised over $3 million) and the performance groups of the TBDBITL Alumni Club. I worked with Jon Waters on a weekly basis on fundraising and other projects. In my leadership roles in the TBDBITL Alumni Club I have organized hundreds of alumni band events which have supported Ohio State; including alumni performances at OSU non-conference away football games from Seattle to Pasadena to Miami and more. I have a degree from the Fisher College of Business – double major in Computer Science and Production Operations Management.

I have known Jon Waters since 1995, and I personally know hundreds of alumni from both the Marching and Athletic Bands since 1985. I do not know of anyone inside or outside the OSUMB or Athletic Bands who does not think Jon is an individual of high quality and integrity who strives for continuous improvement in all aspects of the Ohio State experience. (Note that I stated OHIO STATE EXPERIENCE, not just OSU Band experience – Jon improves all of Ohio State.) But for Jon Waters 90% of the population of the planet knows about the OSU Marching Band (OSU statistic).

I recognize that there are areas for improvement in the Band program, but the one-sided Investigation Report and the course of action Ohio State has taken is contrary to the positive steps Jon Waters was taking to improve the culture of the band. The firing of Jon Waters has disrupted improvements to the band culture and caused enormous harm to Ohio State, OSU alumni, and future OSU endeavors (donations are decreasing and stopping). The actions taken by the University have incorrectly labelled over 7,000 alumni of the band (4,000 living) as sexual perverts and this has caused great harm to them, their families, and the current students in the marching band. To treat the students in the band as sexual perverts is unacceptable, where else on campus can you find a group of 240 students with a cumulative GPA of 3.57? Since July 24th the marching band and the coveted OSU brand have been severely damaged.

Jon Waters stated last year, "The OSUMB is not just about the marching and playing on the field but we want to make the student a better person by having been in the OSUMB."

I have witnessed Jon's progression through the ranks of leadership of the Band from Squad Leader to Director and he has continuously brought positive changes to the bands not only on the football field but also to the student's daily life. According to Jon Waters's employment record that was released publically, there is no documented history of anything but excellent behavior.

But For Jon Waters the students, the band alumni and the greater community are better from Jon's actions. Here are some examples:

- The students continue to be high quality, polite, and courteous examples that Jon clearly has had an impact to mold them into fine young adults. They would not be able to perform on the field and in the classroom at such high levels if the atmosphere in the OSUMB were not one of respect and integrity. The cumulative GPA of the 2013 OSUMB was 3.50

- A band alumni who has Parkinson’s disease contacted Jon about bringing his class of Parkinson’s patients to Spring Athletic Band practice this year. Jon and the students voluntarily worked with the patients and the physical actions of being on the practice field in a musical experience had positive effects on the Parkinson’s patients.

- When he became Director, Jon instituted a new program in the OSUMB of giving back to the community through service projects called "March to Pay Forward" including performing at Honor Flight, visits to Children’s Hospital, and performing at assisted-living centers over the holidays (when most students take a break). Jon explained that some of these are Pep Bands with limited size and he has to turn away students, they really like to do community support. In following years Jon explained the service projects had competitions among the students in support of Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Children’s Hospital, OSU Wexner Medical Center, Giaddien House, Honor Flight, and more. Paying Forward!

- Jon created the TBDBITL Parents Association to involve the parents and allow them to be part of their student’s experience in the band which includes a picnic at the beginning of the season and a banquet. Jon has big plans for this group that is in its infancy.
For the Drum Major Tryouts In the Spring Jon’s continuous improvement included adding an interview of each Drum Major candidate before tryouts and a new leadership category added to the evaluation of the Drum Major.

Jon’s continuous improvement benefited the Squad Leaders as he set up pre-season leadership training at Aileron in near Dayton and their facilitator was the CEO of La Rosa’s pizza (Cincinnati) in 2013.

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Jon has worked tirelessly with the Ohio State School for the Blind Marching Band to improve their ensemble to the level that they have marched in the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California and performed a Braille Script Ohio in Ohio Stadium with OSUMB. He told our alumni Board “It is a joy to work with this group and a life changing experience.”

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Jon’s demeanor with the alumni band at our annual rehearsal before our performance in Ohio Stadium is one of respect, polite and cheerful expression, and it exudes the true love that Jon has for the Band and the University. A more welcoming presence cannot be found on campus in the Fall and his wave of positive polite attitude permeates the alumni band and makes us better for coming back to Ohio State.

For more about Jon please see WeStandWithJonWaters.com and read the letters there from those named in the Investigation Report and you will see that the strong high quality women are products of the band culture. If you are not aware of all that has been going on, this website is a place to start – or NBC4i - what the rest of the world is seeing, especially Russ M's interview on August 5th where he stated culpability of others across the University in this debacle.

To dismiss such a high quality individual with such a one-sided investigation and resulting report does not reflect well on The Ohio State University and I am shocked and disgusted by such behavior and the message that this sends out to the world about Ohio State. The act of publishing documents in the Exhibits of the Investigation Report (which are decades old) that Jon had nothing to do with is further action that the current OSU Administration is one that I cannot support or be even remotely associated with. These actions by OSU leadership have slandered thousands of OSUMB members, band alumni and their families. Ohio State has incorrectly labelled us all as sexual perverts and it is time to stop this malicious attack on thousands within the Ohio State community.

I am suspending my volunteer fundraising support of Ohio State and channeling my energy and resources away from Ohio State and I am advising others to do the same as I can no longer support such an institution. The only exception to this may be Pelotonia in 2015 which I will evaluate in January. I have been a multi-year participant in Pelotonia but I will find another cancer research movement. Disconnecting myself is not an easy decision for me as I have enthusiastically promoted Ohio State since 1985 in Ohio, the USA, Japan, Germany, Ireland, across the internet and to generations of people. Not to mention sacrificing my own resources to support Ohio State by processing hundreds of donations to scholarships, organizing trips to perform at away non-conference football games, and countless other activities in support of Ohio State over 24 years.

Jon and a staff of two other directors are in charge of more than 500 students (Marching and Athletic Bands). Why are they so under-staffed? Why does the University make it so hard for the band to function properly? There are 100 football players and dozens of supporting staff.

Please urge those that can make the decisions necessary to rectify the action taken against Jon Waters — reinstate this fine man - and put Ohio State back on the path that we all hope it can be on for a bright future. Jon Waters is the one person who can resolve this if he is reinstated.

Respectfully

Pete Borin
6491 Northland Road, Worthington, Ohio 43085
614-638-6411 pborin@gmail.com

"Please provide me with confirmation that you received my letter and your feedback on my comments."
Rachel Brennan

I've refrained from making a comment on my actual [Facebook] page until this point, but I feel like a PSA is in order as a lot of my friends are not from the OSUMB and may still be forming their opinions.

As my husband and I, who met as undergrads while members of TBDBITL, were digesting the news yesterday, my mom recalled the night I first made the band. The date was September 12, 2001. The day before her just-turned-18 year old daughter was “alone” on a huge campus, away from home during the worst terrorist attack this country has ever seen. This was the age before cell phones and my dorm phone had yet to be assigned. She was worried to death as any parent would be in that situation, not knowing what was happening around the country at that time except campus was on lockdown. The night of September 12 my mom and dad drove to Columbus and sat outside the band center for two hours waiting on news of whether I had "made it" or not. I remember running outside, filled with joy that my hard work and blood, sweat, and tears had payed off and couldn't wait to tell them. I remember introducing them to my new squad leaders, Tim Cremean and Jason Mishtawy, who looked her in the eye and said "Don't worry, mom, we'll take care of her." And they did. My mom said she knew the stuff that goes on when kids go to college, but she never worried about me because over the course of the 4 years I was a member and then a squad leader myself, that group of men and women become your family. Did shenanigans and questionable things take place? Of course! We were a bunch of 18-22 year old idiots! But did I ever feel forced, coerced, or threatened to participate in anything? Absolutely not. I look back on my time spent in that hard working, exceptional organization as some of the best and most character-building of my life. And I'll never regret it.
August 29, 2014

Dr. Michael Drake, President

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Dear President Drake and Board of Trustees,

My name is David Brumback, BSBA 84, TBDBITL 1-Row 79-83, I-Row Asst. Squad Leader 82-83. I do not know Jon Waters personally and cannot speak first hand to all that he has done for the band and university at large. Nor can I speak for countless individuals both within the band community and outside of it that he has helped over the years. You should have an abundance of first hand testimony on these fronts, and will most certainly receive more. I can, however, speak first hand to the impact the OSUMB experience has had, and continues to have today, on its current and former members and the community at large. 

The core reason this is such a challenging issue has nothing to do with Title IX and the alleged ‘sexual culture’ or sexual harassment. These would be terrible things if true as represented in The Glaros Report. Frankly, none of us in the band community would condone it nor tolerate it, regardless of when we were members. The core reason this issue is so challenging is entirely the result of the education 4,000+ present and former OSUMB members received from Ohio State and most importantly, the OSUMB itself.

In studying past membership of the band you will find a HIGHLY successful group of individuals. Many have advanced degrees from Ohio State and/or other fine institutions. They are doctors and attorneys, artists and teachers, business leaders and engineers, congressmen and senators, clergy and accountants. Why the success? The Ohio State University Marching Band produces leaders and has for decades. Professionally, I would argue that it ranks among the best leadership development programs in the world within higher education.

We all learned the importance of and experienced:

• Servant leadership and service to others
• Learning to follow to learn how to lead
• Learning how to succeed while facing our worst fears
• Team work
• Persistence in the face of adversity
• Responsibility to ourselves, to our row, and to the group as a whole
• Excellence – always being at our best
• Commitment – to ourselves, to each other, to the university, and to the community.
• The Journey – Loving the WORK
• And much, much more

The culture and sexually charged atmosphere as described in The Glaros Report, which supposedly led to the actions vis-à-vis Jon Waters, are entirely at odds with the combined success and productivity this group represents, and are thoroughly incompatible with the reality of who we are collectively and as individuals.

It causes me great distress that the university leadership either does not understand or does not respect the educational value and success this group represents to the university and the community. Frankly, this lack of understanding and/or respect, on several levels, led to the wholesale, unquestioned acceptance of a critically flawed report and is the core reason we find ourselves in this situation.

Looking forward, I challenge all of you to lead. Do the things I outline below, as they truly are the HARD and RIGHT things.

• First, please take the time to study and understand the collective educational value and success that we (TBDBITL Alumni) as a group of individuals represent to this great university and to the community at large.
• Second, please find a way to begin undoing the damage to the university that can be undone.
• Finally and most importantly, please find a way to begin undoing the damage to Jon Waters, that can be undone.

Do these things and you may begin to repair the damage done to your relationship with the single most valuable and successful group of Alumni that You have to offer.

Respectfully,

David Brumback, Partner
Columbus Consulting International
Columbus, Ohio

Please provide me with confirmation that each or you personally received my letter and I request feedback from the Board of Trustees regarding this matter.
Dr. Drake,

I don't know you, but I look forward to the opportunity to meet you. Allow me to introduce myself: My name is Darrell T. Bunkley, Ph.D. I am a Black man. I am a 1990 graduate of The Ohio State University with a double major in Psychology and Political Science. I received my Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Northwestern University in 2002 after interning at Howard University Hospital. While at The Ohio State University I was a National Merit Scholar. I joined Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. I sang with The Ohio State University Men's Glee Club. I was involved in student government and president of my dorm. I became a member of Alpha Kappa Mu Honor Society. I was a recipient of the Presidential Academic Achievement award. Most importantly to this letter: I was a five year member of The Ohio State University Marching Band and T-Row Squad Leader. I am also a proud Life Member of The Ohio State University Alumni Association.

Your introduction to me was to send an email to me on July 24, 2014 to tell me a "thorough investigation" (preliminary, at best, in my opinion) had been done that "revealed serious cultural issues and an environment conducive to sexual harassment". Included in your letter was the statement that "Nothing is more important than the safety of our students." and "We expect every member of our community to live up to a common standard of decency and mutual respect and to adhere to university policies." The OSUMB was described by you as a "hostile culture". I can't begin to tell you how wrong your statements are based on my own experiences in TBDBITL. OSUMB was a 100% merit based organization where men and women were treated equally on and off the playing field. So, yes, with their consent, women "rookies" were subject to the same sometimes stupid and inappropriate treatment as consenting male "rookies". And these women (who I will never see as victims) had the same ability to choose to participate in (or not participate in) sexually inappropriate "traditions" left over from the band's all male days. No, I don't imagine that away from the public eye, all marching band members lived up to what you feel is a common standard of decency at all times. I know policies were broken when I was in the band. However, the culture was competitive, not "hostile" and usually as safe (if not safer) as any other group of college students.

With it a foregone conclusion that policies were broken, I'll admit my own guilt in behaving inappropriately at times and contributing to what the investigators called "a culture that facilitated acts of sexual harassment". I couldn't personally dispute any "findings" of the report as I was not a member of the OSUMB in 2012 or 2013. I did recognize most of the behavior described in the report, to some extent (specifically Midnight Ramp, Nicknames, Rookie Introductions, one Rookie Midterm, one Trip Tic, Songbook, Misconduct on the bus and Changing Clothes on the bus). I don't necessarily agree with how things were interpreted and presented in the report. However, those things existed, in one form or another, from 1986 to 1990.

I would ALMOST be willing to accept the possibility that the recent membership of the band under the leadership of Jon Waters had devolved into what the Daily Caller calls "Filled with Depraved Perverfs." who "indulge in devious sexual hazing" or current band members were "horny and depraved" as noted in Deadspin.com. But, I believe in the character of Jon Waters and in the character of the women and men in the current band too much to accept that those are
accurate descriptions of the OSUMB in 2012 and 2013. I'm hopeful a full investigation will reveal the truth.

Why do various media outlets including the Columbus Dispatch feel comfortable referring to your students (and ALL past OSUMB members) in this manner? I would point to the pejorative and sensationalized nature of the 23 page report, and in particular, the additional UNNECESSARY inclusion of 69 pages of titillating tidbits in Exhibits A and B as a major cause.

I am writing to point out that the release of the Investigative Report in the manner your office has chosen to do so, is both EXTREMELY IRRESPONSIBLE, and DAMAGING to The Ohio State University Family and, in particular, to past and present OSUMB members. I take issue with the need to present the report to the public in a salacious and sensationalized manner. I don't find it protective of students. In fact, it puts current, past and future students at risk of personal, psychological and/or professional harm, regardless of the findings of the report and any actions the University has taken or decides to take against Jon Waters and/or the students of OSUMB.

Let's talk about Exhibits A and B. Apparently, your office concluded that Exhibits A and B contained things so horrible and disgusting that they MUST be PUBLICLY released (in full) with the report. Perhaps they were included in a sensational attempt to shock the public and justify the other "findings" of the report. I'm sure others have pointed out that the "thorough investigation" needed to interview only NINE hand selected past and present members of an organization that has hundreds (in 2012 and 2013) or thousands (over the years) of members to confirm a "sexualized culture". The implication is that Exhibits A and B unequivocally prove the misogynistic, homophobic, racist, perversion that is the OSUMB "sexualized culture". As a researcher, I was trained to look a little closer.

Exhibit A:

Let me digress for a moment to when I was in the band. I was aware of one, maybe two rows that traditionally handed out a "rookie midterm". (That would involve a total of 28 band members, of those 28, impossible to tell exactly how many were rookies). I may have held one for a minute (when I asked someone from that row to see it), called it "a stupid waste of time on the bus" and handed it back to whoever gave it to me. Again things may have changed since I was in the OSUMB.

In the report, investigators extrapolated that ONE FORMER MEMBER represented the experience of ALL "rookies' in band. There was no mention in the report of the experiences of any of the other eight band members interviewed. Maybe the other eight were not even asked about a midterm. I don't know, I wasn't there and it wasn't reported in the "thorough" findings. However, by simply looking at Exhibit A, I did notice that only one row was mentioned as responsible for creating and distributing the "rookie midterm" that is Exhibit A. The evidence is CLEARLY written on the document itself and states that the rookies of one row (of 14 members) were given the midterm, CLEARLY not every rookie in OSUMB was handed a rookie midterm as the report implies. A balanced and logical conclusion is that a traditional "rookie midterm"
was one aspect of that particular row's culture, on one bus trip, not a general aspect of the band as a whole. A major cultural finding from a sample of one.

Additionally, unless Exhibit A was presented electronically or was recreated for the report, it was blank. The report did note it was from 2011. Was the witness asked about how they received the midterm, if they completed (or rejected) the midterm and any repercussions of their choice? Was there any way to determine the level of coercion (if any) involved in 2011? Were any witnesses questioned about the presence or absence of a rookie midterm in 2012, or 2013? I hope the next investigation will answer these very basic questions. Flawed research practices often garner flawed results.

And now, Exhibit B:

The preface of the 2006 Songbook, that your administration released to the world as a legitimate representation of OSUMB culture, includes CRYSTAL CLEAR indications that attempts had been made in the past to suppress/eliminate the songs and book. Those efforts were thwarted by a student (or group of students) in 2006 attempting a "reincarnation" (the author's own words) of songbook material. Additionally in the preface, it is noted the book was purely comedic in nature. Implied in the preface is that it should remain hidden from faculty. I would imagine it is because such content was prohibited by the staff and would have led to the songbook being taken and/or potential disciplinary action due to its' inappropriateness. Investigators did not agree with the songbook Preface writer that the contents are intentionally shockingly inappropriate for comedic effect. Instead, they imply the members of the OSUMB considered it some sort of manual for how to treat each other and sang songs on the bus trips to victimize and haze women in the band.

To me, stating the songbook accurately represents OSUMB "culture" would be like someone finding that the work of Don Rickles, Redd Foxx, John Valby, Andrew "Dice" Clay, Richard Pryor, Howard Stern, and Katt Williams was representative of all American culture, or saying the music of NWA, Snoop Dogg and 2 Live Crew represented Black male culture. You get my point. Again, it is a wild extrapolation from extremely limited evidence. Major findings from tiny sample sizes is the hallmark of poor research. That's my opinion. I apologize for the digression.

Further, the Investigative Report implies that the songbook was "distributed", and the existence of a 2006 version is used as "proof" of distribution. Further, the investigators include the songbook in the findings, despite testimony from MANY witnesses that NO songbook has existed for years. This incorrectly gives the implication that the songbook was regularly "distributed" to the band and fully endorsed by Jon Waters and his staff. In fact, the evidence gives credence to Jon Water's statements acknowledging a history of some objectionable behaviors and traditions being a part of the band and that efforts were being made to improve situations. If the testimony of the witness who provided the songbook was that a songbook was distributed to every member of the band with the knowledge and consent of the directors, (as implied in the report) I will stand corrected.
Additionally, I find putting a full copy of the 2006 songbook in a publicly distributed report both pointless and HIGHLY irresponsible. A thorough 23 page report would have been adequate in reporting the summarized "findings" of investigations into OSUMB culture. Inclusion of Exhibits A and B in the public release of the report was DEFINITELY not protective of band students, past present and future. A more accurate and responsible wording in the report could have been something similar to: "Witnesses stated students sing sexually inappropriate songs on bus trips. Our findings were that songbooks containing misogynistic and alternate sexual lyrics to songs existed in the past and contributed to a culture of singing sexually inappropriate songs on bus trips." The mention of a 2006 songbook, would be more meaningful if the witness stated where, when and how he/she came into possession of it, and his/her knowledge regarding staff awareness of the songbook and/or any repercussions a student might have for being caught in possession of a songbook. Again, the report is lacking in crucial decisional information.

It is my opinion that the irresponsible release of the 2006 songbook has inadvertently legitimized it and your administration has put this material potentially in the hands of ANY PERSON OF ANY AGE WITH ACCESS TO THE INTERNET. I implore you to redact Exhibits A and B. My concern is that others will take that material and use it as a prototype for their own versions of future songbooks (at The Ohio State University or other locations). Please think of high school and college band students across the country who might be enticed by a "TBDBITL Songbook", and whether your office's actions in providing public access to these documents puts these young people at risk of potentially downloading and misusing Exhibits A and B. Please protect these students and remove them from the publicly accessible version of the Investigative Report.

If you won't redact Exhibits A and B in the protective interest of students, then protect the Ohio State University from potential liability issues. Otherwise, you may want to prepare to face potential future allegations from parents/teachers/music administrators who may claim their children/students were somehow damaged or damaged others as a result of gaining access to Exhibits A and B through your office's release of this Investigative Report.

That being said, I would like to move forward. I was overjoyed when they announced you would be the next president of The Ohio State University. I consider myself as having a personal interest in your success in this position. I hope you realize my comments are based in a true love for The Ohio State University, its students, faculty and fans.

Based solely on the "findings" of the report, I feel I must have contributed to the inappropriate culture of the band from 1986-1990. Therefore, I will make efforts to improve the environment of the band today. Those efforts include but are not limited to volunteering to do long-distance counseling for any students, and volunteering to be a part of any future oversight committees developed for the OSUMB. I will also make myself available to marching band alumni who feel they may have suffered personal, psychological or professional damage as a result of this situation. My resume and references will be provided upon request.

My plan is that this will be the first of many letters that you receive from me. I will have more to say as this situation continues to develop. If your office does not directly address my concerns about redacting Exhibits A and B from the publicly available report (and only the publicly
available report), I feel it is my responsibility as a Buckeye to make Betty Montgomery and the Board of Trustees aware of my concerns.

I look forward to your response to my letter and again implore you to have Exhibits A and B removed from the publicly available version of the Investigative Report.

Sincerely,

Darrell T. Bunkley, Ph.D.

p.s. As of 9/27/2014, I have had no response to my letter.

Darrell
Sunday, July 27, 2014

Alex Clark – Letter to President Drake

Dear President Drake,

“We respect women and we respect all the different people who work with us, we respect that diversity.” This is a line from your statement on the firing of Ohio State University Marching Band director Jon Waters. I find it to be particularly ironic given the events of the past few days thanks to a report filed by OSU’s Office of Compliance and Integrity.

In their report, the investigators speak of a “sexualized” culture within the band, and how that often led to the harassment of female members, through alcohol consumption, inappropriate nicknames, and tricks performed by young members given to them by their peers, amongst other things. What is truly shocking about the report is not the list of antics by a group of hormone filled college students, but the complete lack of respect for the privacy and dignity of the band members. Included in the list of “offensive” rookie nicknames are things like Donk, Tulsa, Tiggles, and Jewoobs. Ohio State clearly had no interest in learning anything about these strong, intelligent women and instead decided that their delicate feminine sensibilities needed to be defended by adding their names to a list of things they feel the Buckeye community should feel disgusted and ashamed about. I would also like to point out that it is spelled Joobs, not “Jewoobs” as they spelled it in the report. They felt “Jewoobs” was so offensive that they added the descriptor “given to a Jewish student with large breasts” so you could be fully aware that she was being sexualized and harassed because of her faith and her anatomy.

I’m the “Jewoobs” that the entire Internet seems to be talking about. It wasn’t until yesterday that I ever felt sexualized and degraded because of the name Joobs. You turned a lighthearted joke and rookie name given to me by my row mates with my full consent into something shameful, and you decided that my entire identity could be boiled down to being a Jewish woman with a large chest. Please allow me to provide my prospective of the report, my nickname and my time in the band.

I am a proud, strong, Jewish woman. My relationship with my faith is not the business of anyone else and that includes The Ohio State University. If you respect diversity, there is absolutely no necessity to turn this issue into one of religion nor is it necessary to define me in a report as Jewish.

I also have a large chest, but thanks to the investigation, the entire Internet knows that. You took a physical feature that many women feel self-conscious toward, myself included, and made sure that it was what I will always be identified by in correlation with my time in TBDBITL and broadcasted it to the entire world.

The name Joobs was given to me by the older members of my row during my rookie year. They waited several weeks and after getting to know me they gave me a funny nickname that is, quite frankly, really fun to say out loud. They understood that I was able to enjoy the name and that it suited my sense of humor. All of this was done with my full consent.

I was also a proud member of C-Row from 2009-2011. In my three years with the band, far from
encountering a sexualized and hostile environment, I made some of the best friends I'll ever have and found a loving and supportive family in my row mates. The idea that these wonderful people harassed and hazed me by giving me a nickname or created an environment where I felt helpless could not be further from the truth. Here are some examples of how these people treated me during my years in the band:

After making the band, the first thing all members of C-Row told us was, "You don't have to do anything that makes you feel uncomfortable."

Before the infamous Midnight Ramp that same year, my female squad leader informed me that I could be fully clothed if it would make me feel more comfortable about participating, though there was absolutely no pressure to do so if I didn't want to. I did my first Midnight Ramp wearing a tank top and gym shorts that provided full coverage, which is what I wore to everyday band practice, and allowed me to dress modestly. I was not treated like I was doing something wrong. I was embraced as a member of C-Row during a tradition that was meant to welcome us into the band after finally learning all of its traditions. It is also worth noting I was sober and because they knew I didn't drink, my row mates didn't so much as offer me an alcoholic beverage. At no stage of this did I ever feel I was being hazed, rather I was a willing part of a tradition that truly helped mark my membership in the band.

At the beginning of my rookie year I chose not to consume alcohol and my row was supportive of that decision. There were several other members of C-Row that did not drink but still socialized and attended band functions and parties without any pressure from our peers. The choice to consume alcohol was absolutely ours to make. This is typical throughout the band.

My "unofficial" rookie trick was to dance in the stands at the football games whenever they played "Shipping Off to Boston" by the Dropkick Murphys over the stadium sound system. This came into being after I shared with C-Row that I was an Irish dancer while meeting them for the first time upon making the band. It wasn't something used to degrade me but was instead something they asked me to do because they thought it was unique and exciting.

During my rookie year, the vast majority of band members outside of C-Row were unaware of the meaning behind my rookie name. People just knew it as "that rookie name that is really fun to yell out loud" and I met a lot of wonderful people in other rows who were very excited to put a face to the name. The only way they found out what it meant was if I made the decision to tell them. However, The Ohio State University has decided, without ever informing me, to make this public to the entire world, even though they couldn't even spell it correctly.

Like any group that spends large amounts of time together, rows in band will get tired and impatient later in the season. When I did have issues with C-Row and some treatment that I didn't agree with, a friend from another row approached the directors on my behalf. Jon Waters and Dr. Woods facilitated an open and mature discussion between row members that allowed us to grow and move forward. It truly was transformative and gave us an opportunity to better understand one another. My squad leaders also told me that Jon Waters informed them there would be zero tolerance for any further incidences and it would be punishable by expulsion from the band. By providing a safe place for us to air our feelings and a stable environment for us to discuss our issues instead of devolving further into chaos, the directors fostered an environment that assured that we had a happy and healthy band experience.
I was in band for three years and I can’t remember a single time a member of the directing staff referred to me by my rookie name. They always addressed me as Alex or Alexandra because they are professionals.

My father is an Emeritus Faculty member at Ohio State. He taught and did research for 35 years. During his tenure at Ohio State, he also had a ten-year term as a senior administrator. If my father had any issues with my rookie name or my treatment by the band, there is absolutely no way he would have tolerated it and the responsible parties would have been reprimanded appropriately according to university policy. He took a great interest in my membership in the band and we frequently discussed it. My mother is also a proud Jewish woman and as I’ve grown, we’ve bonded over our shared faith. If she felt that I was being sexualized or harassed with even the slightest hint of Anti-Semitism, she would not have tolerated it either and would have taken appropriate legal action.

My parents have embraced their role as band parents and supporters of TBDBITL, and C-Row in particular. Not only did they host multiple row dinners, they are affectionately known to the members of the band as Mama Joobs and Dr. Joobs. These names are not meant to “haze” my parents, but are used as terms of endearment and a sign of respect and acceptance amongst the band for my parents and my father’s role as a professor, in particular.

I have been out of the band for three years but my closest and best friends refer to me almost exclusively as Joobs. They are not saying it to offend or sexualize me. They are saying it because they love me and care about me and it’s a connection to an experience we all shared and a bond we’ll have for the rest of our lives.

Despite spending three years in the band, it was not until this report was published that I ever felt sexualized because of the name Joobs. Now it’s in every corner of the Internet and something that I’ve proudly used to identify my membership in the band has been perverted by legions of the invisible into something dirty and degrading. If I wasn’t experiencing sexual harassment before, I’m certainly vulnerable to it now. There are perfect strangers commenting on articles or tweeting about the “sexual” nature of my name and what they’d like to do to me. There are even people tweeting about the conflict in Gaza because they find this to be an acceptable joke to make based on the report’s description of me. If the investigators felt that my rookie name was so offensive that it was the only one warranting an explanation, why was I never consulted about my opinion? If Ohio State has to investigate claims of sexual harassment, why was I never contacted for my side of the story? Where are the claims of sexual harassment aimed towards me coming from? If the people in charge of the investigation had reached out to me for my opinion, they would have learned that I did not feel I was being objectified or harassed by my peers. They would have learned that I found it to be funny and endearing. Like any woman, I have certain things about my body that I don’t like and one thing I’ve always been self-conscious about is my chest. I am also very private about my faith and don’t openly discuss Judaism with many people. The name Joobs allowed two things that often made me feel like an outsider to become non-issues. It allowed me to accept that aspect of my identity and become comfortable in my own skin because I realized that the people around me didn’t love me any less because of these things, but accepted that they were merely parts of the whole of my person. However, the publication of this report has turned these into feelings of shame and embarrassment. Because of the way my name is presented within this report, I feel as though
I’m being told I should be offended by this name and that because I am not there is something wrong with me.

To say that I never had any differences of opinion with Jon Waters would be dishonest and I can’t say I always agreed with everything he said or did during my time in the band or in the time since I left. I can say with great certainty that I have witnessed his attempts to change the culture within the band for the better and I greatly admire him for that. He had zero tolerance for rookies names that he felt were purely degrading to students and during my last year he made it necessary for rows to document that they were providing their rookies with money to buy game day snacks for their rows so that the first year members could further enjoy their experience in the band instead of feeling as though they were being exploited by older members. I have also witnessed his passion for the band and its members in person and it is a truly remarkable thing.

To expect a group of 225 people that live in a pressure cooker for several months at a time to never misbehave is frankly an irresponsible line of thinking. In a group that size, the vast majority of students are respectful of one another but you will have a handful that enjoy sowing the seeds of unrest and acting out in embarrassing or painful ways towards their peers. Dynamics like that exist in any group that size at every major university, whether they’re a fraternity or sorority or a Division 1 football program. What has happened with the “sexualized” culture and the sexual assaults cannot solely be blamed on Jon Waters or the other members of the marching band staff. It can also be blamed on the institutional failure of the university to provide adequate resources to the band and its members before events of that nature even have a chance to transpire. With the increase in national visibility the band has received and the drastic increase in away games and performances, it is unreasonable to expect a staff the size of the band’s to appropriately manage all of the needs of its students. The Ohio State University Marching Band is approximately twice the size of the Ohio State football team, yet it has absolutely none of the medical, academic, or compliance support provided to Urban Meyer and his staff by the athletic program. It is unfair to call the marching band a part of an athletic program that does not provide adequate support for its members yet still expects perfection and zero tolerance. The majority of the events listed in the investigation are things that occurred away from marching band events or practices and often took place in private homes. If the university wants to enforce a zero tolerance policy on its band, then the least it should do is provide the same level of trained professionals to bring that about.

I respect the efforts Jon Waters made to further TBDBITL on a national and international stage, as well as his efforts to advance inclusion and tolerance within the band. The university’s decision to make him a scapegoat at this point in time for things that have been going on for decades, which he worked hard to change, is absolutely incomprehensible and unjust.

Respectfully,
Alexandra “Joobs” Clark
C-Row, 2009-2011
President Michael Drake  
205 Bricker Hall  
190 North Oval Mall  
Columbus, OH 43210

Board of Trustees  
The Ohio State University  
210 Bricker Hall  
190 North Oval Mall  
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Dear President Drake and Chairman Wadsworth:

Please allow us to introduce ourselves. We are Alexandra Clark ("Joobs"), Jeanette Town ("Tiggles"), Victoria Nolte ("Tulsa"), Lindsay Barrie ("ERV") and Jocelyn Smallwood ("Donk"). We write concerning the university’s investigation into the culture of the Ohio State University Marching Band, of which we are proud alumni.

As you undoubtedly know, the investigative report, apparently prepared by Chris Glaros, described our nicknames as salacious and offensive. You should also know that we have made public statements indicating that our nicknames are completely inoffensive to us, were given in fun, and we embraced them in that spirit. Mr. Glaros would have known that had he bothered to ask about our feelings before including our names in his unwarranted and, yes, offensive report.

We did not feel objectified, sexualized or sexually harassed until we read about ourselves in the Glaros report. For the first time, the report turns what has always been a high point in our lives into something the public sees as shameful and dirty. Furthermore, the report’s description bears almost no resemblance to the band’s actual culture, which is one of excellence, hard work, mutual respect and concern for one another. If the culture were as Mr. Glaros described, the band could not possibly have presented the complex halftime shows that Buckeye fans have come to expect week in and week out, and which require 225 band members to think and march as if they were one person.

The report made us victims, not of anything done by band members or the directing staff, but of Mr. Glaros’s indifference to the truth, our opinions, and
our feelings. We are now, for the first time, subjected to offensive comments about our character and physical appearance on Internet comment boards, Twitter, and other social media.

We recognize, President Drake, that you had the misfortune to be presented with the Glaros report after only two weeks at the helm of a major university, and, due to the time sensitive nature of the investigation, were asked to act on it instantly. In that sense, you, too, are one of its victims. You were entitled to expect a competent, truthful report on which you could rely without question. Unfortunately, it has been made abundantly clear that you received quite the opposite.

We have been very disappointed that despite our public statements, no one from this great university has contacted us to apologize, seek our views, address our concerns, or simply discuss the situation. Accordingly, we request a meeting with you at the earliest possible opportunity. You will find us to be constructive and willing to work directly with you to implement a just and proportionate response to the current situation. However, we are determined to do whatever is necessary to reclaim our voice and redeem not only our own reputation, but that of every current and former band member impacted by this report.

We believe such a meeting is essential because of the shadow the Glaros report has cast over us, the band and alumni, to say nothing of Jonathan Waters. You have stated that the university was on a strict timetable in issuing its report. Therefore, you should attach equal urgency to repairing the damage it has caused through its incompetence and inaccuracy, and we ask that you or your staff contact us immediately to arrange for a personal meeting to take place no later than August 22, 2014.

Due to the nature of the report, the widespread attention it has received, and our personal feelings regarding the gross inaccuracies within it, we believe that it is paramount that our story receive the equal care and attention it should have been afforded from the beginning. With that goal in mind, we have taken the liberty of forwarding copies of our letter to the media. We hope you understand this was not done as an attack, but to ensure that the true character of the band is known and appreciated.
We look forward to your response, and to a cordial and productive discussion. For all that has happened, OSU is still our university, and we want it, and you, to succeed.

Respectfully and sincerely,

Alexandra “Joobs” Clark
Clark.1769@osu.edu

Jeanette “Tiggles” Town
Town.6@buckeyemail.osu.edu

Victoria “Tulsa” Nolte
Nolte.19@osu.edu

Jocelyn “Donke” Smallwood
Jsmallwood1025@gmail.com

Lindsay “ERV” Barrie
Barrie.10@osu.edu
The Ohio State University
Board of Trustees
210 Bricker Hall, 190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, OH 43210

Gentlemen and Ladies:
I’m writing to you in regards to the matter involving the firing of Dr. Waters.
I do not know Dr. Waters, and so cannot comment on his character, or actions as an educator. I do believe that he is deserving of a more fair and introspective investigation than the one which resulted in his firing, given the many new facts that subsequently call into question the accuracy of the Glaros report or the competence of its creator. On the strength of these, prudence should lead you as a Board to call for an investigation into the report, and announce suspension of any decision regarding Dr. Waters’ position until the results compel you to support or retract your original decision accordingly. Given the serious nature of the accusations brought forward, I agree without hesitation that an investigation was warranted. The final product, though, was at best a poor example of investigatory effort and professionalism.
I understand that it’s expedient and effective for OSU to fire whomever is in charge when claims like these are found to have a whiff of legitimacy: It’s decisive and shows the public that you have zero tolerance for behavior of the nature suggested in the report. I get it.
I understand further that it’s politically sensitive to NOT immediately act, but to methodically gather all facts and let them lead you to the conclusion they support—even if this goes against public emotion. This process would provide you the confidence to choose an fully-informed action that is fair and just. That’s not what happened here, guys.
It’s not necessary to admit errors or wrongdoing at this time, because there may have been none. However, the volume of facts that has come forward which conflicts with the reports’ findings must compel you to look again, look deeper, and to acknowledge this to the community. “Despite our best intentions, we realize now some facts relevant to the investigation may not have been available at the time, so we’re looking into this thing more deeply” would do it.
Do the right thing for the university, guys. It’s acceptable to admit that your actions stemmed from an investigation later found to be flawed. You have an ‘out.’ Your silence or repeated recitation of the same “We stand behind the report” mantra don’t make the Board seem judicial and stoic, it makes you seem like you’re hiding something, dismissive of the truth, or acting for political expediency.
I urge you to do the right thing and delay your decision on Dr. Waters’ firing and initiate a new probe into the original.
Thank you for your consideration, and best of luck to you in making the right decisions.

Mike Coggins (TBDBITL Alumnus, H-Row 1981-85)
Archie Griffin  
President/CEO Alumni Relations  
The Ohio State University  
2200 Olentangy River Road  
Columbus, OH 43210-1035  
Archie:  
I’m writing to ask you to lend your well-respected voice to the Jon Waters matter.  
I’ve also included a copy of a letter mailed to President Drake for your review. I hope you agree that it is  
respectful and compelling.  
I don’t know Dr. Waters—and suspect you may not either—so I can’t comment first-hand on his  
character, but it’s become clear that he’s a victim of either alarmingly poor investigative effort, or  
purposeful assault on his integrity. Given the vehement refutation by multiple interviewees in the report  
of many of the facts and quotes attributed to them, the exclusion of facts and quotes not supportive of  
the report’s ultimate conclusion, and the lack of anyone in the OSUMB organization stepping forward to  
support the report’s findings, I feel that no person of conscience or intellect could deny that this initial  
investigation deserves a second look into its validity and process.  
You need to be the guy behind the scenes to initiate that.  
Circling the wagons and offering no thoughtful reply to legitimate questions gives the appearance that  
the Board of Trustees is simply waiting for the whole thing to blow over. This is an understandable  
strategy, we both know, since public outcries tend to quiet quickly, and people get bored and move on.  
The members of the BOT do not bleed Scarlet and Gray as you and I do.  
Urge them to do the right thing, Archi, and open up the original investigation to an investigation of its  
own.  
I grew up watching you play, and wore that #45 jersey to school nearly every day each fall—to the point  
where it could have walked to the washing machine on its own! In college, I listened to you speak, and  
even got to shake your hand on more than one occasion. As a member of the OSU Marching Band—and  
now balding alumnus—I can tell you that you have always been respected and revered as a friend of  
TBDBITL and its Alumni group.  
We need your vocal support now. Speak up and urge the BOT to acknowledge that the original  
investigation fell short, given new information, and that an immediate review was being initiated into its  
processes. Meanwhile, acknowledge that until all facts are investigated, the University would postpone  
any decision regarding Dr. Waters position as Director.  
Thank you for your consideration.  
Respectfully,  
Mike Coggins, H-Row 1981-85
Michael Drake-President
The Ohio State University
205 Bricker Hall, Oval Mall
Columbus, OH 43210

President Drake,

I empathize with you in the Jon Waters situation. I believe you made what you believed to be the correct decision, based on information presented by trusted underlings. You are being asked to reverse that decision when you're not completely convinced it's wrong. That's a tough one.

Your people let you down here, Dr. Drake, for reasons you need to determine.

I, too, manage individuals who I count upon to act in the best interest of my organization, and I make decisions based on information compiled and presented by those people. When they make mistakes, they are my mistakes. I take responsibility for them, though sometimes I didn't "make" them. Not an easy pill to swallow publicly, so I empathize with you.

I've been the "new guy" in the boss's chair, as well—several times—and know the stress that comes from learning a new job in a new environment with new colleagues. The greatest stress comes from feeling compelled to act decisively while not really knowing all the right answers yet. Pressure's on you to keep the organization flowing smoothly and move it forward toward its goals; in short—to be a leader.

Our daily challenge is that we can't be effective in our roles without the people working for us doing their jobs well. They must act in the long term best interest of the organization. They must be selected for their ability, potential, ethics, and character. They must be well-trained and motivated to perform at a level that furthers the organization's goals.

Despite good intentions, leaders and their direct reports sometimes make mistakes. Your people made some mistakes on this one. Big time.

The only correct action at this point is to acknowledge that enough new information has come forward to merit review of all facts. This immediate action does not require that you admit wrong-doing or malfeasance on anyone's part—just that additional review is prudent.

The Glaros report is not a well-constructed piece of investigative reporting, Dr. Drake. As an educator, you cannot help but agree that it would not earn a passing grade in any journalism, research, or science course—in high school, much less OSU. In my organization, it would have been sent back for re-work.

The innocuous explanation for its poor quality is that its creator was someone ill-suited to the task, forced to complete it with insufficient time, or who simply did not perform it well.

Your greater concern should be whether it was crafted with malice.

Regardless of which, your next actions must be to:

1. Admit that new-found flaws in the "Glaros Report" merit review of its methods, content, and conclusions. In other words, acknowledge publicly that the report may have been flawed, and you're investigating to what extent, why and how.

2. Emphasize that the new "Montgomery Report" will be conducted separate from the first: fairly, comprehensively, and without influence from the University.

Pride, fear of bad PR—and pressure to appear as a decisive leader in a new role—may compel you to be unwavering in defending our initial decision and the people who shaped it—all leaders understand the temptation to 'circle the wagons'. However, those same leaders would agree also that to unquestioningly support the findings of a report found publicly to be flawed—in a misguided attempt to preserve the integrity of your office and the university—would result in both wearing the unpleasant scent of scandal that will not go away—even. It's humbling to admit mistakes for any of us, and takes strength of character that most don't have to publicly admit mistakes and reverse a decision, but if sufficient new facts are brought forward in the "Montgomery Report" to reverse your decision—it's
what you must do.
You felt justified to act swiftly and decisively in “terminating with prejudice” to send a message to the university and community that The Ohio State University does not tolerate harassing behavior—or those who foster or allow it—from its students or educators at any level.
Because you acted based on flawed information, I urge you to act boldly, responsibly, and decisively in doing the right thing now.
I am an alumnus of the OSU Marching Band. I did not have a nickname, didn’t assign any as squad leader, didn’t own a copy of the songbook, never saw a copy of any oath, don’t recall taking one, and only marched midnight ramp once in five seasons. My wife and I met in the Band, and both recall with great fondness our time spent in TBDBITL, enjoy still the friendship and camaraderie of countless fellow alums, and get back every few years to march in the alumni game. The OSUMB was the center of our college experience, and gave us a badge of honor we display with pride on resumes and T-shirts still.
As parents of four daughters—one of whom a junior at OSU, despite her New Jersey upbringing—we would never support ANY organization that marginalized women, and yes—we’d ecstatically support it if one of our daughters chose to audition for the band. I don’t know Dr. Waters, but I do know that he deserves a review of this situation that is far more comprehensive and impartial than he has received to this point, and--given the positive public support he’s received from recent female band members—is not deserving of the accusations leveled against him, and certainly not his firing.
Thank you for your consideration of my points, and best of luck to you in the coming weeks and months in making the right decisions. I believe you know what they are: the challenge is to make them.

Respectfully,
Mike Coggins, H-Row 1981-85
Cc: Betty Montgomery, Ohio State Board of Trustees
Dr. Drake and Member of the Board of Trustees of The Ohio State University:
For the president and the Board of Trustees of one of the most prestigious research institutions in the world to continue to state that they stand behind a flawed report is, to say the least, disappointing. If we did not continue to search for the truth despite what we know today the earth would still be flat and the center of the universe, Pluto might never have been a planet or might still be a planet and we might as well shut down the James because since what we know today is all that matters we will never have a cure for cancer since we don’t today. Seem preposterous? I hope so.
I am writing to express my opinion of the investigation and report (the “Glaros Report”) used to justify the firing of Jon Waters from his position as director of the Ohio State Marching Band. From what I know you had every right to terminate his employment at any time for any reason or no reason at all. Unfortunately you chose to use the Glaros report on band culture to justify your decision and your decision now to continually cite that report and rely on it to justify the firing is, in my opinion a big mistake.
I would like to briefly point out why I believe this and then, in the pages that follow, I will challenge each factual section of the report in more depth.
The glaring errors I see in the Glaros report can be divided into several high level categories.
1. Sample Size
2. Hearsay
3. Timing
4. Responsibility for actions of adults
Dr. Drake, there are 225 members in the marching band block, at least 5 members of D row and several student staff members. In addition there are thousands of alumni both locally and scattered throughout the world. Why you would choose to make such an important decision that purportedly is based on a finding about the band culture based on interviews with a complainant’s child, four other current members of the band and 5 alumni plus various staff is concerning. In addition, it is my understanding that the witnesses were all suggested by the complainant or her daughter. I believe that using this sample size to come to any conclusion about a culture is but one of the fatal flaws in the Glaros report. The Glaros report states numerous times that a witness was told something by someone else. That, in legal terms, is hearsay. Rather than determine who the witness heard say these things and interview that person the report takes the hearsay as truth and bases its conclusions on the hearsay. In any court of law the hearsay relied on in the Glaros report would not be admitted as evidence and the actual witness would have to be produced (subject to certain exceptions, none of which I believe apply here). Many of the conclusions made in the report are based on undated testimony. Mr. Waters has only been the director, not including his time as interim director, since October 2012 yet he is being held responsible for actions that could have taken place and most likely in many cases did take place many years if not decades before October 2012.
Many of the events cited in the report took place off campus, not on official band functions and not at times when the director, or any faculty member, should reasonable be expected to be responsible for the actions of young men and women who are over the age of 18.
While I believe the information presented above provides sufficient doubt and new information to warrant reopening the initial investigation and report I have gone into some detail over the next several pages in an attempt to point out specific issues with the report and how the investigation was conducted. While I do not believe anything I or anyone else will ever say will get Mr. Waters his job back I would like you to consider the damage you have done to the reputations of each and every former and current band member by the erroneous way in which the culture of the band was characterized and portrayed and your continued statements that you stand behind the report.
It is not too late to right this wrong, to conduct a full and complete investigation into the band culture and publicize what I believe that will bring to light. The band is and has always been a group of
dedicated young men and women who always did their best to act professionally and represent The Ohio State University in the most professional manner possible. They are also a group of mostly 18 to 21 year old kids away from home for the first time who occasionally act like college kids and this is not a bad thing. As has been stated by numerous former members publically, most band members feel the safest and most comfortable with other band members and would want no one else by our side when challenged with a difficult situation.

I would be naïve to believe that none of the actions described in the Glaros report ever happened but, to conclude that the entire band culture is and always was sexualized to the extent portrayed in the Glaros report is irresponsible and extremely hurtful to the thousands of TBDBITL Alumni and hundreds of current band members whose character you have called into question.

Sincerely,
Lawrence H. Cohen
BSBA 1990, MBA 1994, JD 1997
OSUMB Sousaphone 1986-1990
President TBDBITL Alumni Club 1999-2000
Detailed analysis of the Glaros Report

1. Paragraph 2 of Section I of the Glaros report states that approximately 21% of the band members are women. The percentage of women in the band is irrelevant and misleading. Positions in the band are determined by a tryout procedure that is judged objectively and disregards gender. There is evidence that based on the fact that the band contains no woodwinds or auxiliary it could be reasonably expected for males to outnumber females. Women are routinely in positions of leadership in the band. The band’s military history should not be discarded and scantily clad baton twirlers and flag girls added nor should the all brass tradition in place since 1934 and required tryouts be discarded simply to equalize the number of men and women in the band.

2. The scope of the investigation section discusses the witnesses interviewed during the investigation. The scope of the investigation presents a fatal flaw. Of over 200 band members and thousands of Alumni only 5 current marching band members were interviewed, including the daughter of the complainant and 6 alumni, including the current director Jonathan Waters. Further, the report states that it was completed as information continued to come in, recommended but did not undertake a survey of the band, which should have included alumni, and admitst that it did not randomly interview members of the band, just the witnesses referred by the complainant. If a scientist only published the results of studies that supported his conclusion he would quickly be ridiculed in the scientific community yet that is exactly what seems to have taken place here.

3. Many of the events that led to the conclusion of a certain culture for which Mr. Waters was held liable did not take place during the 2 hour per day class time, other required rehearsals (because band was required to start before the quarter or now semester began), or on trips which were required of the students. They occurred on the students own time and, in many cases, off university property. At what time of the day and geographic boundary does a staff member’s responsibility end? I believe holding a faculty or staff member responsible for the actions of all of his or her students for the entire 4 or more years of their college career is a slippery slope.

4. Midnight Ramp was never a required event. MR was not required to be performed in undergarments. MR was not required to be performed in garments which were excessively sexual in nature. Most MR attire covered as much if not more skin than current swimwear. MR was attended by university police and the scoreboard was operated during MR. Therefore, university officials and athletic department officials knew or reasonably should have known that some or the entire band was marching in the stadium, at midnight in clothing other than their uniforms. In fact, uniforms were not yet distributed. A student had an issue with alcohol consumed off campus, not under the supervision of any staff. The rescue squad was called to the stadium yet no one noticed in 2009 that band members were in their underwear?

5. Nicknames – The report lists 24. It does not state when these were given, the recipients were not interviewed to determine how they felt about the names, it states that the names were on shirts but fails to state that it was the people who voluntarily had their nicknames printed on their own shirts, Smith’s statement that everyone gets a nickname is inaccurate, it was reported that Smith stated that the names are often “pretty dirty”. The emphasis should have been on often. Often is not defined and would be, according to actual band members, a gross overstatement. Hoch said offensive nicknames were decreasing but this obviously did not matter. Of the 24 listed only 12 contain a term that could, without further research or inference be deemed sexual in nature. The report fails to state that the alumni directory only publishes names that are self reported and therefore desired to be published by nicknamed person. Those with nicknames deemed offensive by the report were not interviewed. If they had been they would have indicated that the nicknames were not offensive to them. Just for your
information, my nickname, given to me in 1986, was Wally.

6. Tricks – The individuals performing the tricks were not interviewed to ascertain the true nature of the trick (sexual or not). The tricks were admittedly not performed in front of staff and for the most part not on campus or during class time or other required band time (trips).

7. Rookie Introductions – the testimony by the witnesses is directly contradicted by Hoch and Smith who each stated that the introductions were harmless and not offensive. Staff on other busses did not bring anything offensive to the attention of Mr. Waters. No staff on any bus witnessed nor did any member report to any staff member groping or removing of clothing.

8. Midterms and Physical Challenges – the Rookie Midterm cited dates to 2011, prior to Mr. Waters becoming director and represents the actions on one row not the entire band (culture). Possibly even one person. The challenges alleged to have taken place on the bus would be directly contradicted by Hoch and Smith.

9. The Trip Tic was banned by Mr. Waters in 2012, his first year as director. Contained references to a Marry, Fuck, Kill game which is routinely played by shock jock Howard Stern on his satellite and terrestrial radio programs (where he calls it F, Marry, Kill due to FCC language issues).

10. The song book in an unofficial document produced by a small group of students and paid for by the students publishing the book. The last known publication date is 2006, a full six years before Mr. Waters became director. Smith and Hoch stated they had the singing of these songs stopped when they heard the songs. Many are no “dirtier” that what you would hear from comedians such as Richard Pryor, Robin Williams or Roseanne Barr.

11. Other misconduct – One witness states pornography was on the busses, three staff member witnesses denied this. The “Flying 69” is performed fully clothed, usually by members of the same sex and, except for the name which references the position of the two bodies, is the furthest thing from a sexual act I can imagine. It is more a challenge of strength to hold yourself up on the luggage rack of a bus than anything sexual. Changing clothes on busses is required by the time limitations imposed by the department of athletics and no student that I am aware of has ever stated that this was an issue or sexual in any way. In fact, most seatmates make sure the other can change in relative privacy, at least as much as can be provided on a moving bus.

12. General cultural statements – a witness whose statement supports the finding of a sexualized culture was in band before Mr. Waters became director, described a sexual encounter described by a band member with his non band member girlfriend in an off campus location that was not reported by the female to any authority to my knowledge. First, this is hearsay and second for all we know this band member was either boasting or outright fabricating this story as the band member telling the story was not interviewed. Another used the term culture shock and the only example was the consumption of alcohol on a trip. To some this may indeed be culture shock but the witness’s age is not disclosed nor is the ages of those the witness says were consuming alcohol. One witness described a “culture of intimidation” without any specific examples. ONE!!! One witness stated all male rows were celebrated while another stated that all female rows were equally celebrated.

The analysis section of the Garlos report states:

“The misconduct described above affected many students musical education through the Marching Band, some to a significant degree, as evidenced by feelings of regret and shame that were communicated to our interviewers.” A total of 11 current or former students, including Mr. Waters, were interviewed, there is no reference to their ages and no evidence presented that proves any effect on any student’s education or the significance of that affect, if any. There is also no presentation of testimony of shame or regret on the part of the interviewed students. This is a conclusion which is not substantiated by any facts.

“The misconduct described is highly sexual, frequent, and longstanding as part of the Marching Band’s
culture.” There is nothing presented that shows that any behaviors are HIGHLY sexual or frequent. As for longstanding, there is testimony presented that many of these behaviors either were stopped or in the process of being stopped by Mr. Waters as he entered his second full year as director. Further, there were 6 alumni interviewed and the ages or years in band of these alumni are not provided. How many years of the over 130 year history of the band do these 6 people cover? Apparently they cover enough years to characterize the “highly sexual culture” as longstanding.

“Much of the misconduct was directed by upperclassmen towards newer members of the Band. Some of the misconduct was directly witnessed and permitted by band staff.” I would argue with the use of the term misconduct but it is true that members who have been in band longer gave rookies their nicknames. The testimony seems to state that misconduct that was witnessed by the staff was dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

“The subjects of the sexual harassment were impressionable and developing students.” This presents a legal conclusion without any basis in fact. There is no proof of sexual harassment or that these students, most if not all of whom were over the age of 18, were impressionable or developing.

“The misconduct occurred in multiple locations involving the Marching Band, including practice at the stadium, bus trips, alumni events, and off campus parties. Much of the misconduct occurred during official Marching Band activities when students were under the supervision of staff.” Which events of misconduct occurred under the supervision of staff? The Midnight Ramp? The staff interviewed stated they either did not see or did not tolerate and stopped any misconduct. Is the staff to babysit adult college kids and monitor their behavior on and off campus 24/7? If so I would argue that the Band is extremely understaffed and the staff they have is extremely underpaid. Further, many other groups or teams which also receive credit for a class are not being held to the same standard of holding their leaders and staff responsible for their actions 24/7.

Pam Bork’s statements should be completely disregarded. She volunteered for 18 years before resigning in 2013. How many times did she complain of the atmosphere and behavior? She was concerned she would lose her license if a student became ill from alcohol poisoning but that is exactly what happened four years earlier in 2009. What record is there of any of Bork’s previous complaints to Waters, the previous director, any other faculty or staff member of the University?

The four conclusions made in the analysis section to support the conclusion are new facts that are not presented in the discussion of band culture. If these were such key facts that would warrant the firing of Mr. Waters why were the facts not detailed in the discussion of the culture.

The statement that “Waters failed to take action to eliminate the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects” assumes that there was harassment and, to the extent it references the culture and activities described by some of the limited number of witnesses is simply not true.

The additional factors cited may provide cause for termination but do not address Title IX and a sexualized culture at all.

Title IX CLEARLY does not require the investigation to be complete in 60 days.

Based on a limited sample size of interviews, conflicting testimony, hearsay and conclusions unsupported by testimony, the report makes two conclusions. The Marching band’s culture facilitated acts of sexual harassment, creating a hostile environment for students and Jonathan Waters knew or reasonable should have known about this culture but failed to eliminate the sexual harassment, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects.

I and many other band members and alumni with intimate knowledge of the current situation, the actions of Mr. Waters and the history of the band culture do not believe either of these conclusions is true and neither is supported by the facts in this situation.

The characterization of a pervasive culture decades old is simply incorrect and cannot be supported by even a preponderance of the evidence (the reports standard not mine) based on the amount of conflicting testimony, the amount of hearsay evidence used and the small sample size of recent band
members and alumni.
At the very least, the entire investigation should be questioned, the Montgomery task force should be able to revisit the initial investigation and look into past band activities and culture and the good name of thousands of band alumni that have been tarnished by this incomplete, incompetent and inaccurate Glaros report should be restored. I would also ask that you consider the ramifications on relying on this flawed report to justify the termination of a good man. This is especially concerning as you apparently needed no reason at all to terminate Mr. Waters but instead relied on a flawed report that is based on an inadequate investigation. Whether or not Mr. Waters is rehired or, as many people are advocating for, reinstated, the report and investigation should be publically acknowledged for what they are flawed and inadequate.
Jeffrey R. Cox, Esq.

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 14, 2014

Dear President Drake and Board of Trustees:

My name is Jeff Cox. I am an attorney-at-law, author, historian, Columbus, Ohio, native currently living in Indianapolis, and proud alum of The Ohio State University Marching Band ("Band"). I am also the son of two Ohio State graduates, both of whom received their undergraduate and graduate degrees from the School of Journalism, one of whom just retired after four decades as a political journalist. Despite being raised in Indiana, both my loyal Ohio State Buckeye parents raised me as a loyal Ohio State Buckeye. At this point, the current Ohio State University ("University") administration’s handling of the allegations against Jon Waters and the Band — and at this point they are just allegations — has us questioning that loyalty, and whether that loyalty is being returned by the current administration...

"Loyalty" is not just the emotional basis but the legal basis for the glaring faults with the current administration’s handling of the allegations against the Band, which I will boil down to three major points.

1. Report Dated July 22, 2014 issued by The Office of University Integrity and Compliance ("Office") under the authority of Chris Glaros, Assistant Vice President for Compliance Operations and Investigations ("The Glaros Report").

During my tenure as an attorney with the State of Indiana, I was periodically tasked with investigating possible wrongdoing and composing reports detailing the allegations of wrongdoing, the evidence of said wrongdoing, and the legal conclusions drawn therefrom. As a litigator, it is my job to review and analyze reports of alleged wrongdoing. As an author, I have investigated various questions of history and assembled the evidence into various history articles. It was those articles that eventually got me invited to write my book Rising Sun, Falling Skies; The Disastrous Java Sea Campaign of World War II, which itself contains elements of reporting and investigation. It was with this experience in mind that I read the Glaros Report.

I found the Glaros Report indeed shocking, though not for the reasons you might believe or perhaps wish. I was a member of the Band from 1989-1993. I witnessed most of the behaviors described in the Glaros Report at one time or another. I didn’t like it and didn’t take part in any of it, including the Midnight Ramp. I made clear that I did not like it and as a result I received no pressure whatsoever to take part in it. No nicknames, no insults, nothing. How this comports with the general references to “peer pressure” and a “sexualized culture” made in the Glaros Report is, at best, unclear.

No, the most shocking part of the Glaros Report was its legal conclusions and the structure of its narrative as well as the underlying investigation. I use the terminology in that order deliberately, as it appears the legal conclusions were written before the narrative was prepared, which in turn seems to have been done before the investigation was concluded or possibly even begun. This is a completely improper procedure for investigating allegations of wrongdoing.
Some of the most egregious examples:

**Sample Size** – Page 3 of the Glaros Report states “Conclusions were made using a preponderance of the evidence standard.”

Yet, Pages 3-4 state that the investigators contacted 5 Band members, including the Complainant’s Child. The investigators contacted 6 Band alumni, including Jon Waters. Furthermore Page 3, Footnote 3 states:

The complainant and witnesses recommended specific people to interview and we have talked with or tried to contact each of them. As of July 15, 2014, we were still receiving information from some of the witnesses interviewed. [...W]e did not randomly interview current Band members for this investigation.”

In other words, the investigators contacted 5 Band members, including the Complainant’s Child, out of 225 Band members. The investigators contacted 6 Marching Band alumni, including Jon Waters, out of thousands of Band alumni. That is by itself an awfully small sample size to defame the entire Band. Even worse, Footnote 3 by itself appears to confirm that the investigators only contacted people recommended by the Complainant and the Complainant’s witnesses.

It’s easy to establish a preponderance of the evidence if one looks for and considers only evidence supporting one side of a case. This is not a method for seeking truth but a method for finding someone guilty.

**Glaring Contradictions** – As stated earlier, Page 3 of the Glaros Report states “Conclusions were made using a preponderance of the evidence standard.” Yet Page 5 contains the following statement:

Most witnesses indicated that participation in Midnight Ramp was not required. Some witnesses stated that students not participating in the tradition would receive negative treatment from other students and staff. Other witnesses stated that there were no consequences for not participating, while one witness stated that she was “told not to talk about it outside of the Band.”

By the Glaros Report’s own admission, “Most witnesses indicated that participation in Midnight Ramp was not required.” By the preponderance of evidence standard the Glaros Report states is used, the Midnight Ramp was not required. Yet the Glaros Report never makes this clear. Moreover, the use of the term “some” to indicate the witnesses that said “students not participating in the tradition would receive negative treatment from other students and staff, as opposed to the term “most” witnesses used in the previous sentence, is also revealing, and indicative that “most” witnesses in fact did not receive negative treatment.

Thus, by the standards explicitly stated in the Glaros Report, the Midnight Ramp was not an issue and should not have been included in the Glaros Report at all.
Factually Unsupported Statements and Misleading Language — Page 4 contains statements that the Midnight Ramp was “overse[n]” by Waters or “under Waters’ direction.” This is a factual error. A more accurate term might be “monitor.” The use of “oversee” and “direction” suggests Waters controlled it. While Page 5 references an alcohol poisoning incident that occurred “five or six years ago,” after which staff agreed to monitor the event to make sure nothing like that happened again, none of the alleged witness statements mentioned in the Glaros Report support the conclusion that Waters “over[saw] or “direct[ed]” the Midnight Ramp. This was terminology chosen by the author of the Glaros Report, not by the witnesses.

Factually unsupported statements and misleading language appear throughout the Glaros Report. The previous example of the Midnight Ramp included the statements that “most” witnesses said the Midnight Ramp was not required, but “some” said there was “negative treatment” if one did not participate. “Most” and “some” are not defined, which is by itself suspicious given that the relatively low number of witnesses interviewed should have indicated actual numbers of witnesses speaking to each. “Negative treatment” is not defined. At all.

There is far more where that came from. Page 8 contains the statement:

Several witnesses indicated that new Band members were subject to “Rookie Introductions,” which occurred at the front of a moving bus en route to away games. These sometimes included sexually explicit questioning and dirty jokes. A witness stated that one such episode entailed using a dildo as a microphone. Another witness confirmed that sexually explicit Rookie Introductions occurred in the Fall of 2013.

“Sometimes included” does not properly indicate how often the introductions were of a sexual nature or how much of each individual introduction was sexual. I remember that mine was not sexual at all. Plus, a single account does not “confirm,” unless, perhaps, the “confirm” is a reference to the author’s own biases.

Page 15 is especially bad in this regard. It contains the statement: “The misconduct described above affected many students’ musical education through the Marching Band, some to a significant degree, as evidenced by feelings of regret and shame that were communicated in our interviews.” Except none of the witness statements quoted in the Glaros Report contain any statements of “feelings of regret [or] shame.” Furthermore, as stated above, the investigators by their own admission interviewed 5 band members, including the Complainant’s Child, out of 225 band members. The investigators contacted 6 marching band alumni, including Jon Waters, out of thousands of Band alumni. How, exactly, that constitutes “many” is somewhat unclear. And aside from the bald statement that “the misconduct described above affected many students’ musical education through the Marching Band, some to a significant degree,” there is no evidence in the Glaros Report that any student was affected at all, nor is there any explanation of any effect.

Page 15 also says “The subjects of the sexual harassment were impressionable and developing students.” Which seems like an obfuscation of the fact that the “subjects” of the “sexual harassment” were legally adults. Page 15 also states “We find that the Marching Band’s culture facilitated acts of sexual harassment under both university policy and Title IX, creating a hostile environment for students.” It is not clear from the Glaros Report that the alleged victims all
agree. In fact, based on media statements made by several of the witnesses, it appears that they in fact do not.

While I would like to believe this was just the result of in-artful writing, the totality of the Glaros Report and the current administration's response thereto support the belief that this report was actually intended to give a false impression that would bring in Title IX.

**Lack of Factual Integrity** – This term is my own, a reference to the necessity to “show your work” but make allowances for confidentiality. Whether in my books or in my briefs, I must always show my work – my sources of information, my case law, so that they can be checked. My book, for instance, contains some 30 pages of end notes citing my sources. Nothing of the sort appears in the Glaros Report. With witnesses whose identities must be kept confidential, that is somewhat understandable, except there are methods of handling confidential witnesses, statements, and information that preserve the factual integrity of the report. Such methods include designation of witnesses, declaration of when and, if necessary, where the witness interview took place and by whom, additional information to give context to the witness statement, and even where the full transcript of the witness statement is located and how it may be acquired.

This is not rocket surgery, but basic investigatory and report-writing technique. Yet, again, except for a designation of witnesses that appears at the beginning of the Glaros Report and is never mentioned again, nothing of the sort appears in the Glaros Report. There is no easy way to even begin checking the work of the Office here. No way to verify the witness statements, no way to check for context. For all we know, most of these witnesses and their interviews do not exist and never did; in essence, the Glaros Report says, “Trust us.” Part of my practice involves criminal defense, where such conduct by the government is utterly unacceptable.

Even worse is the hearsay that appears in Glaros Report. For instance, Page 17 quotes Pam Bork, “Physical Therapy Manager with Student Health Services who volunteered for 18 years with the Band,” as saying other students (non-Band members) who were on the bus at the Cal game were “horrified” by the atmosphere. Not only is there no identification of who these people were, there is no indication they were interviewed at all. Page 17 also says Bork added that she was concerned that someone would get hurt and that she quit the Band because she believed “something bad was going to happen,” and then referenced a sexual assault that had occurred as what she feared could come to pass. The Glaros Report never gives any details of this alleged sexual assault.

I have plenty more examples of the shoddy work behind the Glaros Report. As a litigator, it is my professional opinion that this report could be easily destroyed in any court of law, so poorly written and conceived that it may not even be admissible – except to show defamation by the current administration.

Generally speaking, in both the private sector and in government law one cannot expect to turn in a report as poorly-written and conceived as the Glaros Report, let alone release it to the public, and expect to stay employed in assembling and writing such reports much longer. Yet the current administration has pointedly and repeatedly stood by the Glaros Report.
The current administration's position thus changes things, and makes it look as if the Giaros Report is not the result of incompetence but of malice, that it is was not so much an investigation but an assassination. An assassination of character. Of Jon Waters. Of the Band and its alumni. Of The Ohio State University.

Which brings me to my second point:


Robert Conquest's Third Law of Politics rather famously holds "The simplest way to explain the behavior of any bureaucratic organization is to assume that it is controlled by a cabal of its enemies." That is, unfortunately, the most charitable way of explaining how the current administration has handled the Giaros Report.

As much of an abomination as it is, the Giaros Report could have been easily withheld under the investigatory or deliberative records exceptions to the public records statute until, at the very least, someone competent could have rewritten it. At least according to the public timeline, that was not done here.

The Giaros Report is dated July 22. The announcement of Waters' firing was July 24. Granted, there was the deadline established by Title IX, but absolutely nothing in Title IX, the 2001 "Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties" statement or the April 4, 2011, "Dear Colleague" necessitated firing Waters. There were plenty of options, including censure, policy changes, or assignment of a Title IX coordinator that the Band has been lacking. But it appears none of these other options was even considered. Without considering these other options and apparently not even performing due diligence on the accuracy of the Giaros Report, the current administration quickly in that 2-day period chose the nuclear option: firing the best band director in the country, one who has been innovative in show design, who has brought excitement back to marching bands across the country, and has brought nothing but good press and energy to The Ohio State University.

None of the other possible options would have attracted much in the way of possible media attention. Firing the best and most famous college band director in the country was certain to get maximum media attention. And so it did. And it brought in with it the aforementioned shoddy Giaros Report that can easily be argued defames Waters, the Band and all its alumni to national media attention. Furthermore, little of the inaccurate sensationalized reporting by the media of the Giaros Report (i.e., alleging the Midnight Ramp was "hazing," even though it fits neither a legal nor a practical definition) was corrected by the current administration, and may have in some cases even been abetted by it. The current administration did absolutely nothing to defend the University or the Band.

Even worse, the current administration decided to have a second investigation into the alleged "sexualized culture" of the Band, an investigation to be headed by former Ohio Attorney General
Betty Montgomery. Not explained is why a second investigation into the alleged “sexualized culture” is needed if the first investigation into that same culture that resulted in the Glaros Report and the firing of Waters was so “thorough,” a word specifically used by the current administration. Montgomery herself has stated she will not reopen the first investigation that resulted in the Glaros Report. Not explained is how she can look into the alleged “sexualized culture” without reviewing the Glaros Report that supposedlydocuments that culture.

So the current administration “stands behind” (another phrase it frequently uses) the first investigation and the Glaros Report. But will have second investigation. That will look into the same subject matter as the first investigation. But will not look into the first investigation. Because the first investigation was so “thorough” that it does not need to be reviewed by a second investigation, even though that second investigation is supposed to cover the same subject matter.

Not even Monty Python could concoct a scheme that’s so preposterous. At least in the “Dead Parrot” sketch, Michael Palin tried to explain to John Cleese, however ridiculously, that the parrot was still alive. The current administration will not even do that, arrogantly responding to the increasing questions about the Glaros Report with a machine-like “Read the report.” As if somehow the current administration has the right to invoke papal infallibility.

No crisis management specialist worth the title would recommend handling the Glaros Report like this. Based on my own experience in crisis management and consultations with crisis managers, from the standpoint of the University and the Band, this situation has been handled in such a way as to do maximum damage to both. The current administration could not have damaged Ohio State more if it was trying. “A cabal of its enemies,” indeed.

Which brings me to my final issue:

### 3. Duty of Loyalty to Ohio State.

The President of The Ohio State University is not a king, nor a god, a potentate, a pope, an emir, sheikh, an emperor, or even a princeps. The president is an agent. Ultimately, so are the trustees. All are agents of the principal: The Ohio State University. In legal terms an agent is obligated to act in the best interests of the principal and only the best interests of the principal. As “Buckeye Battle Cry” says “Our honor defend, we will fight to the end for Ohio.”

Yet here there was no honor defended, and no one fought for Ohio, including and especially those whose duty it was to do so. The investigators at the Office of Compliance and Integrity did not have to find a violation of Title IX, but they chose to do so, straining and stretching, warping and twisting alleged facts into the Glaros Report. In so doing, the investigators at the Office of Compliance and Integrity appear to have been so determined to find a lack of the former that they sacrificed the latter. Even though a due diligence review of the Glaros Report would have revealed its many flaws, the current administration seems to have been almost eager to accept it
as the gospel truth, and quickly used it as justification for use of the nuclear option — firing the best band director in the country.

The ancient Greek philosopher Socrates was subjected by the Athenians to a sham trial after which he was sentenced to death. The Athenians only forced Socrates to drink hemlock. They did not drop a nuclear bomb on his house and wipe out him, his family and friends, and a large chunk of Athens. But that is in essence what the current administration has done with the Band. The Band, which used to have a spotless reputation and was old and unquestionably the best in the country under Jon Waters, has been badly damaged, perhaps irreparably, and its survival is at stake. The thousands alumni of the Band, including myself, have been libeled as sexual deviants. And all by an, at the very least, incompetent piece of investigation and writing in the Glaros Report.

It is difficult to see how any of the current administration’s actions here have been in the best interests of the University or even could have been contemplated as in the best interests of the University. Nothing — not the facts of the case, even as presented in the shoddy Glaros Report; not Title IX; not even and especially simple notions of justice and fairness — required the use of the Glaros Report to smear Waters and the Band.

So why was the Glaros Report handled this way? We have asked ourselves that, and there is no easy or pleasant answer. It does not make sense. One does not destroy a precious, beloved asset over a century in the making except through incompetence or malice. There is that choice again. It is not a pleasant choice, but one with which the current administration has presented us.

Incompetence or malice? We should not be asking ourselves this question. We should not be wondering about ulterior motives. And yet we are. The thousands of Band alumni, the tens of thousands of Ohio State alumni who have supported us over the years, should trust the current administration — with the president, the trustees, the deans, the provosts, the staff, to protect and act in the best interests of The Ohio State University.

That was clearly not done here. The current administration cannot even make a case that it was done here, and the more and more information comes out about the shoddy Glaros Report — especially the interviewed witnesses who denounce it as inaccurate — the more and more the report looks less like an investigation and more like an assassination. And when we dare to question it, the current administration treats us with arrogance and contempt.

The current administration’s actions here have broken the bond of trust that should exist between it and the alumni and students of the Ohio State University. At this point, nothing said by the current administration or those chosen by it, including Betty Montgomery, can be trusted as be an accurate representation of the facts about this affair. The only way to begin to rebuild that trust is for the current administration to admit its mistake and for the trustees to earn the word “trust” in their titles by retracting the Glaros Report and reinstating Jon Waters as band director.

Anything less and that broken trust will become irreparable.

Please provide me with confirmation that you received my letter. I request feedback from the Board of Trustees regarding this matter.
Truly yours,
Jeffrey R. Cox, Esq.

Attorney-at-law licensed in Indiana and California
Author, *Rising Sun Falling Skies: The Disastrous Java Sea Campaign of World War II.*
JD 2003 – Indiana University-Indianapolis McKinney School of Law
BA National Security Policy Studies 1994 – The Ohio State University
The Ohio State University Marching Band (C-Row) – 1989-1993
Karen Crockett

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 12, 2014
President Drake and OSU Board of Trustees,

As someone who has worked with The Ohio State University Marching Band (OSUMB) for over forty years, I have an important perspective relevant to understanding the work of Jonathan Waters and the culture of our Marching Band family...

In past decades, long before Jon Waters held any position of leadership in the band, student behavior did include examples of sophomoric, inappropriate “humor”-based behavior. These trends were not specific to the marching band, but rather exemplify the broader culture present among college student populations in general, and within the broader society. Some of the specific behaviors that found their way into our marching band culture were a by-product of our military beginnings as an organization. Even those deeply rooted “traditions” were already in the process of being successfully eliminated through the initiative, high moral values, and tenacious efforts that Jonathan Waters independently brought to his role as Director. His work was moving us all toward more currently acceptable expectations.
Jonathan Waters is deeply committed to students, focusing on the quality of not only their education but to also to their college experience in a wholesome and safe environment. As the Director, Jon has worked diligently and tirelessly to improve the culture of the band. In less than two years, he has done more to improve the culture and student behavior than anyone in the band’s rich history. Some of the many improvements already accomplished include:

- Elimination of inappropriate nicknames
- Elimination of poor behavior on busses
- Elimination of “midnight ramp”
- Forbidding excessive alcohol consumption before/during the annual Band Dance
- Implementing trainings for staff and student leadership
- And most importantly, fostering a focus on respect for self and others.

These changes, in order to be effective and long-lasting, were being accomplished in a holistic way, by including the participation of our well-defined student leadership and were implemented with full collaboration between all staff members. An organization of this size cannot be reformed without including the layers of influence coming from all levels. Through this comprehensive approach, Jon Waters has made great strides in improving the band’s culture, thereby protecting students from inappropriate behavior including outdated “traditions”. But even he cannot and should not be held responsible for behavior off-campus, during non-band hours, and not connected to band events.
A more thorough and accurate investigation would have also clearly revealed the band’s positive cultural components focused on service, patriotism, and on citizenship. Under Jonathan Water’s leadership, the band has significantly increased service projects, charitable efforts and fundraising for the OSU community, as well as for entities reaching far beyond the University. The students in OSU’s Marching Band are intelligent, hard-working, respectful, dedicated people who move on to impressive life accomplishments as professionals and community leaders. We should take pride in their accomplishments as doctors, teachers, clergy, artists, soldiers,
engineers, attorneys, social workers, ... the list goes on and on. Instead the dismissal of Jon Waters, based on a narrow and erroneous "report" has tarnished all of us, including the thousands of former members whose lives were forever enriched by their membership in our band.

What sad, embarrassing irony that our organization, OSUMB, steeped in excellence and respect, has been so wrongly characterized by a "report" that was poorly conducted, one-sided and misguided.

Our honor defend...

Sincerely,

Karen Crockett
August 4, 2014

Mr. David Axelrod,

As someone who has worked with The Ohio State University Marching Band (OSUMB) for over forty years, I have an important perspective relevant to understanding the work of Jonathan Waters and to the culture of our Marching Band family.

In past decades, long before Jon Waters held any position of leadership in the band, student behavior did include examples of sophomoric, inappropriate “humor”-based behavior. These trends were not specific to the marching band, but rather exemplified the broader culture present among college student populations in general, and within the broader society. Some of the specific behaviors that found their way into our marching band culture were a by-product of our military beginnings as an organization. Even those deeply rooted “traditions” were already in the process of being successfully eliminated through the initiative, high moral values, and tenacious efforts that Jonathan Waters independently brought to his role as Director. His work was moving us all toward more currently acceptable expectations.

Jonathan Waters is deeply committed to students, focusing on the quality of not only their education but to also to their college experience in a safe and supportive environment. As the Director, Jon has worked diligently and tirelessly to improve the culture of the band. In less than two years, he has done more to improve the culture and student behavior than anyone in the band’s rich history. Some of the many improvements already accomplished include:

- Elimination of inappropriate nicknames
- Elimination of poor behavior on buses
- Elimination of “midnight ramp”
- Forbidding excessive alcohol consumption before/during the annual Band Dance
- Implementing trainings for staff and student leadership
- And most importantly, fostering a focus on respect for self and others.

These changes, in order to be effective and long-lasting, were being accomplished in a holistic way, by including the participation of our well-defined student leadership and were implemented with full collaboration between all staff members. An organization of this size cannot be reformed without including the layers of influence coming from all levels. Through this comprehensive approach, Jon Waters has made great strides in improving the band’s culture, thereby protecting students from inappropriate behavior including outdated “traditions”. But even he cannot and should not be held responsible for behavior off-campus, during non-band hours, and not connected to band events.
Julie Essman Stevens

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 12, 2014

I am a member of a three-generation OSUMB family. This band has shaped my entire life and now I tell you our story...

My father, Jim Essman, was in band in the unexpanded, unisex era, serving as a squad leader in the baritone section. He was also a member of the trumpet section, I believe, when he first made the band. He loved that group, and has continued friends with many he met then. He is a past president of the board of governors and has marched almost all if not every reunion. He made the band on grit, talent and determination though he will tell you he had very little actual playing ability. That is nonsense, and I grew up listening to him practice – wanting to be just like that. When he returned from service in Vietnam the first thing he did was play Christmas music. The second was to play all his OSUMB recordings. I am told I marched around the living room to Le Reg, but what child can resist? He was very involved in the active band throughout my childhood, and we kids went to all his performances – Park of Roses, Upper Arlington 4th of July Parade, reunion rehearsals. My mom made lifelong friends among the other wives and we all made friends with the other children. My dad was rejuvenated by alumni active band practice, and sometimes I’d take the COTA bus in to Columbus from Pickaway County to go to rehearsal with him. The other members always made me welcome. I was not expected to make the band. That is a pure truth. My band director, Mark Hosler, had been Most Inspirational in his day and knew what it took. I don’t think he ever really believed I had that, and my family was dreading what would happen when I was cut. Summer sessions are student run and the best way to learn the skills and build endurance. I had never known my shins could sweat – I was a hard working person whose parents expected a lot, but I had never in my life exerted myself like that. My best friend fell to the music audition and we both cried. I was named M-14 – the last name called, and I was delirious! I must have made that band on my own grit and determination, with the dedicated help of Mike Coggins, Jerry Canterberry, and Al Notestine and Lisa Cozad Galvin (though he and she had graduated and were just back to motivate candidates). My squad leaders, Tom Hartman and Greg Schilling, did their best with me and I actually got to march the Patriotic Show three times. The deeply shy and introverted child that made the band was nicknamed “Cindy Brady” and managed to overcome terror and tell a joke to a busload of people who heckled me through it, patted me the head as I went to sit down, and in general cheered me into greater confidence. Some of my favorite people were in band with me, and you all know who you are. I was so proud to be part of this greater family, to have done something so closely tied to my dad. Every year I was terrified of being cut and ran miles and miles to prepare. I had my own 5 yard by 5 yard grid laid out on the patio (I know lots of us did that) and practiced 270 spin turns and horn flashes till I was no longer dizzy. The expectations are identical for every candidate – there are no female or male requirements. I can’t emphasize that enough. Why are there fewer women then men in the OSUMB? Because it is hard to make, because everyone completes the same drills and skills and puts in the same time. I play baritone. That bad boy weighs 8 pounds, and we were required to hold it at arm’s length during a horns up drill. Not to abuse us, but to build the strength necessary to complete a flawless halftime show. EVERYONE did this. I used full gallon jugs of milk to build up to holding that horn. Colleen Nutter Kent was
my ideal, so musically talented, strong and a wonderful leader. She was one of my squad leaders also and the first female Most Inspirational Bandsman. By my last year I was so much better, so much more confident – I could march an entire tryout drill or series of ramps without missing a note, could march down the field with no horn movement, could march Snoopy with no drifting, could fall out and instruct a candidate whenever asked. As M-7, my dad and I were at one time the only two family members to have marched the same spot. That may be different now, but still fabulous to us!

I met the love of my life in band, Brian Stevens, who has gone on to become one of the best high school band directors in the state in my humble opinion. His cousin had been in the band, so Brian knew he wanted to try out for himself. Although he was cut the first time, he did not let that stop him as he had his own store of determination. When he made the band on his second try, his parents were so incredibly proud of him. That learning experience has allowed him to reach out to students who may experience failure and encourage them to persevere, then succeed with the victory all the sweeter. A member of Trumpet Cheers, he also became a squad leader his last year. We continued attending the TBDBITL alumni reunion together when his fall schedule allowed, and we do so to this day. Also the director of the Brass Band of Columbus, he has many former OSUMB, now TBDBITL alumni members in his band. We share an heritage of pride and excellence. Brian’s high school bands have long marched in the Buckeye Invitational, and he and Jon worked together often to hone and enhance the role the Ohio Music Educator’s Association plays in high school programs. You have never seen anything more lovely than the look on a student’s face when they come off Ohio Field having marched their competition or exhibition show. A dream come true for many, and a powerful recruitment tool for Ohio State. My brother, Steve Essman, also made the band. He played sousaphone, has emotional and deeply felt memories of dotting the “i” and was in K-L Row with Jon. He told me at the time what a wonderful person Jon was, and was so incredibly thrilled for him last year when named the head director, at long last. Steve’s five years in band shaped him, also allowing him the chance to grow into the strong, wonderful person he is today. Steve also comes back for reunion every chance he gets.

Three years ago, our son, Dan Stevens, auditioned for the first time, on trombone. There is nothing harder than knowing exactly what your child is facing and having no power to influence the outcome. He wore the same grid into the yard, ran miles and miles, and went to every summer session. Like my dad had done, I asked him what he would do if he were cut. Try again next year, like dad did, he said. Dan is such a bold soul, with a big heart and incredible talent, and I was so scared. He made the band as an alternate, one of only five freshmen to be selected that year. He has done very well and this year is assistant squad leader in Q-Row to his best friend. He plays in Trombone Cheers and has been known to serenade our pastor, my mother, various friends and family if he knows where they are seated in the stadium. Another best friend from high school is also in Q-Row and Dan has never been happier. Brian and I are so proud of him. He was interviewed last year by Channel 6 at the height of the positive hoopla, and again a week ago at the depths of despair, and acquitted himself well. His sister has the talent and strength to make the band, but would choose to be the band PT, providing her insight and wisdom in other ways. His younger brother has expressed a wish to try out when his time comes, as well, so the tradition continues.

I submit this family history to make a point. This is not an institution based on degradation, humiliation and negative practices, nor could it do so and persist for generations. I carry that
family connection with me wherever I go, continually meeting people who also have a deep pride in our history. I stand with my band family and the current OSUMB.

I stand with Jon Waters.

Respectfully yours,
Julie Essman Stevens, M-Row 1985-1988
I am writing to you to provide information on my experiences with the Ohio State University Marching Band culture. I was a member of the marching band from 1986 to 1990, and a member of KL-row. This is the basses, or as most people call them tubas or sousaphones. I dotted the "i" twice in my time at Ohio state, in 1989 and 1990.

It is with great dismay that I have seen our reputation slandered by an inaccurate representation of our culture.

The OSU report glosses over some very critical pieces of information, and because of that the press has read between the lines to spread information that is actually libelous. There are many baseless claims of things people had to do to participate in the band.

It's been constantly overlooked that there is a very formal process for getting into the band. Tryouts will start this week and I sincerely hope you attend this process. It is a very serious professionally run system that has been in place for years. Past members as well as new candidates must tryout. The tryout as I remember it consisted of one musical audition, one candidate at a time in front of School of Music faculty. But primarily the audition consisted of three long intense half-day marching sessions where you were assigned complex drills, and were graded on your execution of marching fundamentals, your ability to remember complex drills, and how you handled it when you could not remember them.

It is an intense time, and for those who don't make it, a painful time. I was cut twice, in 1984 and 1985.

There is nothing during this process that could remotely be considered hazing or harassment. None of the things that OSU's report alleges could ever happen at this time. You are not in the band. The only way to get in the band is through this tryout process. More importantly, there is no danger of being removed from the band after you make it (excepting of course for acts that would get you thrown out of any OSU class).

Any such comparisons of the alleged rituals in the investigative report with fraternity hazing rituals are therefore inappropriate, as these hazing rituals in fraternities are prior to membership. Various articles have reported that these are things you "had to do to participate". And yet this is absolutely not true. The only prerequisite to participation in the band is the tryout process.

Not everyone marches in the band. There are two alternates for every row (of twelve) who do not march. Again though this is controlled entirely by formal processes. Failure to memorize your music can result in becoming an alternate. Otherwise, alternates challenge someone from within the row in a process just like the tryout process, to try to take their marching spot by demonstrating superior marching skills. Marching ability is the only criteria that matters. These challenges are judged by squad leaders, and overseen by band staff.

No one is immune from this process. One year a marcher who I will not name in his fourth year was a bit out of shape. A rookie chose to challenge him as the weakest marcher currently marching. This is unusual as most fourth year members are expert marchers. Because of this, the staff was giving this challenge extra scrutiny to insure that only marching ability came into
play. The rookie lost, but the challenge was very close. Afterward there were no repercussions for the rookie. They were doing exactly what they were there to do, insure excellent marching in the row. The fourth year member shaped up.

These are the kinds of things that the band is really all about. This is the truest heart of the band's culture. We were there to make sure the band did the best job possible.

Band practices and performances were always run with the utmost respect and professionalism. Every band function was taken seriously. There was only one way to gain respect in this system, and that was to work hard and do your job well. There was also only one way to lose respect, which likewise, was to fail to take your band membership seriously.

Most of the alleged rituals in the report, I do not recognize. Some though, I do, and I witnessed them or took part. However it should be made extremely clear that the vast majority of such things happened completely outside of the duties of the marching band, for instance at parties put on by band members. Attendance at these parties was not required by staff, nor did any students ever claim they were required.

Any extracurricular traditions of the band are only intended to bring the band together. One of the few things that did take place during practice was the use of rookie nicknames. However this was a process who's goal was inclusion, not humiliation. Nicknames were chosen with sensitivity to the response from the rookie. Sometimes based on an uncomfortable look, but often based on direct objections from the rookie. The vast majority of nicknames were given and never used again. Once you understand that the purpose was inclusion, and that the practice was to find names that people were comfortable with, the whole thing becomes rather pedestrian.

A bit of a big deal has been made about whether the directors used the nicknames. Generally no, but sometimes. This is hardly shocking. A big bear of a trombone player was nicknamed "Ox". It was also a shortening of his last name. Everybody including staff called him Ox. It's simply a nickname that stuck because HE liked it. It's not unusual that people prefer to go by nicknames, and it's hardly surprising that in those cases the staff might pick up on those nicknames.

I want to specifically talk about Midnight Ramp. This is an important tradition, and I'm sad that it will be going away. This one tradition, while extracurricular, I have to admit is not entirely unofficial. The band members who choose to participate have access to the band room, the stadium, and their instruments. (Any claims that university didn't know about this are absurd, as half of a band out in Ohio Stadium marching and playing our instruments as loudly as we would in a performance could not go unnoticed.)

If memory serves, I did this three times out of my five years. I did not choose to do it my rookie year. Like any extracurricular tradition, it was absolutely not mandatory. Moreover, those who were not interested were not even at the stadium (unless they wanted to watch but not march, which was sometimes done). Nobody was forced to be in their underwear, and nobody was forced to see anybody in their underwear. I do know of members who never marched and never attended (at least one became a squad leader).
But I want to share with you why I think this is an important tradition, and why it is ludicrous that it has been called "sexual" in nature. As marching band members, there is, in fact one horribly difficult thing that we are forced to do by the band, and which our membership depends on. It is terrifying and uncomfortable and the source of great stress before any rookie doing it for the first time.

We have to march in front of 100,000 screaming fans, after only having one week to memorize new music, and learn new pregame and halftime shows. There is no optional tradition that I ever chose to participate in that ever made me remotely as uncomfortable as the fear of performing in Ohio Stadium.

This is why Midnight Ramp was important. It was EXACTLY about that fear. The dream we all have where we are in public and suddenly realize we are in our underwear, is a manifestation of this fear. And midnight ramp is one more way we can directly confront that fear. If we can march and play a pregame ramp in our underwear, surrounded by other people in their underwear, and do it correctly and professionally, it affirms our ability to do our jobs without distraction.

As ridiculous as this might sound to you, this is all I can ever associate this tradition with. I find it repugnant that anyone would ever call it "sexual".

It's my understanding that a hostile environment is one that prevents full access to participation in a school class or program. I never saw anything in my time in the band that looked remotely hostile enough to limit participation.

One of my fellow rookies was named was a fairly religious man. He didn't drink and didn't swear. He showed up and did his job. He was friendly and well-liked. He was deeply respected for his excellent work attitude. He would sometimes go to parties and sometimes not. He would not participate in the unofficial songs we sang at parties. As far as I know he never participated in midnight ramp.

And yet he was a squad leader for the last two years in the band. This is a leadership position that is nominated from within. There is no better testament to the health of our culture than the respect he earned, despite eschewing many of the informal and extracurricular traditions of the band.

I know that he did not approve of many extracurricular activities. And yet he was able to not merely participate, but to excel in this allegedly toxic and harassing environment.

My rookie class was unusually large, ten people across two rows. At the time, the row was all male, but there were two women in that came in with me my rookie year. (There had been female members in the past.) Over the years we gained additional women, but they were still a significant minority, just as they were in the average high school tuba section. Despite this ratio, and the alleged hostile environment, another one of our squad leaders in later years was one of the women that was a rookie with me.
These two examples were not at all noteworthy or unusual. The best people were chosen for the job. Only now, in the context of this report do these stories stand out in my mind as exceptional. The true culture of the band, springing from emphasis on the job, was one that was almost automatically respectful, without us even being aware of it.

When I first heard about all of this, I immediately shared on article on medium.com with a brief summary of my experiences in the band. It can be found here: https://medium.com/@thomasafine/our-honor-defend-69d869011337
And I can provide you with the complete text directly upon request. Please use the information there as part of your investigation.

I urge you to look at this, and a large number of other unsolicited testimonials, many of which can be found at http://womenoftheosumb.blogspot.com/
and take them seriously. They are representative of the real culture of the marching band, one that is serious, professional, respectful, and a place where everyone learns to excel and find their inner strength.

I'll probably write more articles on this topic, and will pass those along too when they are finished.

Thank you for your careful consideration on this important issue.

Thomas A. Fine
<Address redacted>
Cambridge Massachusetts

<Cell>
<Phone Number redacted>

Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics
<Email Address redacted>
<Work Phone redacted>
Our Honor Defend

The truth about the culture of the Ohio State marching band.

I had the privilege of spending five years in The Best Damn Band in the Land, The Ohio State University Marching Band. I was a bass (aka sousaphone or tuba) player from 1986 through 1990, and also had the privilege of dotting the “i” in the Script Ohio twice.

We now know that the investigation which cost Jon Waters his job was sparked by a sexual assault, perpetrated by one member of the band against another. This is a tragic occurrence, and one that is outside of anything that I’m aware of that happened in my time with the band.

This incident didn’t lead directly to Jon Waters firing. Based on available reports, he handled the situation completely according to university policy. Connections I have within the band tell me that he also took quick and decisive action internally even before the University had held a hearing which lead to the student’s expulsion. No one is alleging there was a problem in how this was handled. Instead, Jon Waters was fired based on an investigation that was triggered by this incident, which claimed that the bands’ culture was so toxic that such incidents were inevitable.

A band like Ohio State’s lives—and dies—on tradition. Traditions like the Script Ohio. Many of the traditions are formal, like our marching style, with a high-knee lift and sharp snap. We memorize all new music for new shows every home game, so we had no floppy charts bolted onto (and falling off) our horns. We are kept on our toes through a system of extra marchers, called alternates, waiting to take the spot of anyone who has failed to memorize their music, or has let their marching skills slip. We’ve all been through a grueling tryout process every single year we’ve marched. This process kept me out of the band twice before I finally learned what hard work meant.

There are also informal traditions, things that are simply part of the culture that has grown up in the past 136 years. Like the running joke of “back when I was in the band”, an irresistible phrase to all band alumni who lament how much the band has gone downhill in recent years, and how much better we used to do it. Right from the start, Jon Waters was one to both honor tradition and break with it, because when we look at the shows he’s done, we find ourselves thinking, or even saying “back when I was in the band, our shows were never that good”.

But because of the scandal that’s erupted, many people have heard of some of our other, more private traditions.

Traditions like the Midnight Ramp, where the band takes the field at midnight and performs our standard pregame stadium entrance… in our underwear. This was not a mandatory event—out of my five years, I only did this three times, and skipped it my first (rookie) year.
This is not unlike a great many college traditions at a great many schools. A quick check on Google for “college streaking” or “undie run” yields a very long list of such things. Such traditions are standard fare now, and have been for at least 50 years, if not much much longer. Of course this is not to say it is no problem. Some campuses have cracked down on these traditions, seeking to eliminate them. However others have formalized them, and even turned them into fund raisers. Purdue added an official undie run only two years ago.

But we actually don’t have to look past Ohio State to see how a university responds to such behavior. The Mirror Lake Jump at Ohio State is a tradition where students strip to varying degrees and jump in the freezing cold Mirror Lake before the game with the School Up North. Rather than firing anyone for this, or telling the students it had to end, in 2013 Ohio State issued wrist bands to allow attendance at this event.

(Between the two, Midnight Ramp is the much safer event, involving the possibility of neither drowning, nor hypothermia.)

This is an example of the real problem behind the firing of Jon Waters. At first glance, that report seems shocking. But when you take a closer look, the report is all flash and no substance.

For example, a big part of the report is dedicated to the nicknames. The report leaves you with a feeling of mean-spirited and degrading behavior. My nickname was given to me the day after I made it into the band. Like almost all nicknames, it was never used again. But in fact, some of the nicknames did make people truly uncomfortable. And in those cases, a new nickname was quickly chosen by the more senior members (and again, most of the time forgotten). This part of our culture is not described in the report: that behind the lowbrow humor, people were careful, because the goal was to unite us as an organization, not push people away.

The songbooks are another example of flash rather than substance. What the report shows is, again, the disturbing humor of young adults. It does not mention that these songbooks are standard fare at a great many university marching bands. In fact, several of the songs were written by other university bands and passed on to us.

These songs were important to me. I still know some of the lyrics by heart. However I’m fully aware that they were not important to everyone. One of the other bass players who came into the band the same year I did was fairly religious, didn’t drink, and didn’t swear. Ever. He did not participate in the singing.

Was he singled out? Well, eventually he would be nominated by the other bass players to be one of our squad leaders, so yes, he was singled out. Singled out for an honor many of us, including myself, wanted. He was singled out as being trusted by everyone. And he was singled out as someone who was deeply committed to our traditions, even among us. Seeing how he melded with what the report claims is a toxic culture, and which was definitely a tough fit for him, was for me an incredibly powerful life lesson about fitting in while maintaining your own identity. And about the value of remaining calm and confident. This is the the true culture I found in the marching band, a culture not described at all in the investigation report.
And something else from the songbook included in the report stands out to me:

Previous Edition

Complied by [redacted] and
Revised and re-edited by
Addendum by
New Shit compiled by
Renovations by
Recycled by
Even More Shit compiled by
Final 20th Century Edition by
It's Not Annoying, It's Funny Edition by
Renewing the Tradition compiled by

From the band songbook

If you treat this as a timeline and then mentally add the hiring of Jon Waters as band director (2012), and his subsequent firing (2014), it begins to seem a bit ridiculous that he is being held responsible for such long term cultural issues.

Yet another lurid detail from the report was the changing of clothes on the buses. This happened. It also happened in my high school band. And in countless other bands, and drama clubs in high schools and colleges where rapid costume changes are needed. It's just one more detail thrown in that makes our band sound like some bad fraternity movie. But again, it's flash rather than substance. The substance behind this bit of flash is important.

I was never the most comfortable guy getting undressed in front of anyone. But all I ever experienced in this practice was a sense of professionalism. This might sound crazy if you haven't been there. But we weren't stripping because it's fun, or humiliating, or even a rite of passage. We were stripping because we had a job, and bus rides were uncomfortable, and our uniforms were more uncomfortable, and the uniforms needed to be in the best condition possible, which doesn't happen if we're sweating in them for six hours on a bus.
This was a hugely important life lesson for me. The goal was the job. The goal was to do the best job you possibly could. We were all there to do a job, to uphold a tradition. There were jokes, sure. But my own experience was that I sat in the window seat in a high-backed bus chair, with another guy on the aisle, and I changed clothes, and pretty much nobody could see anything. And then we’d switch seats and he changed clothes. Some rows backwards or forwards there were women doing the same thing. The lessons I learned in this supposed culture of inevitable harassment were lessons of respect. Self-respect. Respect for others. Respect for the work ethic. Respect for the band and the tradition. This is all missing from the investigation report.

Was there hazing in my day? I suppose it depends on what you mean. I do remember things that were asked of me, things that would be considered hazing. And in every single case, I remember a squad leader or other senior member making sure we understand that these things were optional. And I remember that almost always, members opted out of various rituals, and sometimes I did. This was always ok. The band was always a safe place. This is central to what I remember about the culture of the marching band, and yet the report doesn’t mention this at all. Member after member is stepping forward and describing the band in the same way.

The report lists a few tawdry details, which are more or less true, but presented completely out of context. I remember the culture of the marching band as one of the best functioning cultures of any institution with which I’ve been a member. And yet this is all missing from the report.

But of all the things that are missing from the report, the most important thing is any actual wrongdoing on the part of Jon Waters. The worst they can say is that he knew, or should have known, that college students enjoy crude humor. Or that college students go to parties and drink. Or that, tragically, young adults sometimes make what will be the worst mistake of their lives while in college.

There’s no evidence of widespread student problems. There’s no evidence of a cover-up. All the presented evidence in fact points in the opposite direction: Waters handled the incident at the start of this report quickly and decisively, and in full accordance with University policy. And Waters was taking reasonable steps even prior to this to address any potential issues that could arise from the relatively benign culture he inherited, to insure the safety of the students.

For example, in his very short tenure of two years, he had already taken significant steps to curb Midnight Ramp. It’s hard to describe to an outsider how difficult this would be. The members of the band defend every tradition, and I’m sure the band was most displeased by Jon Waters’ efforts. But he was defending the honor of the band and the university, a part of his job which he obviously took seriously.

It should be obvious based on the evidence in front of us that the firing had nothing to do with Jon Waters, or what he did or did not do.

President Michael V. Drake was not protecting the students in the marching band, because he had no evidence they were actually in danger. Instead, I believe he was worried that the report as it was written was a gift-wrapped package for the modern media. He had a report that was only
about flash, and the press lives for flash. He was simply trying to make the report disappear from the media, by throwing the press the nearest scapegoat that was handy.

To be fair, President Drake does not have an easy job. We are warned to “judge not, lest we be judged”. Nevertheless, it is in fact the job of university presidents to pass judgement when needed, and to take quick and decisive action. Other universities have faced serious and even tragic issues where quick and decisive action was necessary.

However, such decisive action is necessary only when there is a real problem to be solved, such as the one Jon Waters actually faced and handled correctly. Passing judgement against a group based solely on the style in which they operate is decidedly not in the President’s job description. In fact this form of judgement goes by a very different name: intolerance.

The title of this article, “Our Honor Defend”, is a line from the Buckeye Battle Cry, the song played by the band during our ramp entrance at pregame, and sung by the band at the end of Script Ohio, while the bass player plays his part solo, as Jon Waters did at the Ohio State-Michigan game in 1998.

By all available evidence, Jon Waters, the most promising and influential marching band directory in the nation, has behaved honorably, and has worked to defend the honor of the The Ohio State University, and the band, and its members.

President Drake on the other hand has not defended the honor of the institution, and in fact has dishonored it. He has ended the career of a hard working innovator who has brought great honor to the institution, in the absence of any real signs of wrongdoing, solely in the hopes of avoiding embarrassment that from the beginning was based solely on flash and on intolerance, not on substance.

“Our Honor Defend” is clearly a phrase that is understood by Jon Waters, but is not understood by our President Drake.

In other words, Jon Waters is a Buckeye. Michael V. Drake, sadly, is not.

There are two paths we can go from here. In the most likely path, President Drake will continue with his posturing that the problem was real and the firing was necessary. That means he’ll have to hire a replacement for Jon Waters, and he’ll have to foist this posturing on the replacement. They will not be a Buckeye. They will be someone who does not understand or respect the tradition of the band. In short, their job will be to dismantle the organization and rebuild it from scratch.

What other choice is there? If you pretend that this culture was so toxic that it merited firing someone after only two years, then you have to pretend that the entire culture must be eliminated. This protectionist pretense can only mean the end of the band.

It is still possible to undo the wrong. The president can admit he overreacted, hire back Jon Waters, and closely monitor the situation, to make sure it is as benign as I and countless other
band alumni and current members are saying. This won’t be an easy path, but it will allow the 136 year old band to continue. The only way this can happen is if the faculty, students, and alumni of the university are willing to make it happen. You have to be willing to defend our honor.

If you consider yourself a true Buckeye, below are a couple of ways you can help defend the honor of the band, the director, and the university.

**Petition to reinstate John Waters**

**Fundraiser campaign, #iStandWithJonWaters**
John Flesher, Current Band Member and Squad Leader

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 13, 2014

This season will be my third year as a band member. I will be the assistant squad leader of H row. In my 22 years on this Earth, I have never met a kinder, more humble person than Jonathan Waters. From the first day I met Jon Waters, I knew I was in a safe environment managed by one of the greatest, if not the greatest person the university has ever had the pleasure of employing...

I began in athletic band in the spring of 2012. Through his guidance and assurance, and professionalism, I was able to improve as a member of the band and contribute to the band, the university, and the community. He taught me so much and I could not have asked for a better person to be under the direction of.

When I made the marching band, Jon Waters immediately welcomed all first year members with open arms. Not once did I feel unsafe. He put in place rules that all rows would live and operate by to ensure the safety of all members. As a first year member, I was given a nickname and I was proud of that nickname. It was actually one of the nicknames listed in the initial investigative report. I have never once found it to be offensive or rude. I embraced the name as my own. I was asked to perform a "trick". My squad leaders asked me if I wanted to perform a song and, being a lover of music, I immediately said yes. I wrote my own song and loved performing it. I wish I could have performed it more! That being said, my squad leaders made it clear from the beginning that anything we did not wish to partake in, we did not have to.

Midnight ramp, my rookie "trick", my nickname, and the other things asked of me, I agreed to do all. I loved what they represented and I wasn't just desperate for acceptance. That had already happened when I made the band. There was nothing I had to do to win the respect of the rest of the band. I was respected and treated well. I never felt unsafe or harassed by any means.

My second year went just like my first but this time, I had younger members to take care of. Any time they expressed concern with anything, we took control of the situation and worked it out. If they had any questions, we answered them, and if they didn't want to do something, they didn't do it. We became a family last year, as a row, and not a single person wanted to leave the band due to any "hazing", "harassment", or anything else mentioned in that report.

This year, I was chosen as a squad leader of H row. I am so proud to have been selected by Jon Waters. I cannot remember a moment in my life when I was happier. I am an Eagle Scout, I have a degree from Ohio State, and I have won many awards and competitions with several musical groups I am a part of. And being chosen as a squad leader is the number one thing on my list of greatest achievements. I will forever hold that dear to my heart. But this position is not about me. Being a squad leader is about what Jon Waters preached and practiced: servant leadership, respect, and leading by example. Jon was never afraid to help somebody, tell the truth, or fix something himself. He taught us all so many lessons that we can use in band, in school, and in life. Without Jon, I would not be the person I am today. And I'd like to think that person is pretty incredible.

I am a masters student at Ohio State, having received my bachelors degree in city and regional planning; I am a dedicated member of Kappa Kappa Psi, national honorary fraternity for bandmen; I was a brother of Pi Kappa Alpha, one of the most successful Greek fraternities on
Ohio State's campus; I am the secretary of the A Cappella group, Buck That!, we are a group of college men that sing for competitions, charity, community, and university events; I graduated with honors and Cum Laude; I hold a wonderful internship position with the Ohio Department of Transportation, and previously the City of Columbus; and I am actively working to improve others lives by being a squad leader in the Ohio State University Marching Band, where I teach others skills in band and life through my actions and words.

I am not a sexualized, homophobic, anti-Semitic, racist, sexist, crazed college student like the university's report made it seem like.

I am a hardworking, dedicated, talented, mature, kind, trustworthy, chivalrous, active student. And this would not be the case had I not tried out for the marching band in 2012. And the only reason I have changed to be this person is because of the man the university recently fired. Jonathan Waters.

I will always stand for that man and his words and actions. He has changed my life for the better just as hundreds, if not thousands of other students.

Please take the time to learn the true facts about who Jonathan Waters and the Ohio State University Marching Band are. I'm sure you will learn we are exactly who you've seen on YouTube and the international news the past two years.

God Bless and Go Bucks,

John Anthony Flesher
H-12
President Michael Drake

The Ohio State University

205 Bricker Hall

190 North Oval Mall

Columbus, Oh 43210

Dear Dr. Drake,

I am writing today to state that terminating Jon Waters was a grave error. I strongly urge you and the Board of Trustees to reconsider your actions, and reinstate him as the Director of Marching and Athletic Bands.

I am a graduate of The Ohio State University, a 4 year member of the Ohio State University Marching Band, a wife, mother, and a teacher. My name is Nanci Francis, but you can call me Helga. I am proud to have received that nickname my first year from my squad leader. I am also proud of my education and career, but I am most proud to have been a member of TBDBITL, because if it weren’t for The Ohio State University Marching Band, I may have never gone to college.

Although I received decent grades while in high school, I was not overly motivated to pursue higher education. I was, however, strongly motivated to try out for the marching band. My high school band director had been not only a member of TBDBITL, but he had also been a graduate assistant for the band while working on his master’s degree, and so he knew that only those with high level skills would make the band. I remember very clearly the day I told him I was going to try out for TBDBITL. He looked quite surprised, and very politely explained to me that although I had excellent marching skills; my playing was not quite up to par for this fine band. He flat out told me I would not make the band based on my music audition. Luckily, my father raised a spunky girl. I took this as a personal challenge and made what might seem like an extreme action plan. I knew my marching skills were pretty good, but I wanted to be in the best shape of my life,
so I began running most days for 2-3 miles. I only had about 3 months to bring my trumpet playing skills to a higher level, so I practiced up to six hours a day. I had never been more determined. When my name was called on the day the band was announced, I was shocked that not only did I make a regular spot in the band, but I would be playing a first trumpet part. Not shabby for a girl whose “playing skills were not up to par.” I was going to be attending Ohio State, not because I was impressed with their academics, but because I was impressed with their outstanding marching band.

Let me tell you about the TRUE culture of the Ohio State University Marching Band. The culture is one of mutual respect and admiration between members. It a culture that fosters hard work, drive, cooperation, and pride in one’s performance and appearance. It is a culture where males and females from different ethnic and religious backgrounds can work together for a common goal. At no time while I was a member of the band, did I ever feel sexually harassed by any other member, staff member, or director. I never felt coerced to participate in any activities. My mom and dad would not have supported an organization that allowed its’ members to be abused, and let me be clear, I would not have tolerated any sexual harassment. The male members of the band were some of the kindest, most respectful men I have ever had the privilege to know and work with. They became my family. One of them became my first boyfriend. They were supporters, mentors, protectors, and yes, sometimes jokesters. But they were NEVER harassers.

There is one other aspect of my story that may be a little bit unique. I have the honor of teaching at an elementary school that uses the 7 Habits Leadership model in all of our instruction. We help children develop the characteristics of good leaders. Last year, while on the bus travelling to a field trip, some of the children were looking at The Ohio State Marching Band on their iPad. One of the teachers had seen the amazing shows on YouTube, and wanted to share it with the students. When the children found out that I had been in the marching band, I suddenly became a rock star. They were so excited! When I wore my marching band jacket the next day, I can’t tell you how many children wanted to talk to me about The Ohio State University Marching Band. It actually gave me a great opportunity to tell them about the leadership skills I developed during the year I was a squad leader. One little girl said, “I want to play an instrument so I can go to Ohio State and play in the band!” Another boy made me laugh when he said, “I don’t think I have ever been to Ohio, but now I HAVE to go!” Dr. Drake, do you understand the significance of what I am telling you? These children live in Columbia, South Carolina, home of the University of South Carolina Gamecocks. They are die-hard Gamecock fans. I promise you, if it
weren’t for Jon Waters and The Ohio State University Marching Band, they would have never even HEARD of Ohio State. I don’t have a business degree sir, but it seems very counterproductive to fire a director who has played such an integral role in drawing positive international attention to the university.

In closing, I mentioned that I teach at a Leadership School for a very important reason. We tell our children that great leaders are never afraid to admit when they have made a mistake. Great leaders garner much more respect when they admit their errors, and when they take action to make restitution. I believe that you could still be seen as a great leader. If any of the children at my school ask me about negative things they have heard about the band, as I am sure they will, I will tell them the truth - NOT what the flawed Glaros report states. I will tell them that Jon Waters and the members of The Ohio State University Marching Band embody all the characteristics of great leaders. I will also explain to them that a man named Michael Drake, who has the wonderful privilege of being a leader at The Ohio State University, has made a great mistake; and that I have hope that he will right this wrong. Because sir, in doing so, you will not only clear the good name of Jon Waters and The Ohio State University Marching Band, but you will also help to clear you own name as well.

Please provide me with confirmation of your receipt of my letter, and I request feedback from the Board of Trustees.

Sincerely,

Nanci L. Francis “Helga” – The Ohio State University Marching Band 1987-1991
Sara Frankart Finn

Dear Dr. Drake,

I am writing to you in response to the events of the past week. I hope that you will take the opinions of the many who are writing you to heart and consider reinstating Jon Waters as the director of the marching band.

I am an alumnus of The Ohio State University School of Music and a proud five-year member of the OSUMB. I am also a veteran of the US Army and Operation Enduring Freedom. I hold an MBA, I work for a large non-profit organization, and I am a parent. I, like my other fellow TBDBITL alumni, am an upstanding member of my community who has always been proud to share my Buckeye roots. However before attending Ohio State I was a student at a small Christian college in Ohio. While I was there I was a victim of a sexual assault. I transferred to OSU because as a result of that assault I no longer felt safe at my small, sheltered, morally upright school. I share this very personal part of my life with you not to elicit sympathy, or to sensationalize my story, but so you will understand the enormity of what I say next.

In my five years in the band I never felt coerced, harassed, or threatened in any manner, especially sexually. In fact it was quite the opposite. I found a place where I was accepted and respected because I worked hard and earned my spot in exactly the same way as everyone else. The only thing that could set me apart would be not doing my part to uphold the tradition of excellence that we had the honor to protect for a short time. I learned the true value of hard work and discipline. I became part of something greater than myself as I represented the other 224 members of the band, the band alumni from the 100+ years before me, and the great University I loved. We left our sweat, tears, and blood on the field and were rewarded with the pride earned in a job well done and knowing that we were among the best in the world. I found a family of brothers and sisters who I knew would support and protect me if I ever needed it. Maybe most importantly I found an atmosphere that empowered all its members to be the best that they could be, to transcend any perceived barriers and to become strong men and women regardless of race, creed, sexual orientation, or any other characteristics that might be a crutch in other areas of life. We carry that with us for our lifetimes, and even as I have traveled the world my band family remains some of my closest friends.

As much pride as I hold in my days in the band, it was with great awe and respect that I watched the transformation Jon Waters had begun to undertake in the past few years. I knew Jon as a young member of the band and in his various roles with it as a man who was kind and smart and always stood for the right things. I heard many stories through various venues of the changes Jon was attempting to bring to the culture of the band as head director, a culture that has been ingrained for more years than you or I have been on this planet and was resistant to change, but was coming around. I had no doubt that he was the right man to take the helm because of the accolades he was earning for the band and the incredible exposure his innovation was bringing to TBDBITL in particular and to marching bands as a whole. A quick search of YouTube shows the evidence of the wild popularity of his shows. Searching for videos of just three shows he wrote (the Hollywood Blockbuster show, the Michael Jackson show, and the one that started the viral sensation, the Video Game show) brings back 22 videos that have a combined 48 million views. Let that number sink in
for a minute. Forty-eight MILLION times that these three shows have been viewed. He was bringing marching band to people who never had an appreciation for it before, and raising incredible good will for the arts and for OSU. Now in one fell swoop my alma mater, the place I love and cherish, has besmirched what I hold so dear. The name of the Marching Band has been dragged through the mud and the media has vilified us. We have been told that we should hang our heads in shame because we were once young adults who joked and ribbed each other and yes, maybe made some questionable decisions. But we did it in an environment where were we safe to be completely ourselves, to find out who we were and what we really believed about ourselves and the world. Perhaps worst of all, we collectively have been opened up to harassment and verbal assaults through the actions of the university we love so much who decided to release our secrets, our nicknames, our traditions to a world that has no context in which to understand our actions. A world that quivers in excitement at the upcoming release of a movie about bondage, that sensationalizes and normalizes sex at every turn, but yet makes young adults feel they should be criminalized for the actions they take in their own time and in their own homes. Worst of all I read all these things revealed in a one-sided report from a committee that spoke with a tiny percentage of the recent members of the band and in fact made no effort to speak to most of those who were allegedly coerced and harassed. A committee that ignored the numerous underwear 5k events sweeping the nation in an effort to make our Midnight Ramp something dirty, something it never was, while it apparently forgot that many university officials outside the band were aware of and sanctioned its existence. The sloppy, misguided, and premature release of this report has given a very real black eye to OSU and the OSUMB and could have very real negative personal and professional implications for people who have long been out of band. To say I am horrified and offended at the way this situation has been handled is a huge understatement. I will never be ashamed of my time in The Best Damn Band In The Land, but I now feel shame that my beloved Ohio State has turned its back on us. I hope this is not the atmosphere you wish to create in your time at the helm.

Sincerely,
Sara Frankart Finn
OSUMB E-Row 1992-96
Kristine Frey Tikson-Most Inspirational Bandsperson 2012

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 04, 2014

Dr. Drake and the OSU Board of Trustees,

I am a proud member of The Ohio State University Marching Band. I am also a 53 year old woman.

I am a 1982 graduate of The Ohio State University. I graduated Summa Cum Laude, third in my class in the College of Administrative Science, with a BSBA degree. I became a certified public accountant, worked in the audit practice of an international accounting firm for 12 years, and then in the private sector as a member of senior management for a financial services company for 15 years. Upon retiring in 2010, I began to pursue my dream of becoming a member of the Ohio State Marching Band. I realized that dream in 2012 and have been a marching member of the band for the past two years...

I feel compelled to share my personal views of the recent investigation into the band and your decision to terminate Jon Waters. In my opinion, this decision was based on an investigative report that is seriously flawed in its scope and methodology. It is unfortunate that the leaders of our university did not have a true picture of the facts when this decision was made.

Only a handful of “witnesses” were interviewed during the investigation. Witness recommendations were made by the complainant and there appears to have been no attempt to interview anyone other than those predisposed to align with the views of the complainant. Further, the investigators relied on what amounts to “hearsay” with no attempt at verification. I find it particularly appalling that a personal conversation between two band members that occurred in 2007 as retold by one of those members is the basis for the “sexualized” culture reference ascribed to the entire band by the report. This reference has been widely sensationalized by the media. In addition, the report focuses on historical events and provides little information related to the many changes implemented by Jon Waters.

To be fair to Mr. Waters and the band, the author should have been required to complete a more representative and complete investigation which should have been presented to you before taking action or releasing the report.

As a 53 year old female member, my perspective of the band is somewhat unique. I would not describe the band “culture” as sexualized. I believe it is no more sexualized than the broader college environment in which it exists. We must remember that our society as a whole is sexualized and has continued to move in that direction at lightning speed since the issuance of Title IX in the early 1970’s.

I would describe the band “culture” as: commitment, dedication, inclusivity, acceptance, hard work, integrity, and self-sacrifice. I have experienced it from the inside for two years. I have often said that the members of TBDBITL are the best the university has to offer. I continue to stand by that statement. You will not find better representatives of the university — academically
or morally. They are excellent young adults. Yes, they sometimes engage in immature activities and conversation that are reflective of their age and generational norms. Yes, as individuals they sometimes make poor decisions and those situations should be dealt with accordingly. However, it is unfair to characterize the OSU Marching Band “culture” in the way the report suggests.

I do not believe this situation was handled appropriately. The report should not have been released until it was a fair and complete assessment. I believe Jon Waters should have been retained as director and been given assistance and direction in his on-going efforts to eliminate or change some of the long-held traditions within the band.

I believe this action has caused unnecessary and irreparable harm to the university, the marching band, all university alumni, and to Jon Waters.

Please provide me with confirmation that you received my letter and your feedback on my comments.

Sincerely,
Kristine Frey Tikson
BSBA 1982
OSUMB 2012 – present
Jennifer Gold, Alli Gentile McGarry, Anne Will, Bill Miller

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 12, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

After careful consideration, we voice our collective opinion concerning the recent investigation of Mr. Jon Waters and The Ohio State University Marching Band. We are all proud alumni of the band, and representing the university through this organization from 1995 to 1999 was one of the most valuable experiences of our lives. It brought us together, and, almost twenty years later, we remain extraordinarily close...

The university’s July 2014 report emphasizes the tradition known as “midnight ramp” along with other arguably run-of-the-mill college antics. Instead of myriad stunts taking place against a backdrop of a so-called “sexualized culture,” what we remember most is how we supported one another through countless days of practice and countless nights of memorization, along with one early fall evening each year when the university allowed us to have Ohio Stadium to ourselves for a post-tryout celebration.

Imagine, after days of excruciating and competitive tryouts, you are selected as a member of the best marching band in the country. After the euphoria dies down, the realization of having to perform in front of 100,000 people in a mere two days is daunting and frightening. Legend has it that the midnight ramp tradition was borne out of readiness new members for their first ramp entrance—because if you’ve done it in your underwear, you can do it under any circumstance. Realistically speaking, midnight ramp was an opportunity for the year’s new band to come together in celebration of the organization and of one another.

In the report, this bonding experience has been made to look like an act of sex, initiation, and intimidation. We never considered it as such, and nor did anyone else we know. The midnight ramp was voluntary, not mandatory, and band members took part ONLY if they wanted to, wearing whatever they wanted. It was not a rehearsal of any kind as reported in the media. We cherished this experience and felt honored that the university allowed us to enter the Horseshoe as a group at midnight, partaking in one of the most memorable experiences of our lives. Ohio State and law enforcement officials let the band in, turned on the scoreboard, and watched in order to make sure all was safe. The idea that this was some secret that no one in the university knew about is not only false; it’s absurd. Holding Mr. Waters solely responsible for what amounts to a university-sanctioned event is unjust and unwarranted.

Midnight ramp aside, the report is incomplete. It appears to center on the experience of very few members, with some of those experiences being reported secondhand. When finding facts about the entire “culture” of a large, well-known student organization and its thousands of alumni, it is important to take a reasonable sample. Furthermore, the investigation seems to lack focus—the university released an audio recording of Mr. Waters’ interaction with a drum major to the media. What does this have to do with this purported “sexualized culture,” and how is this behavior any different than a coach interacting with a student athlete? Take a look at footage of any Ohio State athletic practice. Are all of Ohio State’s teams and clubs being held to the same
standards to which the band has been held over the last few weeks? Have short, secretly recorded
snippets of audio been paraded on the evening news?

The July 2014 report is an insult to those of us who poured our hearts and souls into a fine
organization. As a result of dubious research, a national mockery has been made of not only Mr.
Waters, but also the integrity of those who proudly marched—and are still marching—in
TBDBITL. The authors of this report seemed to draw a conclusion and then write a report in
defense of it. We would guess that any Ohio State faculty member will tell you that this is not a
legitimate way to investigate the truth. A seemingly biased, slanted report has detrimentally
affected all those involved with the band and the university as a whole.

We believe that the band is associated with some of the university’s finest students and
graduates. We know that we’ve never worked harder for anything in our lives. The band taught
us about commitment, dedication, teamwork, and leadership. The band represents the best that
Ohio State has to offer, and its members are wonderful ambassadors for the university.

Please make things right. Reinstall Mr. Waters so that he can continue to move the band
forward. Reinstatement would show that the university acted hastily based on an incomplete
report and would go a long way towards beginning to heal the damage unfairly inflicted on the
band, especially on its current and future band members. We want today’s students to experience
this organization’s unmatched traditions of excellence and fellowship.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Gold (BA 00; MEd 01/B-Row), Alli Gentile McGarry (BA 99/A-Row), Anne Will (BA
99; JD 03/S-Row), and Bill Miller (BSBA 99; CPA/K-L Row)
Support from Mark Greenburg of Tresona

From the petition to reinstate Jon Waters as Director.

- My name is Mark Greenburg and I am the President of Tresóna. I have come to know Jon Waters in a work capacity, and he is someone I admire and someone I am lucky enough to call a friend. In fact, one of the great things about working with Jon was that he wanted to make sure that the opportunities that were offered to his band were opportunities that would be offered to all of the bands, or he would not even consider them. I find his generosity of spirit and his genuine nature to be exemplary.

One of the great things about growing up in the Watergate generation is that we have learned to question what we are being told, even when what we are being told is being told to us by people in positions of authority. Tresóna’s legal department reviewed the official video featuring the new President of The Ohio State University and listened to what he had to say about Jon Waters and his stewardship of The Ohio State University Marching Band. We then read, in great detail, the report that the University posted on their website about this whole affair. We have also listened to a surreptitiously made tape recording of Jon disciplining an adult student (over the age of 18).

Now, in the interest of full disclosure, I was accepted to matriculate at the Ohio State University Law School and I chose not to do this, and matriculated to another school. I would also like to disclose that based upon all the evidence that is out in the open, Tresóna stands with Jon Waters and that the many executives in the music publishing industry with whom I have spoken to are simply astonished by the apparent rush-to-judgment in this matter. For them, like I, who have come to know Jon, we believe that there is no possible way Jon contributed to or supported a “sexualized” atmosphere in The Band.

I encourage everyone in the Marching Band community to read the University’s report, which is filled with innuendo from a few unnamed student witnesses who were hand picked by the parent who complained to the university, and the infantile and perhaps salacious details of the songbook, a songbook written in the 60’s and passed down amongst the students, but not by The Band or Jon Waters or Chris Hoch.

Jon has also been accused of witnessing and doing nothing about the notorious “ramp walk”. Apparently this is some ridiculous event where the kids show up late at night and parade around in their underwear on the football field. This begs the question of who opened up the stadium late at night to let the kids in. I suppose that for some this juvenile procession in one’s underwear is in poor taste, but the fact of the matter is that Jon, in his first year at the helm of The Band, went to the ramp
walk with his staff to witness what was going on, and then abolished the practice for the coming year.

Jon did not eliminate or order the students to stop using nicknames. How does one do that by the way? I have three kids, the oldest named Mark, and when people would call my house when he was younger, my younger sons would inquire, "Do you want to speak to small Mark or Big-fat Mark?" I couldn’t even stop that from happening and I had a pretty good size advantage at the time. My mother refers to me as "Shamoo" in front of many people. Maybe I will tell her, in her 84th year, to knock it off, or else... Maybe I will write my kids out of my will.

Lastly, Jon is apparently not a master of the Title IX laws of the United States, laws that are so intricate that most Universities have Title IX compliance departments, filled with attorneys, to deal with this act.

What is it that The University President did not tell us? The University should be an arbiter of fairness and due process, and the music publishing executives with whom we work and who know Jon are looking very carefully at this and questioning whether they want to be supportive of a program where the cornerstones of our democratic process have been grossly overlooked.

I cannot say this enough: Tresóna believes there is absolutely no place for a hostile work or study environment for any student, male or female. However, there is nothing in the report other than the uncorroborated testimony of 2 unnamed students and a clearly disgruntled former trainer for the band who apparently and according to the report wanted to scream because she heard the proper words for the human anatomy too much for her personal taste (while riding on the band bus returning from games). Maybe this trainer asked Jon for a raise and the band turned her down and she was angry at that decision? The point is that none of us knows why these five people, organized and selected by the complaining parent, came forward, because Jon was not allowed to ask. Furthermore, to hold Jon responsible for the behavior of students over the age of consent for giving each other nicknames, for students drinking too much, or for students consuming too many drugs, while not in his presence, seems to be ridiculous and would require a type of monitoring that was absent in Russia during the heyday of the Soviet Union. It would literally not be possible.

The University’s report clearly indicates that Jon had been reforming the behavior of the band, as his staff has attested to this in the report. However, even if that were not the case, in America, there is such a thing as due process, and there is no evidence against Jon where Jon was allowed to question the integrity of those making the accusations about his leadership.

I remember, not too long ago, the accusations that were made against members of the Duke lacrosse team by another authority figure, the District Attorney of Durham County, Mike Nifong. Mr. Nifong’s false rush to judgment led to the destruction of the lives of the students, all of whom filed claims against Duke University and all of whom have been paid handsomely for their ill treatment by
Duke University. As for Mr. Nifong, who was disbarred and disgraced for bringing forward a claim that he knew was false, he has been disbarred, and the last time he spoke to anyone, it was to ask them if they wanted to supersize their fries.

I think we should hold The Ohio State University to a higher standard and ask their leaders, with grace and humility, to reverse what seems to be a rush-to-judgment against Jon Waters, to champion the democratic values and processes that every University should hold dear, and have a public hearing allowing Jon to defend his name and reputation. And while this proceeding takes place in an orderly fashion, Jon and his staff should be allowed to run The Band, with a Title IX compliance officer in attendance in the band office, and we should all wait until a jury of his peers returns with their judgment. It is only in this way will we know whether there is guilt or innocence, whether the punishment fits the crime or whether there was a rush to judgment as we suspect. That would be a University that I imagine we could all be proud of.

Mark Greenburg

President, Tresóna

July 27, 2014
Dear

My name is Doug Hall. I graduated from Ohio State in 1985 with a BS in Math. In 1987, I earned an MS in Engineering Mechanics. I was a member of the Ohio State University Marching Band from 1982 through 1986 including two years as the head Squad Leader of Q-Rang. My wife, Jenny, graduated with a BS in Computer and Information Science from the College of Engineering. We have three sons, Alex, Andy, and Greg.

I have been an analytical engineer in the aerospace industry for 27 years, currently representing Honeywell Aerospace on several industry committees, including chairing one. I also teach quality management and statistics for quality control at Purdue University College of Technology in South Bend, IN. In my free time, I am a member of the Edwardsburg Public Schools Board of Education. I know about reasoning, data analysis, management, and governance.

I cannot deny it. I sang the fight song for that school up north without using the word "Victors" even once. I learned the words as a freshman, living in Lincoln Tower, 10 months before I became a member of the OSU Marching Band. Almost every student on campus knew them. But as a member of the OSUMB I learned that rivalries can bring out the best from both sides.

I cannot deny it. On one or two occasions, I got so drunk I could not get myself into bed without help, while I was a freshman, living in Lincoln Tower, 10 months before I became a member of the OSU Marching Band. But as a member of the OSUMB, I learned that you cannot drink that much and still perform your job to the best of your ability.

I cannot deny it. I told a few gross, crude, sick jokes about minorities, gays, and women, while I was a freshman, living in Lincoln Tower, 10 months before I became a member of the OSU Marching Band. But as a member of the OSUMB, I met Dr. Willie Sullivan, an African-American, role model, Christian gentleman, and mentor from the time I met him until he left OSU. He was one of the finest people I ever met. Tony, a baritone player, was the first person I knew who was gay. His friends and I found out by accident, five years after we had met him. He died of AIDS 20 years ago and we all miss him. Sandy, Jeannie, Kari, and Stacey proved that they were stronger than alternates standing on the sidelines, stronger than men who had been cut from the band. I stopped telling gross, crude, sick jokes about minorities, gays, and women because as a member of the OSUMB I learned that many people I do not know deserve my respect.

I cannot deny it. I sometimes have a negative attitude and it used to be worse. I used to complain about how badly the Buckeyes were playing if they got behind. But as a member of the OSUMB, my friend and assistant squad leader, Rob, called me out during the Fiesta Bowl. Paraphrasing, he said, "I'm getting tired of hearing you complain. Our job is to cheer for the Buckeyes and help them win." He was right. Before finishing my years in the band, Earle Bruce, and even President Ed Jennings, visited the band room on more than one occasion to tell us that the team won because we were there for them. Teamwork and attitude matter. "The team and the band are one." Urban Meyer

I cannot deny it. I spent time alone in a hotel room with a woman while traveling with the OSUMB. My wife and I had been married for six months when she traveled with the band to the Citrus Bowl in 1985 and 18 months when we went to the Cotton Bowl in 1986. Twenty-nine years later, I still share hotel rooms with the same woman. Our sons, Alex and Andy, have five-
year OSUMB rings and will join me on the field as TBDBITL Alumni for the first time next month. Their brother Greg tries out for his third season this week. The Hall boys are only the second sibling trio to be in the OSUMB and the first to play the same instrument, march in the same row, and march together for two years. We all play trombone. Jenny asked me out. She learned I had been cut, refused to quit, and tried out again. She valued my perseverance. I met the woman I married because I was a member of the OSUMB.

My parents taught me these positive lessons at home but parts of campus life and LincolnTower encouraged the opposite type of behavior. Back when I was in the band, Paul Droste, Jon Woods, Willie Sullivan, and other leaders of the band reinforced the values my parents had taught me. Their positive leadership strengthened my ability to resist inappropriate behaviors found on just about every college campus in the country.

Jonathon Waters is the same type of leader, a positive force for change, a role model for students to follow, and a mentor to future professionals of every type. I've played under the batons of some fine directors, Droste, Woods, Sullivan, Bloomquist (MSU) and practically all the top band directors of the Big Ten. As a member of TBDBITL Alumni, I have played for Jon Waters, quite possibly the most exciting and dynamic of them all. I can't imagine you will find anyone as good as him to continue leading the OSUMB to new heights. Please revisit your decision. Consider the abundance of new information that has come to light since the release of the report. Given adequate resources and proper training, no one could do a better job than Jonathon Waters.

Please provide me with confirmation that you have received my letter and I request feedback from the Board of Trustees regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Doug Hall, aka “Capt. Fun”
Q-Row 1982-86
Chris Haller

[Editor's Note: I have removed all instances referencing Jonathan Waters as "Dr." as he has not yet achieved that designation.]

Originally found on http://www.thebuckeyebattlecry.com/2014/08/another-tbdbitl-alumnus-speaks/

An open letter, concerning the Ohio State Marching Band and Jonathan Waters:

In an age where an ever critical eye has encouraged us to find and exploit even the smallest of faults in each other, long standing institutions are crumbling under shockwaves of judgment. As we strive to uncover weaknesses and errors in each other, our hypersensitivity has made us all but incapable of forgiveness and acceptance while camouflaging the truly unacceptable. We have nurtured such a paranoia of potentially offending someone that we ignore the individuals we supposedly seek to protect, placing our opinions before theirs in a fit of pure ego. Too often is the right to speak freely misperceived as a right to not be offended.

This is the case of the Ohio State University’s gross mishandling of Mr. Jon Waters and the Ohio State University Marching Band. A prime news story in Ohio for the last week, the university’s publishing of a 23 page admonishment of the band’s conduct led to the firing of the most forward-thinking director in the band’s 140 year history.

First, it should be made absolutely clear that sexual harassment and hazing are categorically unacceptable in any organization. This type of reprehensible behavior physically and psychologically damages individuals and should be treated with the utmost contempt. There is, however, a clear difference between the intentional harms suffered by sexual harassment and hazing, and pure-intentioned ribbing, devoid of malice. Our willingness to believe the worst in each other has rendered us incapable of understanding this difference.

As a five year member of the active band family at Ohio State and a ten year alumnus of the OSUMB, I observed the evolution of the band culture and the budding career of Mr. Waters, first hand. In the past week, numerous personal accounts have surfaced, disproving the university’s 23 page indictment of the band, its directors, and its alumni. Character witnesses have voluntarily come out of the woodwork to praise Mr. Waters and his accomplishments with the band. I wholeheartedly echo their praise of Mr. Waters and equally support their acknowledgements that occasional misconduct occurred as it would in any other organization comprised of young people experiencing their first freedoms and beginning to learn the skill of adulthood.

So eager have we become to expose fault that we disassociate ourselves with those under scrutiny. An organization of people marching, scantily clad, through a stadium somehow seems
more depraved than group of college kids running around a pool in bathing suits or, heaven forbid, skinny dipping. We overlook the fact that multiple institutions share and promote a similar tradition, be it a naked mile or an underwear run. When members of an organization consume alcohol to excess in the privacy of their own homes and completely of their own accord, it reflects poorly on the organization while tailgates, block parties, and sporting events are not only sponsored by beer companies on university grounds but are considered the norm.

That an individual voluntarily participating in a group, without being singled out and without being stereotyped, may take offense from a conversation is a vile enough threat that it should shake an organization to its core. Surely sticks and stones now cause less hurt than words, and suffering mild, unintended offense is an injury so egregious as to merit taking a man’s job. This is as clear an argument as can be found to illustrate the right to not be offended trumping the freedom to speak as one pleases.

How strangely must the lens of time distort our own pasts that we now expect perfection where our mistakes once educated us. Instead of considering ourselves fortunate enough to learn, consequence-free, from our errors, we now cry foul and assume mistakes to mask far darker intentions. A popular phrase among business professionals is assume the worst, hope for the best. Our eagerness to ignore the latter part of this phrase belies our rampant fear that we no longer possess the ability to differentiate between innocence and malice. We so strongly shore up our defenses against fear that we fail to leave room for hope, for forgiveness, for mistakes.

In the race to defend against this fear of depravity among our college students, simple truths have been cast aside. Testimonial after testimonial after testimonial that the OSUMB fosters relationships so close as to be called family have been ignored. The voice of a “victim” identified in the 23 page report has fallen on deaf ears as she refuted the claim that her time in the OSUMB was offensive, depraved, harassment because, surely we, the greater populace, know more of how she felt than she did. So easy has it been to write off Mr. Waters for perceived cultural issues that no one has registered the fact that, since his days as a student, Jon has relentlessly worked to negate objectionable behavior while simultaneously raising the group to new heights and national prominence.

Every group has its outliers and rule breakers. The OSUMB has not been immune to this. I have both born witness to and experienced firsthand, the processes in place to correct any infractions to the strict set of band rules. I am thankful to Mr. Waters for the opportunity to learn from my mistakes and I know that my character has been strengthened by those opportunities. My fellow students at the time were not so privileged and made far greater mistakes in order to learn the lessons the OSUMB afforded me. Despite their transgressions and despite a national spotlight on these transgressions, not a person identified the Ohio State University as a home of depravity. Many of these peers were allowed to learn from their mistakes without greater consequences and considered simply to have made the errors of youth.

Once, we were capable of differentiating between youthful transgressions, innocently made and learned from, and malicious actions, intentionally inflicting physical and psychological harm. Our fear has blurred this line so much so that all but perfection is considered a threat. An
extreme minority of misbehavior is being allowed to taint the overwhelming positivity of an organization that has produced a well-rounded family of upstanding citizens and world contributors. For a university that claims the world to be a lesser place “but for Ohio State,” let us see the OSUMB as an organization making incredible headway in both pioneering performances and in upgrading its own culture under Mr. Waters “but for Ohio State.”

The Ohio State University Marching band no more engenders a culture of depravity than does the university of which it is an extension. To learn is to make mistakes and the trespasses of the OSUMB as an organization should be seen in the context of a global university system comprised of young individuals learning adulthood by making, and learning from, mistakes. The more we continue to punish the mistakes of learning, the further we remove ourselves from each other and from the human experience.

Mr. Waters has moved mountains with the OSUMB. Allow him the privilege we have all benefitted from, the chance to learn, and afford him the opportunity to return an exceptional organization to its once sterling status.

I Stand with Jon.

Go Bucks.

Chris Haller
E Row (2003-2004)
Athletic Band (2000-2004)
Ohio State Alumnus (Life)
Band culture has to change

Saturday August 2, 2014 5:01 AM

I am a big fan of TBDBITL. However, the facts that have surfaced from the university report concerning the Ohio State University marching band have significantly reduced the admiration that I have for the band.

I read most of the report. Some of the stuff was just silly. Most of it I couldn’t believe would actually still go on in 2014. This is the sort of behavior I’d expect from junior-high students, not young adults who are part of arguably the most prestigious college organization in the country. What parent is going to want to send his son or daughter to Ohio State to be part of the marching band under those conditions? The worst part is that these practices were institutionalized as part of the band, not isolated incidents involving only a few band members.

Despite what has happened, I’d like to see Director Jonathan Waters reinstated with the proviso that he institute an immediate zero-tolerance policy. He knows what is going on and is probably in the best position to put an end to it. In the long run, I think he would serve Ohio State well.

More important, I’d also like to see the band leadership, especially the student squad leaders, man (and woman) up and say: “Yes, there have been problems. We’re going to address those problems and see that nothing like this happens again. We will be a model for others to follow. We will be ‘The Best Damn Band in the Land’ on and off the field.”

That would go a long way toward TBDBITL regaining its stature.

KARL HELLSTROM

Reynoldsburg
Dr. Patrick Herak

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 04, 2014

As a former member of the Ohio State University Marching Band and a three-time graduate of The Ohio State University, I wanted to share with you how embarrassed I was by the investigation that was released last week, both by some of the findings of the investigation as well as the unscientific manner under which the investigation was carried out. The two major claims of the investigation are the hostility of the OSUMB culture and Jon Waters’ failure to address these issues. I’ll address some of the issues in the order of the report...

Midnight Ramp
Midnight Ramp (MR) is a unique experience as it is the only opportunity for every current member of the marching band to march together; during a game day two alternates in each row do not march. It can be argued MR also gave students an opportunity to experience something quite scary—marching out of the tunnel in front of 110,000 people—in a less-threatening, more-relaxing environment. Given that participation is not forced and students are able to cover themselves to their level of comfort (e.g. pajamas rather than underwear), I have no problem with this event. The only potential concern I have is if students are completely naked, which I do not remember from my tenure in the marching band. Other students may feel uncomfortable seeing this, which would be unacceptable. Barring that, if MR is a problem, I am shocked that it took the university this long to address the concern. Even decades ago, scoreboards were on and even night-time security stood at the gates of the stadium.

Nicknames
During my tenure in the band, not every rookie was given a nickname and very, very few would be considered sexually explicit. If students were given sexually explicit nicknames and did not want them, this behavior is totally unacceptable. However, I have always found it disturbing when people trying to promote tolerance are at the same time intolerant of the choices made by the people they claim to be protecting. In the news the past few days, the band members dubbed “Joobs,” “Tulsa” and “Tiggles” have come out defending their nicknames as consensual and something that made them feel closer to the band family. It appears the investigators failed to follow-up with any of these students, but rather painted the broad-brush implication that they were all sexually harassed.

The other issue I have with the investigation is that it does not address the time frame of these nicknames. Without a time frame you cannot properly address the conclusions in the report. If these 24 nicknames were all given the same year, then the culture would certainly be VERY disturbing. If the nicknames were spread over an 18-year period, then it would appear these nicknames are either isolated exceptions or a sub-culture that needs to be addressed. Furthermore, if it is found that no students were given nicknames that made them feel uncomfortable in the past two years than Waters has made a positive impact. I do not have the answers to these questions, but they are questions that should have been asked.

As far as nicknames being published in the alumni directory and on the back of “row” T-shirts, in my experience this practice has always been voluntary and is not so different from filling out your complete name and a preferred name on a survey. Some members embraced their nickname so much that other band members did not know their actual name. These alumni wanted their nickname in the roster so their fellow alumni could find them.
Tricks
My recollection of tricks in band was finding out some talents members could have that facilitated getting to know others. (“Oh, you’re the one that has the speech from the Millennium Force from memory,” for somebody that worked at Cedar Point.) Many of the tricks listed in the report are disturbing and vulgar. Even if they were consensual, that does not mean people want to watch these behaviors. However, I would also go back to context. Without a time frame of these behaviors it is difficult to ascertain if this is a broad cultural issue or isolated sub-culture. I have heard from some alumni that many of these date back to the early to mid-2000s suggesting that this issue may have been dealt with. However, the investigators were very incomplete in their research.

Rookie Introductions/ Rookie Midterms & Physical Challenges/ Trip Tic
My experience with these is very different than those described in the report. In fact, I am speechless with some of the behaviors described and appalled by the Rookie Test (Exhibit A). I believe there is no place for this. I remember Rookie Introductions as singing your high school fight song, to which the rest of the bus would often join in, and telling a joke. Midterms often consisted of marching band history (there is some of this in Exhibit A) and a Script Test (where you would have to complete a script chart with the required number of steps). In fact, I remember taking the script test in my later years in the band as well. Trip Tics often had some information about where we were going (much like a AAA Trip Tic) and a few jokes, but were never directed at individuals and nothing like in the report.

Regarding the investigation, buses have often been staffed by not only the three members of the OSUMB staff in the report, but also by members of the school of music (e.g. Richard Blatti and Russel Mikkelsen). If this issue was so widespread, why are there no citations made in the report by Mr. Blatti? Furthermore, a documentary crew followed OSUMB for an the entire season (I believe the DVD release was entitled “The Pride of The Buckeyes”). Why have these journalists not been questioned, since they were not only there but impartial parties to the investigation?

Once again the methods of this investigation are so poor it is impossible to conclude whether this is a broad cultural issue or an isolated sub-culture, nor to determine if things were improving under Waters.

Songbook
As mentioned on many occasions, the song book was an underground publication by some band members. The song book was not endorsed by the OSUMB staff and, according to exhibit B, the last revision was 2006. I would argue the majority of the songs were outdated and never sung; if they were sung at all, it was certainly not in public. Moreover, a likely reason why the last revision was in 2006 was that the staff has clamped down. The other ignored fact is that many of the songs are more representative of a national band culture—you’ll find the same fight song lyrics sung around the country—and part of a national pop culture sung at piano bars around the country. I even heard one song sung by a British band on a bus in the UK. In other words, they are not unique to OSUMB.

Summary
In summary, I find some of the behaviors in the report unacceptable and hope they are isolated incidents and no longer occurring. I know many school districts in the area have training videos accompanied by quizzes for all their teachers in areas like safety, sexual harassment, tolerance, etc. I am amazed that a university of this size and resources has not implemented such a process for all students in groups that must be Title IX compliant.
However, I also find the investigation by the Office of University Compliance so poorly conducted that the conclusions reached are unjustified. Assumptions are made that students listed in the report were in a hostile environment, when the testimonies that have been released following the investigation state just the opposite. The sampling was not representative nor random, but rather focused on specific allegations and incidents that make it impossible to ascertain the overall culture of the band. In fact, the best tool for this Student Evaluation of Instructions (SEIs) were noticeably absent from the report. With no time frames, it is impossible to determine how things have changed under Waters. In fact, the report suggests he submitted a list of changes that he has implemented, but for some reason these are not included.
It appears to me the goal of the investigation was to find Waters guilty and not actually determine the general culture of the band or whether Waters has made strides in improving some of the issues described in the report. Furthermore, I believe by releasing the nicknames and “tricks” to the media, the University may have violated FERPA and perhaps Title IX. The students can easily be identified and no less than two female students have come out at feeling harassed because of the report. Furthermore, by publicly releasing the contents of the songbook, now many OSU band members who never had access to the songbook (as well as high school students that look up the OSUMB) have access to every song. This action is socially irresponsible.
The poor quality of the Office of University Compliance investigation and President Drake’s hasty and impulsive decision has arguably brought the public image of the university more harm and shame than the immature actions of some of the past band members. I am saddened that the original recommendation, to keep Waters at the helm, was ignored as I think Waters was/is uniquely qualified to continue to improve the deficiencies in the band culture due to his experience as a member. I stand with Jon.

Thank you for your time,

Dr. Patrick Herak
OSUMB 1991-1995
B.S.E. 1996, M.S. 2001, PhD 2010
As one member of a family that first set foot on the grounds of The Ohio State University in 1922 and as a former member of the OSUMB, I was floored by the abrupt termination of our director, Jon Waters, this summer. It is astonishing that a person's career could be so greatly affected by the flawed report that was presented to our newly installed President. As a prudent administrator, one would have thought that President Drake would have taken more time to fully assess the "standing and history" of the band and measured the depth and validity of the research in which the report was based on. Statements from two or three malcontents and their selected "witnesses" does not measure up to a fully comprehensive review of the band, its conduct, and its character; especially when a far greater pool of current and former band members are available within the Columbus Area willing to be interviewed. I am especially concerned about two aspects of the report and one divergence from written policy: 1. The Midnight Ramp in underwear which has been panned by the University and Media; 2. Ms. Bork's roll as a witness (a physical therapist/volunteer for 18 years); and, 3. Failure of the University to adhere to its own policy regarding personnel interviews First, I fail to see the difference between the "midnight ramp" and the "bi-annual undie run" conducted at the University of California - Irvine and other colleges around the country? By simply googling...undie run, numerous colleges come up! If OSU's Ramp is sexualized then why aren't all the other runs which receive the blessing of their universities? Perhaps, President Drake would like to provide a supplemental report on the differences between OSU's undie ramp and Irvine's undie run, the latter of which it appears he condoned while servicing as its president? Second, as I understand it from the official report, a volunteer of 18 years (16 years of which were under Dr. Woods directorship) suddenly became repulsed by the Band's conduct? It took this individual 16 years to build up the courage to confront the University of the alleged sexualized conduct of the band? Her concern regarding the band trips and alcohol abuse only started
during the last two years of her 18 year involvement with the Band? Really? Therefore, is it logically to assume that during the initial 16 years, the band members were saints? Really? AND finally, hearing that the University did not follow its own policy in advising Mr. Water that he could have his attorney present while being interviewed by Title IX personnel is most distressing. It supports the public perception that the exercise was a rush to judgment and handled unprofessionally. I take heritage as a Buckeye, my years of serve in the band, and my estate gifting very seriously and feel that insufficient effort and professionalism went into this report resulting in an imprudent action having been taken by the President and supported by the Board of Trustees. Anyone and everyone can make a mistake (we are all human), the University leaders should not compound their mistake by becoming stubborn and not allowing the numerous flaws within the report to be further investigated and corrective action taken. Please pass this correspondence on to anyone of authority that you feel should hear (and will listen to) an opposing view.

Richard ("Rick") I. Johnson

Class of 1974
Dear President Drake,

I am writing you in regards to the recent termination of Jonathan Waters as OSU band director.

As a taxpayer of the State of Ohio, an alumni of OSU, a lifetime dues-paying member of the alumni association, and an alumni of the marching band, I am disappointed in how this situation has been handled. I have three main objections: First, the Glaros report was greatly exaggerated. Secondly, Jon was in fact actively working improve the band's culture. Finally, Jon was not afforded any due process.

First, the finding of the Glaros report were exaggerated. The report makes it sounds as if the marching band is a completely out-of-control fraternity from the movie Animal House or worse. From my personal experience as a member of the marching band from 2001-2002 I can state that this was simply not true. Many of the items mentioned were rare exceptions and not the norm: For example: My rookie name (“Gilligan”) was not sexual offensive. I never witnessed any groping or anyone trying to remove articles of clothing during “rookie introductions”. I cannot recall ever taking a “rookie midterm”. I never received a copy of the “Songbook”. I never witnessed a “flying 69” or a game of “roller bus” on a bus trip. Several of the witnesses interviewed in the report have already publicly stated that their comments were taken misrepresented (http://www.nbc4i.com/story/26249658/osu-band-witness-highlights-inaccuracies-omissions-in-report).

Secondly, most if not all of the activities in the report that were reported accurately (as opposed to the ones that were exaggerated per my comments above) had been going on for many decades before Jon became director. For example, I participated in a Midnight Ramp in only my underwear in 2001 when I was in band, and it was a well-established tradition at that point. The only way to hold Jon Waters accountable for something that pre-dated him by decades is if he was not actively working to change it. In fact, Jon was working to change these traditions, as documented by Dr. Richard Blatti in his performance reviews (http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2014/08/13/Ohio-State-releases-Waters-evaluations.html):

"Jon is confronted with many years of ‘tradition’ and many well-meaning alumni whose proclivities and excesses need constant but gradual attitude adjustment. Jon has already begun to address these predispositions and is courageous in tackling some of the more-extreme views head-on.”

It seems inconsistent to me that his performance review would rate him as exceptional and praise him for doing the very thing that he was accused of not doing when he was fired.
To give a specific example of a positive change implement by Jon Waters: When I was in band in 2001, rookies (first year band members) were expected to purchase Gatorade and snacks for their entire section for each and every home game. I spend over $100 out of my own pocket buying Gatorade for the rest of the percussion section. The older members of the section did not contribute any money towards these purchases. Jon has eliminate this “caste” system, making all members of each section contribute equally towards game-day refreshment purchases (http://www.nbc4i.com/link/706939/pdf-osu-alumni-band-statement). This may seem like a small thing, but the old system contributed to a culture where rookies were treated as second class citizens. Organizational culture is a hard thing to change. If you want to eliminate a culture of hazing, you have to start with the things like this that contribute to it. This is precisely what Jon Waters was doing.

Finally, Jon Waters was not afforded the due process that he should have been granted. As I understand it, the allegations contained in the University’s Investigation Report were not presented in writing to Mr. Waters until after he was given the choice to either resign within eight hours or be terminated. Jon was not given the opportunity to respond to the allegations.

I knew Jon Waters personally when I was in the band in 2001-2002. As graduate assistant director, he was never anything less than completely professional. The current situation has greatly misrepresented his character.

Therefore, I believe that Jon Waters should be re-instated as the director of the marching band.

I would ask for your acknowledgment of receipt of this letter, and for your feedback on this matter. Thank you for your time,

Daniel R. Kiracofe, Ph. D.
2100 Perkins Drive  
Springfield, Ohio  45505

July 31, 2014

Mr. Archie Griffin  
President, The Ohio State University Alumni Association  
Longaberger Alumni House  
2200 Olentangy River Road  
Columbus, Ohio  43210

Dear Archie,

I understand that you were at yesterday’s meeting with Brian Golden, president of the TBDBITL Alumni Club, and President Drake. I’m writing to you because I’m an alumnus of The Ohio State University, a former member of the marching band, and a current member of the Alumni Marching Band.

You and I have met a couple of times, most recently on the Buckeye Cruise for Cancer a year and a half ago. I played in the marching band during the years you were on the football team. You got to hear me play, and I got to see you play. I think I got the better end of that deal!

You know what it is to be the absolute best, Archie. Your two Heisman Trophies are a testament to that. I also know what it means to be the best, having earned a spot in the organization widely recognized as the best marching band in the world.

I’m sure you remember that Coach Hayes frequently talked about the importance of the marching band. He was very proud of us, and he understood how important a good band can be in motivating the football team and inspiring the fans. He referred to us as “the second-hardest-working group on campus.”

You are no doubt aware that I’m writing in support of Jon Waters, and that he be reinstated as the Director of the marching band. I know Jon personally. I was in the Alumni Band during the years he was its assistant director. Sometimes when he wasn’t directing, he would get his tuba and play along with us. Jon is an exceptional musician, an outstanding director, and a great leader. He has the knowledge, background, and ability necessary to be the band director. His imagination and innovation have gotten the marching band, and, consequently, the university, worldwide acclaim. He has the admiration and respect of the band members. Jon is absolutely the best-qualified person to lead the marching band, as well as to continue the efforts he has already implemented to fix its problems.
I believe that the firing of Jon Waters was unfair and unjustified. I urge you to represent the thousands of alumni who feel the same way as I do, and to help persuade President Drake that the proper thing to do is to reinstate Jon Waters immediately.

Thank you, Archie.

Sincerely,

Brian Lewis
B. Sc. Business Administration, The Ohio State University, 1976
The Ohio State University Marching Band, 1972-1976
“i” dotter, 1975, 1976
“i” dotter in the Alumni Band, 2006
Dear President Drake: I am writing to express my grave concerns about the “Investigation Report” regarding the complaint against Jonathan Waters, and the action you have taken based on this report. No doubt you have heard the “Investigation Report” described as being “deeply flawed” and “biased.” In this letter I prove those claims. I apologize in advance for its length, as the “report” has so many shortcomings that it will take several pages to document them. In the interest of brevity, I will only address the most egregious of those shortcomings. Please have the courage to read and understand this entire letter, and to send me an appropriate, non-automated response...

I realize that you do not know Jon Waters. I do know Jon; and because I do, the nature of the “Investigation Report” is more obvious to me than it might have been to you. Nevertheless, there are no number of errors which should have stood out to an educated man.

The authors of this “report” have an agenda. The slanted way in which it was written, the select few witnesses who were interviewed, the reliance on “evidence” from six years before Mr. Waters was named director of The OSU Marching Band to indict him, all of this tarnishes the reputation of The Ohio State University as one of the great research institutions in the world. Perhaps the biggest accomplishment of the investigators was to find as many as twelve people who would say negative things about Jon Waters. And even much of they said was reported inaccurately, as you would know if you’ve been watching the news lately.

Let’s start with the Executive Summary, on the first page. It contains what the authors want you to believe, regardless of whether it is substantiated in the report. Note how it refers to “secrecy oaths,” but when you read the report, only one witness ever mentions such a thing. Furthermore, the authors imply that the Band’s culture is “sexualized.” Conspicuously absent is any definition of “sexualized.” The term is thrown about as if we all agree on its meaning, and as if it means something horribly bad. Why wouldn’t the authors define it? Is it possible that a “sexualized” nature exists within our entire culture, not just the Marching Band?

If you look at Page 3 of the report, you see that the investigators claimed “Conclusions were made using a preponderance of the evidence standard [sic].” In Footnote 3, they say that they interviewed specific people recommended by the complainant and witnesses. The investigators even admit that they “did not randomly interview current Band members for this investigation.” When one only looks at a tiny, biased fraction of the evidence and refers to this as a “preponderance,” the consequent report is unbefitting of an institution of higher education. That the Marching Band Director would lose his job based on this report is a travesty.

On Pages 4 and 5, there is a discussion of the Midnight Ramp. No doubt you have seen references elsewhere to a fund-raising run done in underwear, and photographs of students in underwear jumping into Mirror Lake. So we must assume that the real issue wasn’t underwear.
Furthermore, multiple witnesses “indicated that participation in Midnight Ramp was not required.” (How often did the “report” cite “multiple witnesses?”) Nevertheless, the authors attempt to paint Mr. Waters in a negative light because he was in attendance. If you read further, you find that there had been an incident of alcohol poisoning at a Midnight Ramp in some year previous, and because of that, the staff committed to be there. There can be little doubt that had Waters not been present, the investigators would have faulted him for that.

On Page 9, regarding the Trip Tic, the report says, “One student stated that the only reason Waters banned Trip Tic was because the percussion instructor asked him to ban it when it had cruelly disparaged the instructor’s girlfriend.” How would the student know Jon’s reason for banning Trip Tic? Are we to believe the student is clairvoyant? Even if Waters had stated that this was his reason, the witness’s statement is hearsay. Note that only one student mentioned this. Nevertheless, in their attempt to disparage Waters, the authors use one person’s statement as if it is undisputed fact.

Before we leave the Trip Tic issue, note that on Page 9 the report states “Smith and Hoch were not aware of the ‘Trip Tic still being published. [sic]’ Two paragraphs previous to this, it states that staff members “were not supposed to see it [Trip Tic].” Why were they asking people who weren’t supposed to see something whether it still is being published? This is beyond mindless.

On Page 10, the report states, “One witness indicated that students brought a box of pornography on the bus and shared these magazines with other students.” Again relying on the statement of a single witness (when it would have been easy enough to corroborate), the authors are attempting to paint Jon Waters as being willfully ignorant. A standard Greyhound bus will hold 53 passengers. With a travelling party of 225 bandsmen plus staff, the Band travels with six busses. I assert that Jon Waters could not have been on all of them at the same time; nor could he have known everything that happens on all the busses. Evidently no student filed a complaint about the supposed pornography; if any complaint had been filed, it doubtlessly would have been included in the report. Citing that witness’s statement in this report is entirely unjustifiable, and it is further evidence that the investigators had an agenda.

On Page 11: “One witness stated that Waters texted dirty limericks to students.” Again, just a single witness is relied on for this claim. Furthermore, this would have been easy enough to verify with other witnesses or electronic records. The investigators apparently didn’t do very much investigation. They were content to damage the reputation of Waters with an unsubstantiated charge. They would include 69 pages of second- and third-hand “evidence,” most from six years prior to Waters being named director, but not so much as a screen shot of texted dirty limericks?

Also on Page 11: “One witness described the Band’s long-term culture as ‘sexualized.’” The witness then tells how an upperclassman described sex with his cheerleader girlfriend. Even begging the question that we agree on what “sexualized” means, one witness’s account of a single incident is hardly justification for characterizing the culture of the entire Band, much less “the Band’s long-term culture.”
On Page 13, we find the answer to what you probably thought was a rhetorical question on the first page of my letter. The writers of the report repeatedly refer to the “sexualized culture” of the band, without defining it, so that with verbal sleight of hand, they could morph “sexualized culture” into “sexual harassment.” To quote the report, “The university’s Sexual Harassment Policy 1.15 makes clear that such harassment...” In one cleverly worded sentence, the uninformed and uncritical reader is led to conclude that everything foregoing was, in fact, harassment. This is shameful. It’s almost as shameful as terminating someone’s employment based on this report.

On Page 17, the report includes allegations from Pam Bork, who, in any other circumstance, would be described as a “disgruntled former employee,” possibly followed by the phrase “with an ax to grind.” In this report, however, her words are treated as if they are undisputed truth. There are people who have been around the band far longer than 18 years who could have been interviewed, but weren’t. Not only that, apparently the investigators could not find and interview any of the other “horrified” witnesses to which Pam Bork refers. This suggests very powerfully that such witnesses do not exist. Finding them and interviewing them would have strengthened this report, but it wasn’t done. Science, which is implied in the term “investigation,” is about repeatability, not about finding exceptions.

“Bork then referenced a sexual assault that had occurred as what she feared would come to pass.” So the writers of the report want us to conclude that because Pam Bork says there was (in her opinion) excess alcohol consumption in California, a sexual assault occurred somewhere. That’s quite a stretch.

On Page 19, “The information provided by Bork demonstrates that the Marching Band’s physical therapist put Waters on notice of issues concerning alcohol consumption and the Band’s sexualized culture in September 2013.” Again, a single witness. Not to mention that sentence was written as if it were intended to be quoted out of context, given that Bork was the Marching Band’s physical therapist at the time.

“Given the nature and volume of the information available to Waters, he had knowledge of sexual harassment that created a hostile environment.”

Within the space of two sentences, the report’s authors have leapt from a “sexualized culture,” whatever that may mean, to “sexual harassment” as a proven fact. By now, I trust that you are seeing a pattern, President Drake. This was not an investigation. It was a hatchet job. A character assassination. Someone’s vendetta being implemented by the university. A professional lynching.

Also on Page 19, “On July 19, Waters provided a document describing his thoughts about the Band’s culture and his efforts to improve it; the document does not change the analysis in this report.” Why not include the document so the reader can decide? Perhaps because it didn’t support the predetermined conclusion?

One more thing I will point out as evidence that the report writers have an agenda: On Page 22, in the section entitled “Conclusion and Recommendations for Corrective Action,” one bullet
item is “Understand the connection between alcohol and drug abuse and sexual harassment or violence;”. Drug abuse? Where did that come from? A computerized scan reveals that the word “drug” occurs nowhere else within the entire document. How, then, did this end up as a conclusion? Can anyone possibly believe that the writers did not have an agenda?
Similarly for the word “violence.” It is used once in the body of the report, on Page 10, “…one witness observed that some of the songs went so far as to glorify violence against women.” But if you look at the Conclusion and Recommendations, the word “violence” occurs twelve times! Twelve times! It occurs three times in the expression “sexual harassment and violence” and nine times in the expression “sexual violence.” So the investigators have gone from “sexualized culture” to “sexual harassment” to “sexual violence” based on no evidence! How much more obvious could it be that they have an agenda?

I hope by now, President Drake, you understand just how one-sided, unjust, deeply-flawed, and unjustifiable this “Investigation Report” is. The people who did this so-called “investigation” and this slander pretending to be a “report” should be disciplined. Jon Waters should be reinstated, with your profuse apologies.

It takes a big person to admit and correct his mistakes, especially a mistake of this magnitude. Thousands of Ohio State alumni are hoping that you are a big enough person, and will correct the horrendous mistake of firing Jon Waters.

Sincerely,

Brian C. Lewis
Brian Metzer

#WestandwithJonWaters

I was a sousaphone player in the OSUMB from 1993-1997. I came into the band as a pretty naive kid, into a culture rooted in the military that was by anyone's account like any athletic team. The long history about where exactly the band belonged - in the Music School or in the Athletic Department - attests to this. It was not a classroom as much as a team.

Reading the report in the context of an athletic team or military unit can bring some perspective, helping to compare apples to apples. It doesn't change the facts. But it tempers one's rush to judgment.

Nevertheless, even among the athletic and military culture, I was never forced or required to engage in any behavior that I objected to. And I never suspected that my spot was in jeopardy if I refused. In truth, I was never even in a position to "refuse" publicly. I was protected - warned and sheltered by men and women who were like big brothers and sisters.

I became a Christian during my junior year at OSU - I was not one coming in - and am a missionary today. My own mores and sensitivities only increased during that time. But I suppose, like chaplains in the military, I felt that I would work toward the betterment of the organization from within - I had and still have much respect for TBDBITL - and that any other means would actually be destructive to the organization I had become so fond of and one that had given me so much.

Unfortunately, this is what President Drake's decision is doing.

Have the full extent of the changes come too slowly? Admittedly, yes. I was in the band 16 years ago. Changes have come. But a wholesale overnight change of the culture at the moment Jon Waters became director would have been an impossible task. Jon, as a man who was actually moving the band in the right direction, has been publicly embarrassed, shamed, and blackballed, yet he was uniquely the person to do the very thing the university desires.

I'm deeply grieved because there was a better possible outcome in all of this, a more redeemed outcome: a cleaned-up culture with the aid of the university, with Jon Waters still at the helm, and relationships restored. Instead, there's been deep embarrassment and destruction all the way around.

Reasonable possible outcomes could have included a Title IX compliance officer permanently attached to the band, an official visit from the President of the university and legal affairs warning the band of the pending consequences for Jon Waters, the associate staff members, and students themselves, along with a presidential (and parental) embrace that said, "This is unacceptable but we'll move forward together for your good and ours."

We unfortunately don't live in a world where wisdom can prevail, but in a litigious media saturated one that salivates on the salacious. The university has fed that hunger, hypocritically covered themselves (having turned a blind eye for decades - university police and stadium staff have been complicit in "midnight ramp" which bears the remarkable similarity of being as benign as jumping in mirror lake), and tarnished a man and his career.

All other athletic teams and marching bands across the country are now on notice. You get a do-over. It's nothing to laugh or joke about. You get a chance to clean things up. I wish Jon Waters had that chance. Don't waste it.
August 4, 2014

Mr. Chris Glaros  
The Ohio State University  
Assistant Vice President of Compliance Operations and Investigations  
1534 N High Street  
Columbus, OH 43201

Mr. Glaros,

I write to register my concern about your treatment of The Ohio State University Marching Band Director, Jon Waters. I am an alumnus of Ohio State (B.S. Actuarial Science, 1998) and a proud former member of TBDBITL (Sousaphone, 1993-1997). Your report, which precipitated the firing of Jon Waters, and its release to the media has soiled not only Waters’ reputation, but the reputation of the Marching Band, Alumni, and the University.

At issue for me are the following:

1) The years associated with many of the details of the report (including nicknames, rookie tricks, etc.) are not included. The deliberate absence of these dates was necessary to paint the picture to prove the hypothesis, rather than discovering its validity. Many of the details predate Jon Waters’ tenure as Director of the Marching Band. Indeed, there is no clear chronology in the report. A report seeking to communicate the truth would have included that. It reads as if all events happened in the same fall season, not spread out over multiple years and even in different bands. This was irresponsible and appears to be purposefully deceptive.

2) Exhibit B, an unofficial songbook, is also provided without context, again painting a picture that is entirely inaccurate. Once again it appears to be a deliberate attempt to shape opinion. The sheer shock value of the document ought to attest to the kind of work it is. It is intended as “off color,” or “blue,” “insult” comedy. While it is not comedy that I personally find entertaining, it is one that nevertheless exists, and it survives underground generation after generation - despite repeated crackdowns - precisely because it is so over-the-top. It survives in the hands of that small element that enjoys it. But the perception that it was widely distributed or extolled is patently absurd. Nevertheless, this assumption is now repeated by media outlets across the country - verifying the effect of the report on the opinion of the general public. Further, upon the irresponsible release of the book by the University to anyone with internet access - your floodgate far surpassing the trickle of viewers it previously had - you may have subjected Marching Band members to further verbal and physical abuse in away stadiums where our rivalry sometimes turns to hostility.

3) As has now been widely noted, only one of the students whose nicknames appeared in the report was actually interviewed, and the interviewer did not even ask for her opinion about the very thing for which she was mentioned. The number of interviewees was abysmal and only those suspected of corroborating the forgone conclusion were included. Furthermore, there was clearly no suspicion of motive on the part of the complainant or the hand-chosen witnesses. I do not suggest that motive should negate their concern, only that it should be considered, much as
my motive is inevitably being used as a filter for my comments. The inclusion of more interviewees in the process would have countered the very real possibility of bias and even revenge.

4) Sadly, Jon Water's own reply to the allegations listing in detail the changes he was making in the band, after full cooperation with the University investigation, were left out of your report. A truth-telling report would have included student behaviors and both Waters' preemptive and responsive actions.

5) There was no mention in the report of the ways in which the University was complicit - either by turning a blind eye, failing to provide resources, or by actually participating in the events mentioned. "Midnight Ramp," like the Mirror Lake jump, has been attended by University Police and Stadium officials have provided lighting, scoreboard entertainment, and access.

6) Mr. Waters' responses to actual allegations of sexual misconduct were handled appropriately, following procedure. The only mention of this again appears to be a deliberate distortion, with an explicit suggestion that Waters' botched his responsibility in this. Where was Athletic Director Gene Smith's responsibility in that decision noted? Even so, is it not the responsibility of your office to make sure not only that staff know protocol, but that their decisions comport? If faculty can expect to be assailed publicly for reporting, have you not discouraged them from fulfilling their responsibility?

7) That Mr. Waters was not given the resources for which he is being held accountable, nor given the time to finish the work, and is being held responsible for the totality of behavior of 225 marching members and additional student staff (not to mention the other bands) - both while in his presence and away - belies common sense. All faculty and staff should be on alert by the precedent set, a precedent of unfairness and heavy-handedness from an adversarial university administration which will neither afford due process nor proceed with integrity. Is your office not charged with both aid and compliance?

In all, the investigation was farcical and unworthy of the University stationery it was printed on.

My own experience in the Marching Band was not what was purported by this report. I became a Christian during my junior year at OSU - I was not one coming in - and am a missionary today. My own mores and sensitivities only increased during that time. I and others hosted a band Bible study attended by as many as 25. Like chaplains in the military, we worked toward the betterment of the organization from within, believing that other means would only serve to hurt the organization I had become so fond of and one that had given me so much. I offer this perspective not as a denial of any verifiable data but to express that the band 'culture' is not a monolith of sexual perversion, as has been so grossly portrayed. This is further attested by the volume of parents whose children and even grandchildren go on to participate with support and encouragement.

Let me make it clear: I do not condone and will not offer defense for sexual harassment or assault. Where they occur, violators should be punished and prosecuted appropriately. Surprising, Jon Waters is has been castigated for doing that very thing, and I write to defend him.
I do not deny that changes were needed, but Waters was changing an institution, arguably the single best group of ambassadors for Ohio State, from the inside, accomplishing both its preservation and reformation. Cultures do not change overnight. He was working persuasively with the students to inculcate lasting change for everyone’s betterment. Jon Waters was making what was Best even Better and bringing further acclaim and money to the University in the process. He has been rewarded with character assassination.

Additionally, as far as one deems the Marching Band sexualized, that is a reflection of the culture at large, and the University shares the responsibility. Examples from society abound and need not be rehearsed, but permitting sponsored underwear runs at the very least sends a mixed message. Even the Student Wellness Center’s Condom Club’s videos available online refer to their wooden prop as “Woody” and the proper use of a “finger cot” (previously unknown to me) was demonstrated on the extended finger of the bronze Brutus Buckeye in the Ohio Union.

I recognize the responsibility of the University to protect students. I value that for my own child. But I agree with the TBDBITL Alumni Club Board of Governors when I say that the decision to fire Waters served no one. One can only assume that your deliberately untruthful report (for the reasons listed above) was written with the nefarious motive of offering up Jon Waters as a scapegoat.

I have always worn my Ohio State Alumnus status with pride, especially my association with TBDBITL. The latter continues, but I am for the first time embarrassed by my university, and I have removed my name from OSU solicitation rolls.

I have written a similar letter to the following parties: Governor John Kasich, Board of Trustees, Archie Griffin, Betty Montgomery, and David Axelrod. Please provide me with confirmation that you received my letter and I request feedback regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Brian Metzer
Analysis of Percentage of Women in OSUMB

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 04, 2014

Letter to the Dispatch Editor in response to "Ohio State's marching band has few women compared to others in Big Ten".

As a female alumnus of the Ohio State University marching band, I feel compelled to clear up some details after reading Collin Binkley's article about the band on the front page of the Sunday paper. Over the past few days, several of my fellow alumni members have written wonderful letters to the Dispatch, President Drake and other news outlets. I am a very data driven person, so I have spent the last 48 hours gathering as much information as I can about two major issues I have with this article...

My first concern is Mr. Binkley's point that women are rarely selected to be squad leaders in the marching band. As a four year member of the band, I spent 2 years serving as a squad leader, an assistant in 2004 and a head squad leader in 2005. Feeling concerned that perhaps my perception of the number of female squad leaders was skewed by the 8 years that have passed since I was in the band, I posted a request on the official TBDBITL Alumni Facebook page asking that anyone who had or was a female squad leader in the band let me know their name, their row and what years they served as squad leaders. Within ten hours, I had the names of 195 women who have served as squad leaders since women joined the band in 1973. And this list is still growing. In fact, my row has had a woman serve as an assistant or head squad leader, and for 4 years both, for every year except one since 2001. This number does not include the 51 women who have served as head managers, librarians and secretaries for the band starting as far back as 1947.

The other concern I have is the comment regarding the ratio between men and women in the OSUMB as opposed to other Big Ten bands. The author specifically mentioned our friendly band from that place up North, so I did some researching on my own. Using Michigan's 2013 roster that is posted online, I discovered that when looking at the entire band, 42.44% is made up of women. This is not quite the equal makeup that Mr. Binkley implies, but it is close. However, if you take into account that the OSUMB is made up of only brass and percussion, the picture changes quite a bit. Only 22.15% of Michigan's brass and percussion sections are made up of women. If we take away the woodwinds, flags and majorettes, something that OSU does not have, the percentage is actually LOWER than the 22.67% that represents the number of women in the 2013 OSUMB. Another Big Ten band, Penn State, has a similar issue. When looking at the Nittany Lion band only 22.22% of the brass and percussion sections are made up of women. Having a Bachelor's degree in Music Education from OSU, and having taught in a public school district for 4 years, I would love to believe that the stereotypes no longer exist that women play woodwinds and men play brass. And while ideas are changing, it is a fact that currently more men play brass and percussion instruments. To be honest, I'm okay with a band with a lower percentage of women, especially when an increase tends to mean the women are dressed in suggestive glittery attire, and twirl flags or dance provocatively on the field. I find those choices to be degrading to women.
I urge you to please look at the many stories being shared by the women alumni of the OSUMB. We were not abused or mistreated. In fact, the male members became our friends, teammates and brother-in-arms as we spent countless hours learning difficult drills and memorizing challenging songs. Rather than being sensitive and delicate girls, the women of the OSUMB, both past and present, are strong, confident and empowered members of society. And we owe much of that to what we learned and gained from the band. I am just as proud to be an alumnus of the OSUMB as I was after I marched my last game. And in my heart they have always been and will forever remain TBDBITL.

Jenna McCoy
E-Row 2002-2005
BME 2007
August 3, 2014

President Michael Drake
205 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, OH 43210

Dear Dr. Drake:

Before I could even walk, I already loved The Ohio State University. My grandpa, my parents, my uncle, and countless family friends made it clear that their years at OSU were priceless. We made so many trips to campus that it has always felt like home to me, and I knew each time that those brick buildings and crisscrossing paths were hallowed ground. When it was finally time to apply for college, there was only one choice in my mind, and my most precious dream came true when Dr. Jon Woods read my name aloud as a member of "The Best Damn Band in the Land". Each time I put on my uniform, I proudly felt the weight of decades of Ohio State traditions and history: I was marching for Eugene Weigel, Tubby Essington, and the other pillars of band history I'd learned about. Moreover, I was marching for Woody, Archie, and the other heroes of my parents' stories, as well as the hundreds of thousands of current fans across the country. As a five-year member of the band and current active member of the Alumni Band, I know firsthand the band's true culture and Jon Waters' impact on it. I am incensed at how they have been portrayed, and I am devastated that the university I love so dearly has gathered, disseminated, and acted maliciously on a collection of misinformation to destroy my biggest source of pride and its best leader ever.

Although this issue is of the utmost urgency, I have taken my time in writing to you because I spent several days conducting a detailed analysis of the Investigation Report released by the university. Always a diligent student, I wanted to ensure that I was fully informed regarding the situation. After closely reading and annotating the report, I was astonished at the preponderance of inaccurate and outdated information included, as well as the minuscule scope of witnesses compared to the wide range of band members and recent alumni (including myself) who have relevant information about the cited incidents and Mr. Waters' actions as Assistant Director and Director. I have always been taught that investigations should seek information with an open mind and then analyze that information to arrive at a well-reasoned conclusion. Sadly, it is obvious from the multitude of errors, irrelevancies, and contradictions within this report that this
investigation began with a pre-determined conclusion in mind and sought only evidence that supported that (extremely inaccurate) conclusion. As a scientist, you must agree that such a one-sided, incomplete "investigation" is, at best, mediocre, and at worst, insidiously calculated to do maximum damage to Mr. Waters and the band.

While I am extremely concerned that one of the premier research institutions in the country would release, yet alone make high-stakes decisions upon, a "report" of this nature, I am even more disappointed that you, as a new President, would rely solely on this information without seeking to personally experience the true culture of the marching band or meet Mr. Waters. In this first letter (because, yes, I have so much to say on this topic that you'll be hearing from me several more times), I'd like to introduce you to the man whose upstanding character this "report" has so cruelly assassinated. He is an innovative educator, an admirable role model, a passionate Buckeye, and a caring man of integrity: Mr. Jonathan Waters.

Two days after I made the band for the first time, Jon Waters knew my name. Me, a random scrawny horn rookie! I knew then that this Assistant Director cared about students. The next year, he came up to me before the first practice after tryouts and said, "Show 'em how to march!" I was so proud that he'd noticed my high marching scores that I thought I'd fly right off the field! I knew then that he cared about individual students. My fifth year, when a sideline collision at Michigan State caused the bell of my mellophone to slice into my chin, sending blood running down my face and onto my tie and crossbelts, it was Jon that I ran to. I will never forget the expression of deep caring that registered on his face when I approached him. As he sprinted down the field in search of a trainer at a velocity that most people reserve for rescuing their firstborn child, band members unaware of the situation wondered who had collapsed or broken a bone! To this day, the small scar on my chin still reminds me of Jon's concern for me as a person. Later that year, as I sobbed uncontrollably after my last Gray Day practice, he hugged me and said, "I know how hard it is!" I knew then that if anyone loved the band more than me, it was Jon Waters.

Throughout my five years in the marching band and seven years in the Alumni Active Band, I've watched Jon work and fight to make the band better, on and off the field. Much of the evidence presented in the Investigation Report occurred before he was Director, yet some of the incidents were specifically addressed by him at the time, even as Assistant. The report's claim that he "did nothing" about such incidents is a blatant lie, because I watched for five years as he was the one staff member who most often stood up for what was right and took steps to curb inappropriate behavior. In fact, he often received pushback and ridicule from band members for his firm stance on such behavior, yet he continued to work tirelessly to make changes. Even as Assistant Director, he systematically planned specific procedures and actions to encourage responsible behavior and limit poor choices. For example, I recall disagreeing with him in squad leader meetings about trip itineraries, because I wanted more sleep but he wanted to avoid opportunities
for students to get into mischief. Likewise, he was constantly admonishing the few students who made inappropriate jokes and reminding us all of our duty to represent the band with honor. Through his courageous, tireless leadership, the outdated vestiges of inappropriate subculture (and the simple misbehaviors of some ornery college kids with questionable senses of humor) were dramatically reduced from my first year in band to my 5th year. In the following years, countless more positive shifts occurred as Jon gained more and more power to enact change.

When Jon became Director, I had no doubt that his unique leadership would propel the band to new heights, in performance and in positive representation of the university. He proved me right with incredible innovations in show design, impressive new traditions that highlight the core of what it means to be a Buckeye, and a new range of training programs and service projects designed to help band members become better people. Since I am now an educator, I know how sensitive and volatile classroom culture is, even without the added complications of long-held traditions, extracurricular activities, an extremely large class size, and the burden of intense public scrutiny on young students who are legal adults but still working towards maturity. Furthermore, I know that the inappropriate behavior of a few individuals is not representative of a larger culture, but of the poor choices of those particular individuals. Thus, I especially admire Jon's expertise at building on the strengths of the band and cultivating caring relationships with students in order to create positive change. By using the pride and positive traditions of the band to get members to buy in to his leadership, he was able to enact far more drastic and sweeping changes than any of his predecessors, while maintaining the respect and admiration of 225 diverse college students still trying to figure out who they are.

As a teacher, I understand that Jon's intense concern for each student is the single most important trait of a life-changing educator. Jon doesn't just want to make the band better; he wants to help each student become a better person. I admire how carefully he has planned guest speakers and training sessions to instill leadership and responsibility in band members. I've noticed how his eyes sparkle while discussing his dreams of helping students become better citizens through service, and I've witnessed the impact of those projects on the community and the students. Because of Jon, being a member of TBDBITL now means giving back to the community who gives you so much honor and praise. Because of Jon, the Ohio State School for the Blind has a nationally acclaimed marching band. Because of Jon, the families of cancer victims cherish singular moments of honor and respect from the OSUMB. Because of Jon, the band members involved in these and other acts of service are now more empathetic, compassionate people as well as better musicians and marchers.

All in all, there is no one better suited to continue moving the marching band forward than Jon Waters. No one could be a better leader for the OSUMB than Jon, because no one else has his unique blend of a true Buckeye heart, an educator's soul, and a drive for excellence. I am so proud to be a TBDBITL alumna, and I am even more proud of Jon Waters' work to make "the
best" even better. Because of Jon, the band has become a more respectable organization internally, with new, more positive traditions, at the same time as it has achieved international acclaim on the field. As evidenced by his extensive transformations so far, firing Jon takes away the University's best tool for positive change. I shudder to imagine the band’s future without his unprecedented “tradition through innovation”, and I urge you to reinstate him immediately.

Now that you are discovering the poor quality of the Investigation Report and the true nature of Mr. Waters and the marching band, his reinstatement as Director is clearly the only acceptable course of action. Together, you and he can collaborate to continue ensuring that the Ohio State University Marching Band truly remains “The Pride of the Buckeyes”.

Please provide me with specific, non-automated confirmation that you have received and read my letter. I request your feedback regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mitchell


B.A. with Honors, Spanish, 2006: Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa


Teaching & Learning Endorsement, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, 2009

Columbus Area Writing Project Summer Institute, 2013

Life Member, OSU Alumni Association

Member, TBDBITL Alumni Club Board of Governors
August 7, 2014

President Michael Drake
205 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, OH 43210

Dear Dr. Drake:

As you'll recall from my first letter, I am extremely upset about the way my beloved university has attacked the proudest experience of my life and one of the most admirable men I know. Since I can personally attest to various examples of outdated, inaccurate, and exaggerated "evidence" in Mr. Glaros' Investigation Report, I am astonished that a widely respected research institution would continue to defend it while ignoring the testimony of so many individuals with deeper knowledge of the marching band and Jon Waters' extensive positive changes. I am disappointed that I have not yet received your personal feedback about my first letter, and I hope to hear from you soon, as you should now have a deeper understanding of Mr. Waters' admirable character and his extensive work to help all band members grow into better people.

This time, I'd like to introduce you to the true culture of The Ohio State University Marching Band. As a five-year member and two-year Squad Leader, I assure you that the "sexualized" and "hostile" culture depicted in Mr. Glaros' incomplete and biased "report" is absolutely NOT representative of the OSUMB. While some members did engage in inappropriate behavior, these were isolated incidents that are not reflective of the overall character of the band. Moreover, many of the examples cited in the report predated Mr. Waters' term as Director by at least several years, and he specifically dealt with the vast majority of those incidents, either as Assistant or Director. To discerning readers, the lack of years in Mr. Glaros' collection of "evidence" is extremely concerning; it is either very sloppy work or a deliberate attempt to misrepresent the culture of the band by shocking readers into believing that such incidents occurred much more often than they actually did. Likewise, Mr. Glaros' "report" misconstrues isolated anecdotes and outdated exhibits as prevalent and condoned, when they were actually rare, extreme, and prohibited. Most importantly, the "report" fails to include the numerous steps that Mr. Waters took to punish and eliminate such behavior and refuses to take note of the respectable actions of most band members.
What is the truly widespread, representative culture of the marching band embraced by all members? It is an honorable culture of perseverance and unity that inspires members to put aside personal exhaustion, pain, and challenges in order to achieve excellence for the glory of the band and the university.

I first experienced the culture of the marching band as a sophomore in high school, when one of my mom's colleagues brought me down on the floor of Skull Session. I soaked in the gleaming instruments, the rigid posture, the immaculate uniforms, and the resolute faces. I could see that each band member carried profound pride in a shared history mixed with a desire to innovate towards future greatness, and I knew, without a doubt, that I wanted to be a part of that tradition of excellence. That is the culture of the marching band.

When I began attending the OSUMB's optional summer practices, I found that the veteran band members leading the sessions shared a fierce drive for excellence to the point of perfection. I also found a welcoming, united family where members were eager to help, teach, and support everyone. For three months, these role models pushed me, encouraged me, and volunteered hours of their time to teach me individually. As I prepared for tryouts, I marched for two hours a day on my own, practiced my music, and often met veteran band members for additional practice or Summer Sessions, resulting in 2-5 hours of practice. Every day. For the entire summer. That's the culture of the marching band.

After persevering through two days of grueling tryouts, I was welcomed into a new family: E-Row. Through serious discussions and joyful celebrations, I learned that I was safe, I was valued, and I was responsible for pulling my own weight to keep the band great. I learned that some band members shared my core beliefs and others didn't, but we were all part of the same team, working toward the same goal. Veteran band members took me in as a little sister, teaching and supporting me just as they had when I was working to make the band. The third-year member who marched beside me took special care to take me under his wing, helping me learn to navigate the band and college life in general. His caring guidance helped me develop as a band member but also shaped my life philosophies, my major, and my career path. This summer, after learning about Jon Waters' termination and the unreasonable nature of Mr. Glaros' "report", he called me from Virginia because he knew I'd be upset and he wanted to check on me. That's the culture of the marching band.

Did some band members behave inappropriately? Sometimes. However, I didn't interpret those incidents as the culture of the band, but as the behavior of some college students who embraced prevalent societal norms encouraged in popular media. There was no more inappropriate behavior in the band than on the campus as a whole; rather, I felt safer and more respected with
band members than in other situations. Even in the rare case that an older band member was mean to me, another would immediately stick up for me. When I was stressed or upset (about band, school, or just college life), I knew where to look for hugs and encouragement: my band family. Even if we were years apart, even if we had little else in common, we shared an unbreakable bond. When I walked across campus and saw another student in a marching band t-shirt or jacket, we'd smile and say hi like best friends, even if we barely knew each other. As a tiny freshman on OSU's massive campus, there was nothing like a smile from a senior to make my day. That's the culture of the marching band.

We inspired each other. We defended each other. For five years, we challenged each other to be better marchers, musicians, and people. By embracing me without judgment as I stuck to my Christian values but allowing me to work with students who held other perspectives, the band taught me that diversity makes us all stronger. By giving me opportunities to mentor new members, the band helped me discover the joy of teaching. By showing me the power of leading by example, the band made me realize that even though I was introverted, I could be a leader. My fellow band members, directors, and experiences made me become my best possible self. I believed so much in the power of the band to change lives that I was constantly recruiting friends and acquaintances to join, and I still do. If the band was truly as Mr. Glaros' "report" depicted it, I would not have given countless hours in the hot sun and driving rain to help others become a part of it. As a squad leader, I sought to nurture, encourage, and challenge younger members just as my mentors had done for me. Determined to leave the band better than I found it, I worked passionately to ensure that each member of my row had a more positive experience, and I saw so many other squad leaders and veteran members doing the same. That's the culture of the marching band.

My last Saturday in uniform was one of the saddest days of my life. I still miss putting on those crossbelts and going out with my brothers and sisters to weave a history of excellence into a future of possibility. Fortunately, I now have an even bigger family: the Alumni Band. As an active member, I have gotten to truly embrace our proud history interacting with alumni of all decades. Again, these members have welcomed me, embraced me, and mentored me. We share a love of music, but we also share stories, advice, and wisdom. One night after practice, as we laughed and ate pizza, we realized that our table of friends spanned every decade from the 1930's to the 2000's. That's the culture of the marching band.

Above all, the culture of the band is an unwavering commitment to represent ourselves and The Ohio State University with honor and dignity. You can hear it in our deliberate chants. You can see it in our impeccable uniforms and spotless instruments. It flows through our crisp, precise movements and rumbles in the resounding beat of our music. Our backs are straight, our chins are held high, and our eyes are riveted forward with dignity and determination. Young or old, past or present, we are "The Pride of the Buckeyes", and we know it.
As a proud alumna of TBDBITL, I will not stand for the university's malicious and misleading attack on our collective character. I will not allow the most positive experience of my life to be vilified with a false focus on rare, extreme, and outdated incidents that Jon Waters specifically addressed. I know our culture is one of honor, and just as our fight song says, I will fight to the end to defend it. Once again, I urge you to reinstate Jon Waters as Director, since he is the embodiment of all the most positive aspects of the marching band's culture and the driving force behind innumerable positive changes. Moreover, I hope you will take it upon yourself to learn more about the marching band by visiting practices and performances in order to experience the true culture firsthand. Finally, I hope you will acknowledge that you acted without first obtaining accurate, balanced information so that you can support the TBDBITL Alumni and current students in our efforts to repair the falsely damaged reputations of Mr. Waters, the band, and its members.

Again, please provide me with your specific, non-automated confirmation that you received my letter. I am still awaiting your previous response and I request your further feedback regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mitchell


B.A. with Honors, Spanish, 2006: Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa


Teaching & Learning Endorsement, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, 2009

Columbus Area Writing Project Summer Institute, 2013

Life Member, OSU Alumni Association

Member, TBDBITL Alumni Club Board of Governors
Band director didn’t deserve to be fired

Sunday July 27, 2014 7:45 AM

Who knew Ohio State University had the Softest Damn Band in the Land? The internal report issued last week in support of dismissing marching band director Jonathan Waters reads like satire.

It is apparent that the problem at OSU is not the band culture, but the bureaucratic and politically correct culture that could allow a report like that to see the light of day.

OSU terminated a respected director because band members acted like college kids.

They gave nicknames; they played around on bus rides. They even had a tradition of marching into the stadium in underwear.

What any of us would call hijinks, pranks, practical jokes, Ohio State University called grounds for termination. The report is a frightening bit of political correctness run amok and a chilling lesson to all current and future Buckeyes: Don’t dare act like you’re in college.

ANDREW MOODY    Columbus
To All This May Concern:

As I sat on the stage of a recent TBDBITL alumni concert, in front of over 2,000 people at Lakeside, Ohio, I felt embarrassed and humiliated. These feelings were coupled with sorrow for what Jon Waters, his family, and the entire OSU marching band community.

While answering my patients' questions the following week about "sexual culture", I wondered how the university could be so wrong in slandering Jon Waters and the entire OSU marching band alumni. Doctors, lawyers, preachers, teachers, farmers, engineers, I first met Jon Waters when he joined the alumni band for its concert tour of Oregon and Alaska. He has been a director with the alumni band ever since. My wife, daughter and I got to know him better when we toured northern England with the band.

Since the firing, my many conversations with current band members and recent graduates have confirmed my good opinion of Jon. This sudden firing has shaken my confidence in the judgment of the administration of The Ohio State University.

Sincerely,

Brice R. Musser, O.D.
Dr. Drake,

I graduated in Social Work from The Ohio State University in 1969. The student culture has certainly changed over the years. The first big change came when 18 year olds were declared to be adults; if they had to go to war they should be able to vote on those sending them there. The position of dorm mother was done away with along with restricted hours. Co-ed dorms became the norm, instead of no visitors of the opposite sex permitted beyond the lobby, they can now stay overnight. I had to put a skirt on over my cut-offs to eat the evening meal in the dorm as it was evidently not appropriate to for a girl (we weren’t women then) to wear shorts to dinner. Times have changed. These are young adults now, free to choose their lifestyle.

If the band members will be chastised and their leaders fired for having access to lewd lyrics (no one was forced to sing them), the football team and other groups must be prohibited from listening to and singing today’s rap music with its explicitly, misogynistic and violent lyrics. My husband was in the band in 1964 and he said they had some “dirty” lyrics to songs but nothing as bad as the ones he learned on the playground growing up in Lima, Ohio.

I have spoken to many alumni in the past week and all feel this has been blown out of proportion and is no more than a reflection of college life in general. One acquaintance is a recent graduate and now in charge of religious music for a large church in Texas. His wife, also a marching band alum, is a teacher there. When this tabloid rendition of the University appeared on national news it was an embarrassment to them especially since it painted all band members with the same brush.

Finally, I am a property owner at the Lakeside, Ohio Chautauqua where Jon oversaw the youth recreation program for years helping them to grow in mind, body, and spirit. He is beloved here. I have also known Jon through the alumni band activities including a week tour of Alaska and ten days in England when he guided band members and their families through a number of parades and performances, always checking on everybody’s wellbeing. Where will you find another of such creative, musical abilities who cares so much for the youth and has such strong moral fiber?

Sincerely,
Carolyn Schlub Musser
B.S. 1969 O.S.U.
Thomas A. Myers

7 August 2014

Michael Drake, President
The Ohio State University
205 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, Ohio 43210-1357

Copies to
TBDBITL Alumni Club, Inc., Brian Golden, President
Attorney David Axelrod
Attorney Gary Leppla
Archie Griffin
Betty Montgomery

Secretary for the Board of Trustees
210 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, Ohio 43210-1388

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Stacie Seger
Timothy Smucker
Alan VanderMolen
Abigail Wexner

Dear President Michael Drake and Trustees,

The most challenging acid test for a leader is admitting his or her mistake, apologizing, and taking immediate corrective action, especially when new facts clearly show the mistake was made. A great leader has no difficulty doing this.

Given the fatal flaws in the Glaros Investigative Report and the collective rush to the misjudgment of Jonathan Waters, I believe it is now time for you to admit your mistake in firing Jonathan Waters, apologize to him and to the Trustees, University, and Alumni, and reinstate him, effective the date of his firing, without penalty or probation.

I believe being innocent until proven guilty, based on all facts, still applies in the United States of America. Correct?

I ask that the office of President Drake confirm that he has received this letter. Email is fine.

Best regards,

Thomas A. Myers
OSUMB 1963-1968

Mobile telephone +1 510 589 5265 • myersaz@gmail.com • 5473 E Butte St • Mesa AZ 85205-8137
Thomas A. Myers  
Summary Chronology

- Member of the O.S.U. Marching Band, 1963-1968.
- B.S.B.A. (finance) (music major during the first two years), O.S.U., 1968.
- Commission as a U.S. Army Officer, 1968.  
  (O.S.U. R.O.T.C. Cadet Brigadier General. Distinguished Military Graduate.)
- M.B.A. (finance), University of Cincinnati, 1970.
- Post M.B.A. courses at the University of Akron.
- Financial analyst (financial analysis, financing, financial planning & forecasting, and investor relations support), Mid-Continent Telephone Corporation, Hudson, Ohio, 1973-1978.
- Investor relations Manager and Director, TRW Inc. in Cleveland, 1979-1997. Industries included aerospace, defense, automotive, industrial, energy, and information.  
  Led the company’s global investor relations program for 17 years.
- Director on the Board of the National Investor Relations Institute, four years. U.S. representative on the Board of the International Investor Relations Federation (global organization), three years.
- President, Firestone High School Instrumental Music Association (Akron, Ohio), four years, and band camp counselor (includes counseling students and staff in musical performance, marching, behavior, and harassment), seven years.
- President, North American Brass Band Association, two years. Lifetime member.
- V.P., Investor relations, ICO Global Communications in London, U.K. (emerging satellite telephone services), 1998-2000. During that time, once I became aware of it, I counseled the acting Chief Financial Officer on his serial sexual harassment of employees.
- Created the publication *Investor Relations Strategy, Staffing, and Structure* for the National Investor Relations Institute, 2002 and subsequent updates.
- Subject matter expert, University of California, Irvine, 2003. Created the introductory and capstone online courses for the professional certificate program in investor relations, sanctioned by the National Investor Relations Institute.
- Management and investor relations consulting, Christensen in Scottsdale, Arizona, 2005 to today, including six years in Beijing, China (2008-2013). Teaching and assisting client chairmen, chief executives, chief financial officers, investor relations officers, staff, and employees in a wide range of strategic, planning, operating, technical, financial, investor relations, legal, accounting, and regulatory subjects. Clients were listed or planned to list on a U.S. stock exchange.

7 August 2014
Victoria Nolte

President Drake,

I marched my fourth and final season with the OSUMB this past year and as a female I feel that I need to speak out. The media and university have dragged a wonderful man and organization through the mud, with very little facts and context. This was not an investigation, it was a witch-hunt.

My nickname appeared in the report, but I was not contacted whatsoever. Ohio State did not conduct a proper investigation, but rather took hearsay to victimize and slander me. I was absolutely not made to feel inferior during my time in band, and these claims of misogyny are way off base.

Using this false report, my own university was the FIRST to make me feel like a frail, helpless, inferior, sexual object. I reject any insinuation that I was coerced or pressured into doing ANYTHING. If they had taken the time to talk to me, a more complete narrative would have emerged.

From the time you make band, you are a part of the TBDBITL family and everyone takes care of one another. During my time in the band the older members were constantly making sure I was okay, and it was ALWAYS made clear to me that I did not have to participate in anything that I did not feel comfortable doing. That being said, "midnight ramp" was absolutely all in good fun, the point of it being, "If you can march ramp in your underwear in front of your closest friends, you'll be able to march ramp in front of 105,000 fans". Many people chose not to march in their undergarments, but wore as much clothes as made them feel comfortable. Many didn’t even participate. I would like to make it very clear that Jon understood this lighthearted tradition, and was present to make sure we were all safe. He single-handedly changed this to a sober and safe event, and even completely cancelled the event for years following his inaugural year as head director.

Quite a few traditions have been done-away with by Jon and his staff over the past two years. The things we could get away with drastically changed, like night and day, from the beginning of my band career to the end. The band frequently referred to Jon and his staff as the “fun police”, making siren noises whenever he cracked down on us, or changed something. Jon always would have talks with the entire band and squad leaders, feeling it was important to consult the band to get feedback in finding a solution to tweak our deeply rooted traditions. He coined the phrases, "Do we need this? Is this necessary?" The answer, of course, was "No." Jon was passionate about bringing forth change in our culture, and was a very disciplinary leader. Any other report that says otherwise is absolutely false and fabricated. Jon Waters was TBDBITL’s instrument of change. (Pun intended)

I am very sure about one thing. Without the support of Jon Waters and this band, I don’t know how I could have gotten through my mother’s cancer, or even my undergraduate chemistry classes. I have served as the former vice president and president of the band’s service sorority, Tau Beta Sigma, working closely with Jon to provide service to the whole band. We supported the bands at OSU through recruitment, financial support, and especially welcoming the new members of the marching band and helping them in various ways throughout their first season, among other things. Jon is a stand up man, who cares not only about his own students, but all students involved in music. A few years ago, a tragedy occurred where another Big Ten marching band member lost their life. Although our fiercest of rivals, Jon quickly organized a few TBDBITL members to drive up to the university the next day to speak to their band in support, attend a memorial service, and give the band one of our most prized possessions, a grey baton. I could speak all day about the respect I have for Jon Waters as a leader.

For the first time, I am very disappointed in my university. If you want more change, the only person who understands this band and knows how to do that is Jon Waters. As a female member of The Ohio State University Marching Band Alumni- I stand with Jon.

Sincerely,
Victoria "Tulsa" Nolte
Q-Row 2010-2013
Past Tau Beta Sigma President
Biology B.S. 2014 graduate
I write this to stand with Jon Waters in deep gratitude for all he has done for my daughter Victoria Nolte as a teacher, mentor, and life coach. My greatest hope is that Victoria continues to surrounds herself with many people who have Jon’s work ethic, character and humility. You only get one life.

Aug 4, 2014

Dear President Drake,

My name is Mark Nolte and my daughter is Victoria Nolte, a recent OSUMB alumni having matriculated on May 4, 2014 earning her B.S. in Biology. She is continuing her education, working on her Masters, at a college in Philadelphia while also preparing to take the MCAT. I tell you this so you know that she is still covered under Title IX which became effective on June 23, 1972.

After the annual marching band tryout process in 2010, she earned her position in OSUMB and marched in both F-Row and Q-Row. She marched under both Jon Woods and Jon Waters. Her mother and I have hosted two row dinners for Q-Row in 2012 and 2013. We have been friends of the band since 2008 when Victoria attended a Concert Band Camp at The Ohio State University and earned first chair. For the parent’s concert at the end of camp, she was given the lead trombone part in “Fantasy on a Theme by Sousa”. She and I met Jon Waters and he invited her to come sit with the band as ‘friends of the band’ for the October 25, 2008 game vs. Penn State. We sat with TBDBITL during the game, stood on the field during half time when OSUMB performed Script Ohio and the 1812 Overture. Mr. Archie Griffin stood 10 feet to our left as he waited to honor John Cooper during the halftime celebration. Only my marriage to Tina and the birth of my daughters ranks higher in excitement and satisfaction. Number 4 is the Purdue game victory led by Kenny G but that is another story for another time. After the game, Victoria applied for admission and nervously waited to be accepted, she made it, attended the 2009 summer sessions, tried out for the band in 2009, didn’t make it, tried out again in 2010 and made it each of the following years, 2010 to 2013.

So you understand how her mother and I have raised our two girls, we do not accept bullying. We do not like bullies, both individuals and institutions. There is a strong smell to your report that insinuates, implies there was rampant coercion, hazing and sexual harassment in the band. Hmm. Not concerning Victoria, this I can assure you. Victoria is an ‘alpha female’, she doesn’t do the ‘victim, sexual harassment, hazing, bullying things’. So you know her better, a funny story from her youth. She was in 4th grade, learning about the Presidents. I forget what I was trying to get her to do, clean her room, something like that, she got very angry and yelled at me, “YOU ARE NOT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON OF ME!” To this day, as I offer her fatherly advice, many times I preface my statements with, “Now I know, Victoria, that I am not the George Washington of you but here is my advice to you …”

Victoria’s personality and character is such that she leads. In high school she was the only female trombone player in her 250 piece high school marching band. Her senior year she was both the section leader of a dozen or so male trombone players and was elected band Vice President. At University, she was elected first Vice President and then President of The Ohio State University chapter of the National Band Service Sorority Tau Beta Sigma (TBS). So we are clear, it is a sober, dry sorority that promotes marching bands on a national level. As President of that organization, she and her other elected officials and members worked closely with Jon Waters and his staff on a number of big events sponsored by the University. Their work is a matter of documented record by their secretary and TBS historian. Victoria knows Jon Waters and Jon Waters knows Victoria both as a band member and I think Victoria would call him a colleague during her volunteer work with TBS. He made her feel like she was part of the planning and execution process in what OSUMB does for the larger community. The list of pep bands alone, to shine the University reputation is too long to list.

I tell you this because these young adults have done amazing things and have carried a lot of water for the University on a volunteer basis. To be identified in your scurrilous report, riddled with errors, many say slanderous, I guess they learned a great lesson about the fickleness of the University. Your report is ridiculous and has set your administration up for ridicule. Ridicule duly deserved. I heard all the leadership was in agreement to fire Jon Waters. I guess the ‘emperor has no clothes’ is not spoken in the
upper levels of your administration. Sad there is not more robust debate within the ranks. It makes a
team weak.

Not all fun and games in college for Victoria, 30 hours a week devoted to band, TBS, rigorous classes to
achieve a B.S. in Biology. She could not have made it without her band friends helping her with all the
chemistry classes amid all the other math, science and biology classes. Her final two years, she attended
classes each semester and during the summer. During band summer sessions she is known for her
marching skill and along with her band mates, they teach the high school kids readying for tryouts how to
march. Band members, who while part of the band's prior season, with their place in the band at risk to
be lost during tryouts, they teach candidates how to march. Hmm. Character. Victoria lived in Columbus
full time since she left high school. She bleeds scarlet and gray.

Concerning women in marching bands and the instruments they play, I briefly read a news story that The
Ohio State University has only 21% women in their band and Indiana has 58%. This reporting is an
excellent example of what happens when one doesn't know the facts and either willingly distorts
information or it happens they are just ignorant and not well trained. These type statistics are very
misleading. Let me tell you why. The Ohio State University Marching Band is a brass band. Indiana's
band is not a brass band. There band contains woodwind instruments. I have been closely observing
marching bands since Victoria first played the trombone as an eleven year old child. I was also her high
school's band videoographer for 10 years. I saw hundreds of marching band performances. There are
many less female brass players than female woodwind players. Not having the exact numbers, I would
venture to guess that 21% female brass players is the national average if not higher. Most young ladies
choose a woodwind instrument. When Vic was in your marching band her last college year, she was one
of 4 women in 28 trombone positions. It is not an instrument many girls chose in 5th grade. Big case,
heavy, who would wish to lug that thing to school and then home to practice every day?

I have read your report concerning the complaint against Jonathan Waters, Director of the OSU Marching
Band. Note the word 'your' since it was released after you took your position, President Drake, it is your
report, you own it and all that comes in the future. Harry Truman understood this when he said "The Buck
Stops Here".

Being an expert in my job performing problem analysis called Root Cause Corrective Action (RCCA),
using the "5 Why's", making Cause Chains and such, after my first quick pass at the report details, I
jumped to the 'Corrective Actions'. This area is obviously not your Investigative Team's strength. No
'root cause' listed. Unless "Jon Waters" is the root cause and the RC corrective action not listed is to
"Fire Jon Waters" but that can't be, firing people in place of fixing processes is never workable in
achieving lasting change.

Having read the list of corrective actions, did it occur to you President Drake the list exonerates Jon
Waters? It reads like a blue print for actions that should have been put in place decades ago, not by Jon
Waters, by persons responsible and hopefully accountable by you for instituting policy and procedures at
your University. Take a moment and think about what I am saying to you. Your own investigative team
directly incriminated the policies and procedures that are some other person's responsibility higher up the
responsibility/accountability ladder than the Marching Band Director. So you know, you have not been
served well by your staff and advisors. You are on the weak ground. President Drake. Jon Waters, the
Marching Band members and the band Alumni (specifically those who did not participate in any events
reported) are on the 'high ground'. Your report admits that above Jon Waters area of responsibility,
accountability and purview, there were policies, procedures, training and other items that should have
already been in place. If your administration had the high ground, your report would have said policy and
procedure X, Y and Z has been in place for years A through Z (there are not enough letters in the
alphabet since Title IX has been in place since 1972) and Jon Waters ignored them, violated them and
the culture became sexualized. Please pause your further reading of this letter and consider this
paragraph. It's important to know. I'm pretty sure any cause chain other experts in RCCA analysis
perform, University Policies and Procedures will be the 'root cause'.
Concerning the report and issues involving my daughter Victoria, having read your report, I noticed that the person who brought the complaint and some witnesses were not named in the report. There is probably a legal reason to keep some people’s names from being reported. I understand why you can name Jon Waters and also those of which you have administrative authority. Can you answer a question President Drake?

Why was my daughter identified and named in your report?

I know you are scratching your head right now, let me explain. Do you know who Gordon Matthew Thomas Sumner and Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta are? They are both entertainers, Gordon is most famously known as “Sting” and Stefani is most famously known as “Lady Gaga”. You may know this one. Who is Jorge Mario Bergoglio? He is known across the planet as Pope Francis.

Now, you may not know this person but she is well known among her friends, family, and professional associates; while not nearly as famous as Lady Gaga, she is still known to many people as "Tulsa". Her birth name is Victoria Marie Nolte. She is my adult daughter. You get my meaning right? Noms de guerre have been around since the 18th century. Your Investigative Team identified 21 current students and or alumni using the word in your report “nicknames”. According to Wikipedia, the compound word ekename, literally meaning “additional name” was attested as early as 1303. This means your report named 21 people. Good people, each and every one. The majority of these people were not provided any opportunity to comment on your findings before you released your report to the press after firing a good man.

Her mother and I are hoping, since your report slanders our daughter, more on that later, you have been having meetings trying to figure out how to unwind your mistake. The report paints the University in to a corner and reinstating Jon Waters and writing letters of apology are the only course of action I would recommend. Hopefully, for the sake of a University that both Victoria and I care about, your naming her in your report and publishing witness and rookie “investigator” rhetoric is not a violation of Title IX. Part of me hopes that it is, a part hopes it so jams up the University you have to spend millions to make it right. That is the dark side of me and the part I keep hidden. I am by nature a really nice guy, not vindictive. Not like those you have so closely associated yourself with concerning this issue.

You may wish to task your legal department to make sure the University is in on solid legal ground concerning their naming of students and alumni who are in the process of continuing their education. If I complain that your report violates Title IX with respect to Tulsa, does the University have to give me standing? Does the University need to further investigate itself for a violation of Title IX? Hmm.

Let us place that aside for a moment so I may illuminate some areas of the report in which I take issue. I read Jonathan Waters as the target of the investigation, yet there is a ridiculous amount of ‘testimony’ ... hopefully persons were placed under oath, the complainer(s) provided sworn affidavits, that sort of thing. It reads like a full blown investigation of the Marching Band and seems to me like you ticked on Jon’s name as the target after a decision was made to fire Mr. Waters. A simple question for you President Drake, was the investigation always concerning a complaint about Jon Waters or was the complaint about the Marching Band culture and the investigators just ‘backed in to it’ and slapped his name on it once a decision was made to fire him?

A brief aside before I continue. Hopefully your attorneys have made sure to lock down all prior revisions of your report, all notes and any and all associated material, emails, etc. concerning this case. Make it so President Drake so the University is not accused in the future of destroying evidence with regard to this case and future cases.

Usually a complaint is made, an individual identified and the scope of the investigation researches and produces the findings related to the complaint and whether or not the individual did what they were accused of doing. Your report is more an investigation of an ‘inanimate object’, an institution, the Marching Band. The report’s major flaw is it sweeps up everyone and paints them with a broad brush, a biased narrative designed to fire Jon Waters and a second consequence is it slanders many people.
associated with the institution who had nothing to do with anything in the report. How do you make right their good names your report sullies? How do you make them 'whole' again?

Your new compliance department, to be frank with you, they do not know what they are doing. Your report is evidence that the persons who did the interviews and wrote the report are not professional investigators. The scope of the report is written like it was written after a grab bag of information was collected, much of it not true. Your report saying the information was "corroborated" is not true. I'm not sure your "investigators" know the meaning of the word. If corroborated, why is there so much factual error? Not only did your "investigators" fail to control the scope, it reads to me like the parent of the band person complaining was allowed to drive the investigation.

I get that a band member may have had a complaint related to some issue, sexual harassment, hazing, an alleged sexual assault off campus, something ... the part I do not get is the "band parent" piece. Do parents of adult band members have standing to get the university to investigate issues? Your report identified the band person as the band parents "Child". Progeny Yes, Child No, Adult Yes. Is your report trying to misrepresent the person as being UNDER 18 years of age?

When I read the name Tulsa and the description of her trick from misremembering witness testimony, you can imagine my confusion? Under the Tricks section, I read:

"A female student would sing sexually explicit songs about someone. Her nickname was "Tulsa."

Now here is where it gets messy. Is your report accusing Tulsa of sexual harassment and or hazing of "someone" because she wrote songs with "sexually explicit" lyrics? Does the vagary of the word "someone" lead one to assume it was a band member? By what measure were they sexual and by what measure where they explicit?

So we are crystal clear. I believe your reports' inference was her songs were 'sexual harassment' and or 'hazing' of 'someone'. Since the report is about Jon Waters and the Marching Band, by implication, that someone is a band member. One minor point for your next report revision, tell your "investigators" and your misremembering witness, 'song', she wrote a 'song', singular. Who has time to write songs?

If we are given a fair hearing by a jury in a civil proceeding and we demonstrate that the conclusion your report published to the media was in fact a strong implication that Tulsa sexually harassed a "someone", a band member by implication, because she sang 'sexually explicit' songs, we can easily prove your report is false and some even say slander. The song was not about a band member. It may or may not have been about "someone" yet there are 7.25 billion "someone's" on the planet as a result of ALL cultures being not only described as but point of fact, are a "sexualized culture". Pretty sure Jon Waters does not have to carry the weight for that fact which escaped your "investigator's" thinking.

Hopefully you have kept all notes and any and all materials related to your investigation regarding Tulsa for my counselor's review.

Entertainers continue to write songs about sex. It is all protected speech according to an Amendment to The Constitution of The United States that trumps Title IX. Many entertainers make a lot of money writing 'sexually explicit' songs. What of it? Your report is nothing but yellow journalism. No dots connected, no evidence of Title IX violations concerning Tulsa's song.

How about this? Say Tulsa's rookie trick when she was 'tapped off' was to sing the following:

"Gotta get that! Gotta get that! Gotta get that! Gotta get that! Gotta get that Boom Boom..."

You recognize the song. "Boom Boom Pow" by The Black Eyed Peas.
Say a person in the band did not like that song with “sexually explicit” lyrics, heavily cloaked in double entendre, and they complained to your new department of compliance. What of it? Someone has a grievance so your new department does all the legal legwork, plays puppet to their puppet master?

Say the rookie trick was the following song sung by Tulsa:

"Cause, baby, you're a firework Come on, show 'em what you're worth Make 'em go “Aah, aah, aah” as you shoot across the sky-y-y”.

Later Katy Perry sings in her popular song "Firework”:

"Boom, boom, boom Even brighter than the moon, moon, moon It's always been inside of you, you you And now it's time to let it through - ough - ough"

That song, with lyrics of double entendre, is the dirtiest song sung by millions of pre and post pubescent girls and boys all across the world. Take the time to read the full lyrics on the internet. I hope I do not need to interpret the song further for you.

Did you ever look at one of those pictures President Drake where it shows one thing and if you look at it just right another picture buried deep in the art comes in to view? Many things are not what they seem. You have to dig deep, Mr. President, look at context, find out the whole story or the thing you are looking at will not become clear.

Your report has the classic “dog whistles” using all the contemporary phrases, hot button words to rally those in the culture of political correctness to grab their pitchforks and support your hunt for Frankenstein. Pathetic. Jon Waters is a good man. He is not a monster. Tulsa is a good woman. She is not a monster.

Many of my friends and I go camping for 5 days each November. The majority of the friends are from Cleveland yet some of us are from Pittsburgh. Since the majority of the Elders are from Cleveland, the friends from Pittsburgh get noms de guerre having to do with some aspect of the male behind. I will not shock you with the names but you have to understand the context. Such context the report omits concerning the band nicknames. In our case, since Pittsburgh has won 6 Super Bowls in 8 events, Cleveland - Zero. Yeah, we get a less than ideal nickname, but we are from Pittsburgh, we hold the high ground. My name is Butt Munch. My friends, they call me “Munch”.

My wife and I have hosted two row dinners for Q-Row. They are the finest young adults I have ever met. You really should talk to your Sociology leaders about what is going on these days concerning social media and such. Young adults today are not like you and I. They have a phrase I keep hearing, "keeping it real". I have found that some names seem to confront long existing problems in our American culture. I can't wrap my mind around it since this is not my area. Every name I’m told is carefully chosen and has some meaning that the report ascribes to hazing but I am not so sure. How can one know without the context? "Blazing Saddles" is a film by Mel Brooks that confronted ignorance and racial stereotypes. Some people watch it and find it offensive. You are correct, it is 2014 yet maybe what you are seeing and reading is not what you interpret since you have not talked to the students about context. Would you be surprised if the names are an ‘inside joke’, that these young adults are making fun of adults and their overreaction to every word that is not sterilized, sanitized, words that are verboten?

My daughter Tulsa asked me why the University is doing this to Jon. I had to be honest. In summary, Victoria, I said, many adults are hypocrites. The have erased from discussion any and all their questionable actions from their young adult life. They would rather forget their youthful foibles and polish all their accomplishments. They never did the things you and your friends do, never made any mistakes. As far as you know. In reality Victoria, many adults have done all the comparable things you and your friends have done. The wheel turns generation after generation. You will not find many adults who will admit to being people who made a lot of mistakes in their young adult life. If someone took that spotlight so easily shown on the Marching Band and pointed it in the "investigators" direction, you would find they
did all the same things you and your friend have done, possibly worse. Fact of the matter, Title IX did not come in to existence because times were good.

President Drake, Did it occur to your Investigative Team that what they have before them is one person with a complaint? OSUMB has been in existence since 1878. Does it give you pause that you have a large organization, thousands of alumni, hundreds of current band members and one complaint before you?

Your report assuages the one while slandering the many. Me personally, yes, some of the names are bawdry, in poor taste, but you know what? It isn’t any of my business. My grandma, when I used to pray for some types of information would say to me, “Mind your own Beeswax, Mark”. Isn’t there enough to accomplish in one’s own life without going about sticky one’s nose in other people’s affairs? Don’t get me wrong, a charge was brought forward and duty required action. I get it. What you may or may not get is your investigation as a train, it wrecked as soon as it left the station, went off the rails when there was no control of the ‘scope’.

Your investigators went off like a bunch of college kids to their first party. Why stop with the Marching Band? Interpretations dressed up as claims of sexual harassment or hazing is systemic across all your campus organizations. Even in your science classrooms, if you must know, when women are underrepresented as a matter of fact. “Oh, you are not asking the right question Victoria”... “You are not studying correctly Victoria”. Everyone has a grievance these days. So you know, as parents, we would never complain about such probable examples of sexual harassment or professorial hazing in a classroom setting. Do you know why? Because it pissed Victoria off and provided the fuel for her to work harder. Victoria loves people who doubt her. Her high school band director, a great man, gave her a talk before she left for University telling her how difficult it would be to make OSUMB. When I heard that, I didn’t march down to the high school office and complain. I went “YES!” in my mind. More fuel for Victoria. There is a picture you should see of Victoria’s high school band director standing after Skull Session with Victoria and two other former SMFHS band members also in OSUMB. You should see the smile on his face. Total pride knowing he had 3 former band kids in OSUMB. He knew he was a part of making Victoria the person she became. He gave Victoria her first trombone lesson.

It gives me pause now. I wonder what he is thinking. Does he know the report is slander? How will Victoria get back her reputation?

I read some of the ‘songbook’ exhibit. The only crime I see is poor writing. The world is full of bawdry limericks, dirty jokes, etc. many are better written than your exhibit. Any English major would read the lyrics and wonder about the level of English instruction in America today, weak use of double entendre, anagram, simile and metaphor. Why can’t these kids write a good dirty ditty these days that pretends to be one thing but has a second intended meaning like Katy Perry’s “Firework”? ‘Make ‘em go ‘Aah aah aah’. Indeed. Bravo, Katy, one of the best song writers in our American sexualized culture. The English majors are shocked by the quality of the ‘songbook’ like professional investigators are with your report. Note my good use of simile in that last sentence. My high school English teacher would be so proud.

I also noticed, no police involved, no drugs, no federal investigators, no handcuffs, no ‘Perp Walk’. Are you sure the University has not been misled by the people who filed the complaint? Pressured to be a puppet with the person(s) making the complaint pulling the strings? You have outsourced ‘further investigation’ by a company no longer associated with law enforcement. Why not call the police? Everyone knows the answer. This is a political witch hunt and Jon Waters the scapegoat. To this point, no laws have been broken. “The use of Title IX as justification looks like a ‘straw man’ to me. Keeping it real, you had to toss in every detail, many weak or false corroboration, since your primary case is weak. I’m pretty sure the federal government is busy looking in to real cases of sexual harassment and will not be visiting campus any time soon.

You should have looked to the Duke Lacrosse Case as a “Warning” sign. Internal Investigations by a University with few trained experts yield poor results. Study it carefully. It should have been looked at
before your investigation began and a simple question asked. Are we sufficiently qualified to do this work?

There was mention of 'changing clothes on the bus'. How is it possible your crack Investigative Team doesn’t know the following: All across America, band kids change on their school bus during away high school football games. Did your Investigative Team know that each year, 30 plus high school bands from across the state go to Ohio Stadium for a high school marching band exhibition and they all change on their bus in the Ohio Stadium parking lot? High school kids, boys and girls. 30 plus High Schools.

Concerning Victoria, is my daughter, Victoria Marie Nolte, aka Tulsa, a victim, a person who participates in sexual harassment, a hazer or some combination of all 3? Planning to outsource further investigation with former Ohio AG Betty Montgomery is very telling. Some may consider it an admission on your part that your report is flawed and you would have been better served by having professional investigators look at this matter from the very beginning.

Now is when I tell you why I made sure to let you know earlier that Victoria is still a student and covered under Title IX. In my thinking President Drake, there are both individuals and institutions capable of violating Title IX. Naming Tulsa in your report and associating her with many other items and exhibits she had nothing to do with is considered by some a form of sexual harassment. You may not agree with me but there is every possibility that what I am saying is anchored in case law. As a continuing student, you would be well advised to make sure any contact you have with her, by the University or your outsourced investigators is not a violation of Title IX. If any of your further actions upset her, cause her to do poorly in her M.S. program, cause her to have a bad hair day, anything and everything, I place you on notice today that her mother and I will take whatever action we deem necessary to make her ‘whole’ again. She and I are very busy and have no time to be wasted. Don’t make matters worse President Drake.

I know this letter has been difficult for you to read and I thank you for your time and patience. It is very valuable and I appreciate it. I will ask again that you please determine a way to unwind your decision to fire Jon Waters. It was a mistake. Other persons in the University gave you a poor report and bad advice. It has become bigger than you realize and there are dark clouds on the horizon. A storm is coming President Drake.

Victoria at the very least deserves an apology for being named and slandered by a false implication. All the subsequent outcomes in her life from your report that threaten her continuing education I am having her document. Because the report was published, we will require the apology in writing on the University letterhead so she may place it in her personal papers for posterity.

We are not people looking for revenge, our ‘pound of flesh’. We come from good parents and grandparents, we earn everything we have. We are not looking for money to make her ‘whole’. I have plenty of money and the love of my wife and two daughters. I am blessed. We do believe that saying “I’m sorry” when doing wrong and forgiveness when being wronged and receiving an apology is part of being self actualized adults. We don’t do the “personal destruction thing”. We are The Nolte Family.

I apologize if this document is curt. I stand behind this letter’s content since it is my position and interpretation of the facts as I understand them to be.

This is something people do, apologize, ask for forgiveness and people by and large are willing to forgive. Take a stroll around campus, President Drake. Look at the street signs by the stadium. One street is named after a person who made a mistake at a football game when Ohio State played Clemson many years ago. There is a street named for him and statues on campus honoring him for all the good he did for The Ohio State University. His name is Woody Hayes.

This culture of personal destruction of good people has got to stop.

This problem is not going away. The Marching Band is going to get a standing ovation all season every time they take the field. I know the people of Ohio. They forgive.
Not sure how you even find an interim director to take the job. The University shows such strong support for their Director, a person would have to be half mad to take the position. Your report "poisoned the well. Drinking the waters (Ha, a pun, that was lucky) only gets one damaged and destroyed.

Please change course President Drake, all your other options are worse. Your report went after a person but all of your corrective actions are policy and procedure, something a Band Director is not responsible for development or enactment.

If you like, I can work with your team to write a brief statement for Jon’s reinstatement. It would require a light rebuke of sorts concerning the "thoroughness" of the report, also a light rebuke that the proper course of action would have been using your "outsourc professional investigator, former AG Ms. Montgomery" since your compliance department is so new and not very skilled at investigations. You could consider them rookies needing the strong hand of a seasoned squad leader. In fact, text like 'we recognize the problems with our report', former AG Betty Montgomery will be taking over both a review of the initial report, further investigation and mentoring of your new compliance department.' Should suffice.

I support a full reinstatement of Jon Waters. Reinstating Jon will show the University understands what fair Portia said in "The Merchant of Venice" during in her defense of Bassanio when Shylock the Jew wanted his "pound of flesh".

The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
'T is mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown:
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
it is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God’s
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence ‘gainst the merchant there.

There is a way out and forward. You need better advisers Mr. President. They failed you miserably. All other paths are worse. I can see it President Drake like it has already happened. There will be civil lawsuits, media scrutiny, a massive waste of resources as lawyers attack your report, policies, procedures, training, records, and so much more in an attempt to regain their good names.

So you are fully informed. I will do whatever it takes to get back Tulsa’s good name. I have the financial means, the temperament and planning skill to have my grievance addressed, not in the media, but in another place at another time depending on your organization’s future actions.

University Policy, Procedures and the Training Process Failed You President Drake, Not Jon Waters.
In my closing comments, I leave you with a translation from German of a quote by Friedrich Nietzsche. I do not direct it at you President Drake. I direct it to your new “Office of University Compliance and Integrity”. It should be inscribed in titanium above their front door.

"He who fights with monsters should look to it that he himself does not become a monster. And when you gaze long into an abyss the abyss also gazes into you."

As for me, I will be working with in any capacity they see fit in any and all organizations and groups working to reinstate Jon Waters as Director of The Ohio State University Marching Band.

I stand with Victoria Marie Nolte aka Tulsa and I stand with Jon Waters.

Sincerely and Best Regards,

Mark Douglas Nolte
10200 W. Maple Street Apt F342
Wichita, KS 67209

P.S. Please provide me with confirmation that you received my letter and any feedback on my comments.
Thanks. mdn
Life with The OSUMB... and my support of Jon Waters

My name is Allison Pallard and I am a 1998 graduate with 3 degrees from The Ohio State University. I am also a 5 year member of The Ohio State University Marching Band from 1993-1997. I am writing today to not only express my support for Jonathan Waters, but to also share my very special experience in the OSUMB as well as in my friendship with Jon.

Let me take you back to 1992. I was a 17 year old naïve freshman at OSU who came from a very small town. I graduated with 63 people and played in a high school band of 30. I was told I was too quiet, too anxious, too inexperienced and too overweight to even consider making The OSUMB by many people in my hometown. I drove 3 hours one way every Tuesday and Thursday to attend summer sessions in order to learn the techniques necessary to make the band. Tryouts came and went and I returned home cut from the band. Much like every other experience in my life, I refused to give up and came back for a second time in 1993. I again drove 3 hours one way every Tuesday and Thursday for summer sessions and again I was cut from the band. A month later I was literally packing my things to return home and transfer to a new school as the ONLY reason I wanted to attend The Ohio State University was to fulfill my dream of becoming a member of The OSUMB. On that same day I was packing, I received a phone call. On the other end of the phone was a staff member of The OSUMB. She informed me that someone had been released from the band and they would like me to join the band as his replacement. I made one call to my mom and dad to inform them and then literally ran to the stadium as my dream had finally come true… I was a member of TBDBITL! Reality set in very quickly though… I was in a room full of strangers, I had just replaced one of their friends, I was still quiet, naïve, anxious, and overweight. Would these people even accept me for who I was? The answer to that question is a resounding YES. I was welcomed with open arms into a row of 11 men and 2 women. Each person went out of his/her way to help me understand the new part I was playing, how to read charts, where to get my uniform, what I needed to buy to complete my uniform, where I needed to be and when, how to memorize my music, and many other little things I never would have considered as a naïve rookie. It very quickly became apparent to me that for the first time in my life I wasn’t being judged by my peers because I was quiet and overweight. For the first time in my life I was immediately accepted as one of them and they didn’t care where I was from or what I looked like… I was simply a member of their family. My new family never made me feel like an outsider, they never made fun of me, and they always looked out for me.
There are two very distinct experiences I remember where my new family made sure I felt supported, protected and cared about. The first of which was my very first Michigan game which occurred in Michigan. I remember as we marched into the stadium and down their ramp and a member of my row turned around and looked at me and said “hold on to your hat, and don’t let anyone touch you”. With my eyes wide and fear in my chest I trudged down that ramp as my row mates kept an extra eye on me to ensure I was ok and untouched. Fast forward to my very first bowl game trip which occurred at the Holiday Bowl in San Diego. I had the time of my life exploring the San Diego Zoo with my row, going out to dinner, laughing and joking in our hotel rooms and exploring Tijuana together. Again, naïve Allison was about to enter Tijuana without a clue in the world what to expect. Why were these band veterans even allowing me to hang out with them? It just didn’t matter to them what class I was, they wanted me there. One row member assisted me in buying a blanket and another one pulled me away from someone who was trying to take my money. Such little things to most, but huge and meaningful to me. These guys didn’t have to watch out for me, they didn’t have to care... but they did. And with that I finished my first year of TBDBITL as a whole new person with hope in my heart.

I made the band the next 4 years after that. With each new year came new friends, roommates, and memories that will last a lifetime. That small town girl was eventually voted by her peers to be their squad leader for her final 2 years in band. That overweight, quiet, naïve girl was accepted as a leader and no one cared about her past. My personality blossomed, my self esteem raised to new levels, and most importantly I had friends I knew would be in my life forever. One of those friends is Mr. Jonathan Waters. Jon was a few years behind me in school and I didn’t even know him as he was trying out. But one day he approached me and an instant friendship was formed. Jon shared that he knew instantly that we would be friends forever simply by
seeing the smile on my face and knowing it was meant to be. We were inseparable from that day on. Jon was someone I knew I could trust, someone I knew would always have my back, and someone I knew would always protect me and care about me as a person. I can say without a doubt that Jon is a man of integrity, respect, honesty and amazing loyalty to his family, friends, students, etc. Let me take you to a day in 1998 when I was preparing to graduate from The Ohio State University. I planned to engage in a senior ritual (unrelated to anything marching band) and Jon made sure I knew that if I needed anything during that ritual that I was to call him and he'd be there to get me or to help me through it. Unfortunately, on that night I did need Jon. That night I became acquainted with a man who felt it was necessary to put me in an extremely uncomfortable and scary situation. After being told “NO”, this man felt it necessary to push the issue and I found myself the near victim of a sexual assault. Scared and feeling alone, I remembered the words of my friend who said “call me if you need me”. Freeing myself from his hold I was able to lock myself in a bathroom and call my friend Jon Waters for help. He was able to talk me through things, calm me down and assure me I would be ok. The very next day there was a knock on my door and there stood Jon Waters with his arms stretched out ready to hug me and let me know I was ok. We sat for a long time in silence that day, but I knew that I had someone to rely on and someone who came through on his promise that he would make sure I was safe. Yet today that same man is being accused of allowing sexualized behaviors and assaults to occur in his band. Anyone who knows this man, takes the time to know this man, or even hears stories about this man knows that this is a far cry from the truth.

My life would not be what it is today had it not been for the acceptance, support, positive experiences, laughter, and friendships I gained while a member of The OSUMB. Never once did I feel threatened, harassed, forced or degraded during my time with the marching band. I can say this with confidence as I came from a place prior to college where those things did happen. They happened on a daily basis. The Ohio State University Marching Band was MY safe haven. The
band was my platform for growth, happiness, self esteem, and a collection of friendships that will never end. I know that without a doubt if I ever need anything that a member of my band family is only a phone call away... we protect each other, we support each other, and we care about one another without reservation or hesitation. Jonathan Waters is without a doubt the best person to build our band and to take it to higher levels. His dedication, his passion, his loyalty, and his respect for The OSUMB is of the highest level possible. He has my full support as a person, as a leader, as a friend and as a “family” member and I truly believe that not for one minute Jon ever tolerated anything negative, demeaning or illegal within OUR band.

The Ohio State University Marching Band is a place where dreams are fulfilled, personalities are developed, friendships are made and lives are changed. My life changed the moment I walked into that band room as an official member of TBDBITL. I experienced things I never would have had the chance to experience had I not been a member of the band. I made friends of all cultures, religions, races and beliefs whom I would have never met had I not been a member of the band. To say that The Ohio State University Marching Band changed my life is an understatement... The Ohio State University Marching Band is a place where growth is encouraged, demanded, and accepted. I am a better person for being a member of The Ohio State University Marching Band. I am a changed person, I am a confident person, and I am a person who is blessed with the largest “family” in the world. The Ohio State University Marching Band MADE my life.

I Stand With Jon Waters

Allison “DOLT” Pallard
Letter to the editor: Ohio State Marching Band investigation report a farce

August 26, 2014
Jonathan Picking
picking.2@osu.edu

Letter to the editor:

Beginning two weeks ago, the university administration began to publicly state that it “stands behind” the marching band culture report released by Ohio State compliance official Chris Glaros and his team. The chairman of the Board of Trustees, Jeffrey Wadsworth, specifically wrote, “We consider the matter closed and we are moving forward as a university.” Unfortunately for Wadsworth, OSU is not exclusively composed of a board of trustees and a president — it is a vibrant community of students, researchers and educators.

As a current OSU student, researcher and educator myself, I write to make it clear that Wadsworth does not speak for me.

To be clear — if the Glaros report was accurate, I would not disagree with the administration’s recent actions. I do not support sexual harassment or assault (though neither do former marching band director Jon Waters nor the members of TBDBITL). I have no issue with our fledgling president’s response to the dishonest report handed to him so early in his tenure. However, the administration has lost the moral high ground with its condescending, tone-deaf response to the significant and deserved backlash.

The Glaros report is a farce. Among the report’s significant failures, which a lack of space prevents me from detailing, several of those interviewed have publicly stated their testimony was ignored or misrepresented. OSU has a term for this. If I received such a report from a student, or if I attempted to publish a manuscript with this type of data manipulation, it would be considered academic misconduct. In undergraduate science, we teach students to critically examine data and we warn against making unsupported claims. Students intuitively grasp these concepts even before they are taught. This makes it all the more embarrassing that the so-called leaders of our great research institution would accept the unsubstantiated conclusions of the Glaros report at face value. In spite of overwhelming evidence, the administration refuses to acknowledge even a single flaw in the Glaros report (though the formation of a second investigation is a tacit admission that the first was flawed). Given that this report directly accuses me and thousands more of facilitating sexual harassment and assault, such a flippant dismissal of truth is unacceptable.

If the administration truly desires to protect and serve students, the firing of Waters and the continued slander of current and former band members directly oppose this outcome. Perhaps the underlying motivation for this charade is to convince the world (and federal government) that OSU takes sexual assault seriously — without the inconvenience of making real university-wide
improvements. Sadly, in specific cases of alleged sexual assault, the administration has prevented true justice both for the accused and accuser by circumventing the legal system and the due process it guarantees.

If your only source of information is taking this report at face value, then please consider the foundation on which you have built your opinion. At best, you have read a twisted interpretation of someone else’s firsthand account. If you honestly desire truth, and not just righteous posturing, consider communicating with the thousands of current and former band members who will happily share their firsthand experience.

If you are interested in specific ways to stand with us, you can start at westandwithjonwaters.com. Even if you don’t personally know Waters, you might be dissatisfied with the mishandling of this situation. Please share these feelings with the administration and those in your community. If you are a donor, consider redirecting funds from OSU to other important causes. Many worthy foundations directly support cutting-edge research or student scholarships without going to the OSU general fund. If you make this choice, be sure to let the university know exactly why.

I invite the administration and OSU community to communicate with me regarding these issues. Let me describe the true culture of TBDBITL. Let me share the ways I have personally seen OSU fail to protect and serve students — including survivors of sexual assault. The time has come to stop posturing and to treat students with respect. The process of “moving forward” will begin when the administration takes the necessary steps to do so, beginning with an apology and an open dialogue.

Jonathan W. Picking  
Graduate teaching associate, Ohio State  
B.S., M.S., Ohio State  
TBDBITL, T-row 2005-08  
Assistant and head squad leader, 2007 and 2008, respectively  
picking.2@osu.edu
Dear Steven,

Hello, my name is Joseph Plattenburg. I am a graduate student at The Ohio State University and a former member of the Ohio State Marching Band (2009-2013). I am writing to express my sincere reservations with the recent investigation of the marching band and the dismissal of Jonathan Waters as the director.

First, much of the report and its conclusions are based on hearsay or blatantly false information. For example, one member’s “trick” was reported to be “pretending to be a vibrating sex toy,” a claim which that member has since denied on the news. The report also claims that “X row members would typically give a copy [of a certain document] to Waters.” I was in X-row and I know every member of X-row from the last five years and I can personally attest to the fact that none of them ever gave the document in question to Mr. Waters. These are just two examples of false information in the report.

Furthermore, the investigation in question listed interviews by less than 2% of the marching band’s current membership. Those interviewed were hand-chosen by the investigator or complainant, not randomly sampled. Based largely on hearsay from this small sample of the total membership witnesses, the report comes to sweeping generalizations about the overall culture of the band. I feel that had I, or any number of my colleagues whom I know personally, been interviewed, that the investigators would have had no choice but to come to a very different conclusion about the overall culture of the band. They most certainly would have realized that the “sexualized culture” described was the opinion of a small minority of the organization.

I also feel that my reputation, as well that of hundreds of my peers, has been damaged by this report due to our association with the marching band. The investigation released to the public an “unofficial” document from 2006 (as explicitly stated in that document) containing very graphic language, and implied that this document was routinely distributed to all band members with full knowledge of the staff. Not only was this before Mr. Waters’ time as director, this conclusion is simply not true. I feel personally offended that the band has been painted in this light.

I concede, however, that if even one member of the organization felt harassed, this is one too many. I also concede that there is truth to many of the events and practices that are described in the report and that some of those practices needed to be reformed or removed. I can say unequivocally that Jonathan Waters was the person who, more than any other, worked for culture change in the areas where it was needed. I can personally attest to many of his efforts including: organizing squad leader retreats to discuss avenues for culture change, discontinuing a student publication that contained explicit language, and inviting the Title IX Compliance Office to a rehearsal to discuss potential areas of sexual inequality and how those issues could be addressed. These among other actions are detailed in a seven page statement released by Mr. Waters’ lawyer. These were all actions initiated by Mr. Waters that never existed under previous leadership. Some of these actions were included in the report; however the investigators still concluded that Waters did not do enough for change.

I can personally say that during my time, the culture of the organization changed tremendously and that change was directly due to the efforts of Jonathan Waters. I feel that the University has made a profound mistake in his dismissal and their actions have had a strong influence on my decision not to contribute monetarily (unless it is directly to the marching band). I implore the Board of Trustees to take action to reinstate Jonathan Waters as director of the marching band and to make a formal statement about the inherent inaccuracy and bias of the report that was released.

Please provide me with confirmation that you received my letter and I request feedback from the Board of Trustees regarding this matter. I can be reached at 2306 Heathergrove Dr. Hilliard, OH 43026.

Sincerely,

Joseph Plattenburg
Steven “Jim” Poast

Like many of you, I have been through a whirlwind of emotions, trying to make sense of a situation so complex, it seems almost impossible to comprehend what has happened and what is still to come. I was Jon’s squad leader (K-1) his first two years (my last two years) in the band. We marched together and I watched him grow from a wide-eyed “rookie” to a not-so-wide-eyed second year. I would like to think his enthusiasm for the iPad project came from the need to eliminate charts, since he carried mine most of the season. The enthusiasm and energy Jon shows for the band, the fans, and OSU in general has been there from the beginning; being cut from the band the year before made him stronger and stoked the fire he has within. I have enjoyed watching Jon work his way through the ranks to director. I will admit I beam with pride watching him direct the band as if he is my little brother and I get the privilege of seeing him achieve his dream. He is my brother, my roommate and my friend.

I am heartbroken for my friend.

Ever since 2 pm last Thursday, I am trying to understand the entire situation. I know I don’t have all of the facts, and that seems to be a common thread as the investigation continues. I know what being a part of this organization means to Jon, what it means to me, what it means to all of us.

I am heartbroken for my fellow alumni.

The world we knew is gone. There is no going back in time. We have to deal with the situation the best way we know how, with determination, dedication and drive. Things will change and that is unsettling and scary. But the change is already in motion and we can’t stop it. We can only prepare, adapt and conduct ourselves in a positive and professional manner. What I loved about being in the band, specifically KL row, was that for the time you were there, you could be considered one of the best of the best in the world at what you do. “I’m one of the best at marching and playing the Sousaphone!” How many people can say that? I bring this point up because now is the time to get back that mentality. Be the best of the best. The best alumni band, the best alumni organization, the best support system for Jon and for each other.

I am heartbroken for the current band.

The 2014 band will be faced with challenges most of us have never seen. The experiences and stories we have shared and used to motivate student musicians to come to OSU may seem like tales from an era time has forgotten. The media coverage will be as intense as ever and not all for the right reasons. My hope is that through this struggle, this year’s band becomes one of the strongest ever to perform at Ohio State. As we work to defend our image, our brand and our reputations, we need to keep in mind this group of students will be paying the price for things beyond their control. We must support them throughout the season, so they can have positive stories to share on the social media of 2020, maybe it will all be holograms by then!

I am optimistic.

We have an outstanding network of people who are stepping up to offer help, raise awareness and educate, as well set the record straight. The example set by this group shows everyone we are truly a family. We are a family, like many, who don’t always agree, sometimes fight, and don’t always get to see each other, but when push comes to shove...well let’s just say no one pushes us around!
I am optimistic.

Because while ramp lead outs, Skull Session entrances and i-dots only last for a few moments at a time, the stories of late night music memorization, early morning trips for donuts and game-day row traditions endure. These are the stories we share even as we fight to save our reputation. These are the stories that truly make the OSUMB a successful and world class organization.

I am optimistic.

If an organization like the OSUMB can take a skinny, smart-mouthed, farm boy like me, and give him a chance to be successful in school, entrust him with the band's traditions as well as be an ambassador of the university and become a leader within the band, then that is an organization worth fighting for.

Pick up your feet, turn your corners square, and DRIVE, DRIVE, DRIVE!

Steven “Jim” Poast
KL Row ’92 - ’96
OSU incidents mild in light of action taken

Sunday July 27, 2014 7:48 AM

As a former member of TBDBITL, an active member of the TBDBITL Alumni Band, and a former high-school and college marching-band director, I am stunned that any such action has been taken against Jonathan Waters, the director of the Ohio State University Marching Band.

I view this in light of the recent sanctions against two other Big Ten university marching bands, and especially those at Florida A & M, in which actual physical harm came to members of these bands — as a matter of tradition (?) when no such dangerous “traditional” incidents have ever occurred at OSU. Those bands deserved the punishment they received.

I have always taken pride in the fact that the members of TBDBITL work so hard at maintaining their excellence and, recently, bringing pride and international fame to the university, that they never have the energy, need or notion to ever purposely impose further physical actions on each other. The band has always been an especially close group, with good-natured competition between ranks, including nicknames not purposely invented to be disrespectful or mean.

After viewing both the exam and song book “exhibits” presented by the university, I am more inclined to be embarrassed by the poor examples of literacy than I am of supposedly pointed harassment.

Poor taste, yes. But, really, quite tame in light of activities still practiced by social groups everywhere, and especially in departmental classrooms on campus. One has to wonder what the result would be if all university academic classes had to demonstrate their competency before a 100,000-plus observers each week. Stupid songs and silly names seem to be an awfully calm, if not a creative, release of pressure from the constant defense of quality at OSU, to say nothing of the definite threats to one’s humanity waiting in the real world outside and after graduation.

IAN POLSTER  Springfield
Tyler Provo

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 12, 2014

First and foremost I am a proud alumnus of The Ohio State University Marching Band, and no one will ever be able to take that away from me. Plainly, I believe that the recently released investigative report on OSUMB has done more harm than good. It is my opinion that the report is inaccurate, painting an incomplete and misleading portrait of OSUMB culture and its students. The report, unfortunately, lacks a robust perspective representing the opinions, thoughts, and feelings of thousands of current and former students in the band...

The portrait that it painted is laced with fallacies, subjectivity, and has caused irreversible damage to thousands of people. The board of trustees has lacked the foresight to see the consequences of your actions and have created a world-wide slanderous campaign that will affect every single members personal lives and careers. I am concerned about the impact of the actions of the university.

I feel personally labeled as a homophobe, alcoholic, pervert, degenerate, abusive, bigot, and sexual deviant among other things as a result of this report. I earned two bachelors degrees in anthropology and history from Ohio State with minors in Jewish studies and music in four and a half years, and graduated Cum Laude. I also worked at least 20 hours a week while attending school alongside participating in the marching band. I have always worked hard for what I believe in and take nothing for granted. For as long as I can remember I wanted to be a member of The Best Damn Band In The Land and worked my entire life to do so. When I had the privilege of seeing the band in person for the first time in 1998 my life was changed profoundly.

For ten years I never lost sight of that goal and when it came time to apply for colleges my only choice was ever Ohio State. However, Ohio State did not choose me. I received my letter of deferment to a branch campus in the early spring and I was devastated. When I thought I had lost all hope, it was Jon Waters who gave me the encouragement to try again and let my application and letters of recommendation be sent to a committee for reconsideration. I waited with bated breath until I received news that the decision had been overturned and I was one step closer to realizing my dream. I trained relentlessly to be in the best physical and mental shape I had been in my entire life in preparation for tryouts. When the day came and my name was read on the list that I had made the band, I wept. And as we left the room to meet our new family there was a man standing in the doorway holding a cell phone and he handed it to me. Jon had called my mother for me so I could tell her that the goal I worked towards for nearly a decade had been realized. As I hung up the phone I began to cry – I embraced Jon and he was the first to welcome me to the band family.

From day one that is what this organization has been to me; these people are my family. You spend countless hours working and rehearsing together and when you finally have free time you spend it with the same people because they're the ones you love. They're your future husbands, wives, groomsmen, bridesmaids, godparents, and life long best friends.
Some reporters and journalists have been quick to point out homophobic and sexist tendencies, most often referring to lyrics in the songbook. I entered in to what some think is a traditionally male-oriented instrument – snare drum. My first year in band both of my squad leaders were females. My second year in band both of my squad leaders were females. These women are elected to their positions through a democratic vote of the row's members and an ensuing interview process with the staff. These women were undoubtedly some of the strongest and fiercest people I had ever met and they were treated as equals and leaders among their peers. These songbooks, which are made to seem like an item that every band member carries on them at all times, were seemingly non-existent in my tenure and I was not even aware of their existence until my third year in band. Seeing countless articles and comments online calling me homophobic and sexist are disgusting and I personally feel violated. Some of my best friends are gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender. I proudly shared the field with all of them, and have shared my home with an openly gay male whom I call one of my best friends. To me and many others the band has always been a community of acceptance and tolerance. We all understood that the moment you put on that uniform and step on the field, no one knows or cares about your sexual orientation and likely can't even tell if you're male or female.

In regards to some of these first year names, the list mentioned in the report contained exclusively names that could be construed as vulgar and offensive without consent of those parties. It did not include any of the hundreds of other nick names in existence that are fun, respectable, and loved. For instance, my nickname was Quasimodo and my trick was to “ring the bell” when “Hells Bells” was played in the stadium on third downs. There was not one single time where I was forced in any way to do this, and it was merely a creative suggestion that I found fun and loved to do. As a fan at football games last year, I would still participate proudly while wearing a jersey with the name “Quasi” on the back.

In my five years in the marching band, not once did I ever feel that I was in an unsafe environment. My tenure in the band came in a time of transition and change. The band that I joined and the band that I left were different and these changes were the direct result of actions that Jon Waters and the rest of the band staff had taken. Many of these changes caused opposition from the students but staff remained firm. To some members of the band – especially those who were more resistant to change – referred to Jon as the “fun police”. This was because Jon worked tirelessly as an advocate for respect of students and had little tolerance for negative or disrespectful behavior.

I was elected to the position of Assistant Squad Leader during Mr. Waters' inaugural season as director. During that season, we saw many changes instituted to the way things had previously been run in an effort to create a safe, productive, and inclusive environment for all members and there are two instances that stand out in my mind, both of which are mentioned in the investigative report.

The first is in regards to one of the rookie nicknames known as “Dr. Faggot.” I believe it is a safe assumption to make that the staff and many other members of the band know about this name because the person was referred to simply as “Dr. F.” Personally, I had no idea that this is what stood for and never thought twice about it, until someone uttered what it was aloud. The directing staff caught wind of this and I can very vividly remember swift action being taken and
us spending long hours in squad leader meetings to address issues like this as constructively as possible. Jon would often ask the question “Do we need this?” so we could view these situations objectively, and make the change that was so desperately needed. We did need to change, and we did change.

There are instances of Midnight Ramp mentioned as well, which chronicle its details along with a particular incident involving alcohol poisoning. This event during my first few years of band would take place late at night, was entirely unsupervised and solely student led. This left time for students of age to over-consume alcohol thus leading to this persons poising. After this occurred, staff took measures to ensure the safety of each and every student who willingly participated creating an event that lasted several hours before hand and immediately segued into Midnight Ramp. This policy, instituted by the directing staff, curbed both issues of alcohol consumption and student safety, as well as providing on hand support for anyone who wished to not participate. The event was entirely voluntary and several people did not join nor was anyone coerced into joining. Also, I specifically remember there being police on hand as well for support to ensure the safety of everyone involved as well as many gates inside the stadium being open. This was far from the drunken sex-fest that the report, along with every single media outlet covering this investigation, is making it turn out to be.

If I recall this is incredibly similar to an act that students participate in every year, though not officially sanctioned by the university, where administration has taken steps to not stop it but make it a safe place for consenting adults. I am of course referring to the Mirror Lake Jump which takes place every year. Where thousands of intoxicated students are scantily clad in bathing suits and underwear jump into a freezing cold lake in the middle of winter, for the sake of tradition. I consistently felt less safe at this event than I ever did during any midnight ramp. During midnight ramp there is no chance of hypothermia and you are surrounded by 225 of your closest friends and family rather than complete strangers. Is Mirror Lake only acceptable because you simply stop 50,000 students from participating and the fact that it's made public? Why is something like this not considered over-sexualized (because underwear is no different than a bathing suit, you just wear it all the time) and it is littered with alcohol (which our staff was able to get rid of). Also, women are legally allowed to be topless in the city of Columbus – anyone who has been to Comfest before can attest to this.

As I'm sure you are aware by now from the hundreds, if not thousands, of letters you have received imploring you to reinstate Mr. Jon Waters to the helm of the band, you must realize that he has been your biggest ally in change. The band was clearly on a track for success both from it's public persona, but internally. Changes were being made and every single one was for the benefit of the students. As any single cultural anthropologist at this university can tell you that you cannot change a culture overnight. Things deeply ingrained take time, and I implore you to allow a little more time for him to finish the job he so clearly started. It's time for you to ask yourself the question “Do we need this?” and for you to come to the right conclusion.

All My Best

-Tyler “Quasi” Provo
July 28, 2014

President Michael V. Drake
The Ohio State University
Office of the President
205 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Dear President Drake,

I am writing as an Ohio State Alumnus and a former female member of the Ohio State University Marching Band from 1993-1997. The handling of the Investigation Report provided by the Office of University Compliance and Integrity, which ultimately caused the firing of Jon Waters, has been a complete embarrassment and disgrace to my beloved university. I have never been so disappointed in my school leadership.

It is clear in reading the report that the complaint was not thoroughly investigated nor written by an impartial party. The report appears to have been written simply to justify the goal of firing Jon Waters as Director of the band. Those investigating the complaint should have spoken to a much larger percentage of current and past band members to get a full and accurate picture of the band’s (off-the-field) atmosphere and how it has changed for the better within the last several years, not just the complainant and their witnesses.

In addition, the report attempts to diminish the role of females in the band and implies that women do not hold leadership roles. Every woman that has been in the band worked very hard to earn their spot. I suggest you, your staff and the authors of this report attend this years try-outs to get a better understanding of the blood, sweat and tears that each person puts forth to be in this band, then maybe you’ll understand that each position is well earned, regardless of sex. To give you a better understanding of the female presence in the years I marched, my particular row of trumpets consisted of almost half the membership being female. Also, two of those women were voted by peers to be placed in leadership roles as squad leaders. At no time, did I feel the female presence was under or poorly represented.

Being a former member of the band, each year I, along with a few of my alumni friends, host a current row from band for dinner, commonly known as adopt-a-row dinner. We have hosted this dinner for the past six years and have gotten to know the current members during those times. At every one of those meals, the band members have spoken of how the band environment has significantly changed from the days of my youth. They speak of the bus trips being boring and the other formerly fun events disappearing.

2219 Dates Street, Delaware, Ohio 43215 • 813/786-6255 Cell • diamondohio@hotmail.com
President Michael V. Drake
July 28, 2014
Page 2

I personally marched with Jon Waters and know that he is an upstanding citizen, a true Buckeye and a wonderful educator. He was heading in the right direction in changing or ceasing the decades old traditions. This administration, under your new leadership, jumped the gun by firing Jon Waters and handled this situation very poorly.

Therefore, I respectfully request you reconsider your position, return Mr. Waters to the front of the band and offer him the guidance that he and the band deserve in complying with these Title IX expectations.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Kimberly D. Putman-Nocera
OSUMB Alumni 1993 – 1997

cc: Betty Montgomery, Esq.
OSU Board of Trustees
225 South Clay Street  
Millersburg, Ohio 44654

August 15, 2014

Hon. Betty D. Montgomery  
MacMurray Petersen & Shuster LLP  
6530 W. Campus Oval, Suite 210  
New Albany, Ohio 43054-7069

Dear Ms. Montgomery:

My name is Robyn Ramsseyer. I was a member of the Ohio State University Marching Band from 1984 to 1987 and 1989. In 1987 I was the Assistant Squad Leader of H-Row. I received a degree in Visual Communication Design in 1987 and in Occupational Therapy in 1993. I have been practicing Occupational Therapy for over 21 years. I don't recall the last time I was this upset about a situation, but I recognize it as a deep belief that an injustice has occurred.

As a medical professional, Evidence Based Practice has become the norm. This entails learning how to read a research article to determine if the results are meaningful and valid to apply to practice. In reading the report that was presented to Dr. Drake, I immediately noticed five issues that would invalidate a comparable study in my field.

- Inappropriate sample size – only 9 current or previous band members were interviewed out of 225 current members and hundreds of past members
- Poor sample selection that does not accurately reflect the population - names of witnesses were provided by complainant and her witnesses, “The complainant and witnesses recommended specific people to interview”, “we did not randomly interview current Band members for this investigation”. (direct quotes from the report) By interviewing only those recommended by the complainant the task force created a bias in the study.
- Inability to be duplicated - most of what was cited has already been refuted many times by current and past members who have written letters describing their own experiences in the band
- Informed consent was not obtained - nicknames were cited and described without input from the person to whom they belonged
- Results were published prior to receiving all relevant data - “As of July 15, 2014, we were still receiving information from some of the witnesses interviewed.” (quote from media coverage online)

For a university touted for its research, this is a poor example.

I feel that this newly coined term “sexualized culture” is being unfairly used as a basis for condemnation. In reading the definition of “sexualize” as a verb, “to endow with a sexual character or cast,” (Merriam-Webster online) it is clear that our entire country’s culture has become sexualized. One has only to watch television sitcoms or advertisements or music videos or print advertising to see that this is not unique to the OSUMB, or marching bands or college students in general. I feel that the outrageous misrepresentation publicized in the report by the Office of University Compliance and Integrity is a personal affront to the integrity of every OSUMB member, past, present and future. I have never felt so insulted, and to come from The Ohio State University makes it all the more intolerable.

Specific issues mentioned in the report:
Nicknames - “Each new Band member (traditionally called a “Rookie”) is assigned a nickname by upperclassmen. Assistant Director Smith stated that everyone gets a nickname and acknowledged that they are often “pretty dirty” or involve sexual innuendo”. (direct quote from the report) I did not receive a
nickname when I was a rookie. When I was the Assistant Squad Leader, I did not participate in giving the rookies nicknames.

Changing Clothes on Buses - Athletes and members of student organizations who travel, including marching band and corps band members, change clothes on buses. This happens in high school as well as college. I never witnessed anyone intentionally displaying themselves or attempting to prevent someone from having a modicum of privacy while necessarily changing on a bus.

“made to swear secrecy oaths” (direct quote from the report) – I never swore to anything. As is tradition with many organizations including student athletic teams, adult and student fraternal organizations, there was information that was exclusive to members. This was not sexual or harassing in nature, just something special for those who earned the right to be included by making the band.

Forced participation – I was never forced to do anything. A midnight ramp was not required. I did not participate in assigning “tricks” for the rookies to perform. Was there any consideration given to the idea that some of the evidence was a unique occurrence, limited to a few and designed by a member who incorrectly thought he was being funny? In the example of the “rookie test”, was this actually given to any rookies, or was it a distasteful joke composed by one individual?

Let me try to explain how my experience in the band has contributed positively to who I am today. Self confidence - I can’t count how many times, when faced with a difficult situation, I’ve thought to myself, “You can do this. You were in the band.” After performing in front of 105,000 people, speaking to a professional or casual group doesn’t unnerve me.

Leadership – Being a student leader was one of the first opportunities to practice management skills.

Time management – Organizing my time for hours of memorizing music weekly, completing homework and studying for exams in other courses was excellent preparation for a job with deadlines to meet or demands for efficiency and productivity.

Team work and pride in a job well done – I’ve never worked so hard and received such great satisfaction in the result, and no matter where I go in this world, I will always be welcomed by fellow TBDBITL members, because a timeless bond has been formed between us.

To be early is to be on time, to be on time is to be late, and to be late is to be left – Punctuality is a very positive attribute in the professional world.

Pick up your feet, turn your corners square, and DRIVE, DRIVE, DRIVE! - Give everything your all, and do it right the first time.

I will defend my reputation. I will support the fight for our honor. I will stand with Jon Waters. I hope justice will be served.

Sincerely,

Robyn Ramseyer
My Own Experiences in the OSUMB

I am writing to express my disappointment over the dismissal of Jon Waters as Director of the Ohio State University Marching Band and to counter the misinformation and mischaracterizations made by the media.

I was a member of the OSUMB in 1989 and 1992-93. I have read the complete university Report and have seen the attached Exhibits. While I agree that much about the student culture of the marching band needs to be updated, it is important to keep in mind that the traditions and activities mentioned in the report existed long before even I made the band. I personally never felt forced, coerced, or otherwise made to feel uncomfortable in any situation during band activities. I was never forced to strip or change on a band bus. I was never forced to participate in Midnight Ramp – in fact as a rookie I was informed about it ahead of time and had ample opportunity to decide if I wanted to participate or not. I have never heard from any other band member, male or female, that their experience differed markedly from mine in those regards. Furthermore, the songbook (Exhibit B in the Report) has existed for decades as you can see from the credits in the beginning. It started being published when Mr. Waters was still an infant, two directors ago. When I came out as a Lesbian my fellow row members were nothing but supportive. I never felt discriminated against because of the song lyrics, and my row mates and band mates never harassed me in any way as a woman nor as a Lesbian nor made me feel less of a person or that I did not belong in band. I was and still am a sister in this large family. Never did I observe or hear about sexual harassment or sexual assault occurring between band members during my time in band; but I sure knew about it in the general university community.

The “culture of sexualization”, as it has been dubbed, has been long embedded and is not due to the negligence of this one man or one directing staff. Despite its long history in our band, Mr. Waters was attempting to eliminate much of the raunchiness we see reflected in the report. But that cannot be done overnight and it cannot be done in one season. As a former band member himself, Jon Waters is uniquely qualified, more than anyone else, to help bring the OSUMB into a new era. At the very least, he should be granted a public apology, reinstated, and given the support and direction he should have had in the first place to make the changes needed.
Marching band taught me perseverance, time management, respect for different cultures and viewpoints, tolerance for personality differences in order to achieve a common goal, absolute excellence in doing anything, and it taught me to never give up. Ask any one of today's band members what they are learning and you will get a similar answer. The funny nicknames and inappropriate song lyrics will be a smirk and a shared laugh among friends, but the real life lessons will endure.

Sherri Rapp
OSU, B.A. 1994
OSUMB 1989, 1992-93
Mr. Thompson, et al.,

I am writing to express my outrage over the Office of University Compliance and Integrity handling the investigation of the Ohio State Marching Band, its “culture”, and Jon Waters. As I am a graduate of the University, a Life Member of the OSU Alumni Club, a three-year member of the OSUMB, a member of the TBDBITL Alumni Club, and a concerned citizen, I expect a response addressing these specific points rather than a canned response that all others are receiving.

1) The investigation was flawed. Several of the people whose nicknames were mentioned in the report were never interviewed to discover who gave those nicknames and when and under what conditions and if the person with the nickname felt offended or sexually harassed. Only 5 members of the current 225-member band were interviewed, and at the direction of the complainant – hardly a valid sample size to determine any sort of culture. That’s like saying my Uncle Ernie is a criminal so my entire family endorses criminal activity – it is poor research methodology.

2) The report being released to the public with the nicknames of several band members has caused more embarrassment and harassment to those members now than when they were in band. Specific people who have spoken out about this mistreatment from the University, media, and the public can be found here http://womenoftheosumb.blogspot.com/2014/07/alex-clark-letter-to-president-drake.html and here http://womenoftheosumb.blogspot.com/2014/07/former-osum-marching-band-member.html. The Office of University Compliance and Integrity and The Ohio State University were irresponsible for releasing these names.

3) Releasing to the public the “Unofficial Songbook” was exceptionally and unconscionably irresponsible. So much so that it reeks of a willful and orchestrated destruction of the marching band and all those associated with it. While I do not endorse the songs and much of the language in the songbook and outright reject others, it is clear from discussions with current and recent band members that it was rare, discouraged, very difficult to get one’s hands on it, and taken away by band staff it was discovered. In fact, 2006 was the last year in which it was published, which is well before Jon Waters became the director. Furthermore, many of the bawdy songs come from John Valby (known as Dr. Dirty - http://www.johnvalbynation.com/home.html#U9kMW_IdXT0) and are known in other segments of our society. While I personally heard some of these songs sung on buses to performances when I was in the band, it was rare. They
were mainly sung at private gatherings when we could act like the regular college students we were.

4) Exhibit A, the Rookie Midterm. I never took one of those nor ever saw one while I was in band. I heard about them and thought they were stupid. I do believe those are unnecessary and should not even be handed out. Regardless, it was unnecessary for the Office of University Compliance and Integrity to release the document to the public.

5) Midnight Ramp is much less prurient as the University of California – Irvine Undie Run (UCI, as you may know, is President Drake’s most recent post before coming to Ohio State). Midnight Ramp has always been completely voluntary and participants may choose how much or how little clothing to wear (within legal boundaries). Furthermore, in recent years Midnight Ramp has been officially sanctioned by the University. Scoreboard staff showed up to run the scoreboard. University police were present. Maintenance warned students to not mess up the turf too badly. Besides... WHO unlocked the gates for the band members so they could enter the stadium?

6) Much has been made of the lopsided male-to-female ratio in the marching band. I will remind you that the band is all brass and percussion. While we’d like to think that we live in a new era of sex equality in musical instrument choice that is absolutely not the case. More men than women play brass and percussion instruments at both the high school and college levels. In fact, the OSUMB has a slight advantage in the female percentage when compared to other collegiate marching bands when the analysis controls for specific instrumentation. http://womenoftheosumb.blogspot.com/2014/07/analysis-of-percentage-of-women-in-osumb.html

7) It is absolutely unacceptable that Mr. Waters’ response was not included in the Investigation Report. You gave a good man no way to defend himself.

8) President Drake never bothered to even meet a university and state treasure - who has dedicated his life and work to The Ohio State University and the Marching Band - and find out his side of the story and if by any chance the investigator(s) perhaps did not dig deep enough or conduct the investigation properly.

9) As part of the Athletic Department and twice the size of the football team, why does the marching band not already have permanent Title IX coordinators assigned to it?

I would like to share with you my own experience being in the marching band:

I was a member of the OSUMB in 1989 and 1992-93. I have read the complete university Report and have seen the attached Exhibits. While I agree that much about the student culture of the marching band needs to be updated, it is important to keep in mind that the traditions and activities mentioned in the report existed long before even I made the band. I personally never felt forced, coerced, or otherwise made to feel uncomfortable in any situation during band activities. I was never forced to strip or change on a band bus. I was never forced to participate in Midnight Ramp – in fact as a rookie I was informed about it ahead of time and had ample opportunity to decide if I wanted to participate or not. I have never heard from any other band member, male or female, that their experience differed
markedly from mine in those regards. Furthermore, the songbook (Exhibit B in the Report) has existed for decades as you can see from the credits in the beginning. It started being published “underground” when Mr. Waters was still an infant, two directors ago. When I came out as a Lesbian my fellow row members were nothing but supportive. I never felt discriminated against because of the song lyrics, and my row mates and band mates never harassed me in any way as a woman nor as a Lesbian. Neither did they make me feel less of a person nor that I did not belong in band. I was and still am a sister in this large family. Never did I observe or hear about sexual harassment or sexual assault occurring between band members during my time in band; but I sure knew about it in the general university community. I saw dorm mates with cuts and bruises from domestic abuse, but never friends in band.

The “culture of sexualization”, as it has been dubbed (otherwise known as “college”), has been long embedded and is not due to the negligence of this one man or one directing staff. Despite its long history in our band, Mr. Waters was attempting to eliminate much of the raunchiness we see reflected in the report. But that cannot be done overnight and it cannot be done in one season. As a former band member himself, Jon Waters is uniquely qualified, more than anyone else, to help bring the OSUMB into a new era. At the very least, he should be granted a public apology, reinstated, and given the support and direction he should have had in the first place to make the changes needed.

Marching band taught me perseverance, time management, respect for different cultures and viewpoints, tolerance for personality differences in order to achieve a common goal, absolute excellence in doing anything, and it taught me to never give up. Ask any one of today's band members what they are learning and you will get a similar answer. The funny nicknames and inappropriate song lyrics will be a smirk and a shared laugh among friends, but the real life lessons will endure.

The refusal of the Office of University Compliance and Integrity, The Board of Trustees, and President to publicly address the several questions posed by concerned alumni such as myself regarding the ineptness of the investigators and the overreaction by the university in firing Mr. Jon Waters is disturbing. Please provide me with confirmation that you received my letter and I request feedback from the Board of Trustees regarding this matter.

Sherri Rapp

OSU, B.A. 1994
OSUMB 1989, 1992-93
Life Member, OSU Alumni Club

CC: OSU Board of Trustees, Mr. Gates Garrity-Rokous
Tuesday, August 12, 2014

The "Oath of Secrecy"

On July 24, 2014, a report released by the Ohio State University’s Office of University Compliance and Integrity (now known as the Glaros Report, named for Chris Glaros, the Assistant Vice President of Compliance Operations and Investigations for the Office of University Compliance and Integrity) charged, among several other things that are now proving to be false, that members of the Ohio State University Marching Band were forced to swear oaths to secrecy about "inappropriate" goings-on in the organization. The Glaros Report mentions secrecy oaths three times in the report:

"On May 23, 2014 a parent of a Marching Band member visited the Office of University Compliance and Integrity and reported that she had concerns about whether the Marching Band’s culture was sexualized, and stated that its members were made to swear secrecy oaths about objectionable traditions and customs." -Page 3, The Glaros Investigation Report

"The complainant reported concerns about whether the Marching Band’s culture was sexualized. The parent further stated that the Band’s members were made to swear secrecy oaths concealing objectionable traditions and customs. ... take oaths not to tell about Fesler" -Page 4, The Glaros Investigation Report

It's true. We were sworn to secrecy over the most horrendous, sexual, abusive, and harassing things one could dream up. (That was sarcasm in case you missed it.)

Until yesterday (8/11/14), I was perplexed that a written "secrecy oath" had even surfaced. How ridiculous! I thought. I never swore an oath to secrecy. It turns out I was wrong. I honestly had forgotten about this because it was so innocuous. See for yourself.
Todd: All rookies now rise.

Drew: Are you excited?

Todd: Scared stiff?

Drew: Well maybe you should be,

Todd and Drew: Because Fesler has arrived

Todd: Fesler would like to extend a welcome to everyone, especially rookies

Drew: But first, rookies: raise your right hand and repeat after us

Todd: I will keep the events of this evening from reaching anyone outside of this band room, or the band family.

Drew: I will keep a good public image.

Todd: I will obey the directors of the OSU Marching Band.

Drew: I will respect and obey my squad leaders.

Todd: I will not hesitate through a cross-over.

Drew: I will pick up my feet, turn my corners square and Drive, Drive, Drive!

Todd: And I will never...

Drew: Ever...

Todd: Cross the street without looking both ways.

Drew: You may be seated.

This "oath" was given at the start of "Fesler Night" which is a casual gathering of the newly assembled band, held in the band room, at which skits are performed and the squad leaders play a couple school songs for everyone. Truth be told, I personally found many of the skits boring, uninspired, or just downright lame. Others were rather creative. Some were crude, using language we wouldn't use in public. Then again...we weren't in public. We were friends trying to make each other laugh in our own unique an quirky ways in order to hasten the bonding, and therefore, the effectiveness of how well we worked together in getting a job done that requires both individual effort and teamwork.

Will I tell you the specifics of the skits at Fesler Night? No, I will not. And it's not because I am
ashamed or have anything to hide or that I think other alumni will be mad at me. I choose not to
tell you because those are my memories. They are things that I experienced that not everyone
can, and to me that means something. To you they are a curiosity. To you, they are a glimpse
into a world in which you can't be a part. You may be looking for prurient details that simply
aren't there. To you, my stories are mere hoped-for pornography. No, my memories and my
experiences are mine.

-Sherri Rapp
Christina Regule

My name is Christina Regule, and I was the first female 1-Row Squadleader in 1986 (Assistant Squadleader in 1985). Nothing prepared me more in this life to become a U.S. Army Active Duty Chaplain than my five years in THE Ohio State University Band! When the news broke for me here in Germany, I was stunned, outraged, conflicted, and convicted regarding parts of the report; however, the research methodology and its subsequent results are extremely inaccurate and seemingly intentionally misleading. I never did or saw a midnight ramp. I never laid my eyes on the infamous songbook. I've never been to the Varsity Club. Furthermore, I was given my nickname, because it was so incongruent with my life, and I received that honorably, as a core value compliment. Yet, my OSUMB Family was there for me through band tryout preparations, the death of my "Buni" (Grandmother), and the establishment of a "For God and Country" foundation to become an Active Duty Army Chaplain. The culture of the Ohio State University Marching Band, not only prepared me for the U.S. Army, it also prepared me for year-long deployment in Afghanistan: Family-bonding, Trust, Resiliency, and Survival!

For God and Country, and "Our Honor Defend, We will Fight To The End for O-HI-O!"

Christina
Brianne Reiss

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 04, 2014

To President Drake and Whom It May Concern:

Hello. My name is Brianne Reiss. I am a 2010 graduate of The Ohio State University and a four year alumna of The Ohio State University Marching Band. A few quick facts up front: I am female. I played the snare drum. In my four years as a member of the band including one as a squad leader, my twenty-nine member row was consistently male dominated. Considering just the snare line alone, over my career the greatest number of females to earn positions in the snare line during one season was a whopping five out of fourteen members. It is fair to say that I am one of the supposed victims of the sexual harassment culture this investigation is propagating. I am here to say that is simply not the case...

The current slander debacle that is taking place is offensive to me on many levels and that is saying something because as I'm sure you've heard, it takes a lot to offend a member of The Ohio State University Marching Band. As a woman and an alumna, I'm taken aback by the ease in which society has seemingly assumed that this type of behavior would ever be acceptable; that without having met me or many of the alumni that have had the privilege of moving this great organization forward, it has somehow been determined that we would allow this type of behavior to continue without question. I don't know if I could pick exactly which assumption angers me most: that I would submit myself to that kind of treatment or that I would pernate an atmosphere of sexual harassment for other people. Are changes necessary to some of the traditions that have spanned decades within our band? Absolutely. But in the same breath, the band I made in 2006 was a completely different animal from the band I left at the beginning of 2010 due to steady effort. Although firmly-footed progress can take time to create, it has been happening and is in many ways due to the direction of Jon Waters. I'll touch more on him later [not literally, Columbus Dispatch, put down your pens], but I'd like to start with the Title IX aspect first.

Women may number in the minority of the band, but to suggest that we are or were in any way minimalized or forced to be submissive to the male members of the band is laughable. Have you met a girl in the marching band? Rock stars should write sonnets about these women. They are strong and driven, they are spirited, and by God, they are loud. I can promise you they wouldn't take being systematically overlooked or waved aside sitting down. These are women that create change. These are women that push for more. They number among the best I have known in my life and I am proud to stand among them. I could only hope to have daughters some day who carry themselves the same way.

The last few days have been tough to stomach. Not only am I offended as a woman of the band by the idea that this type of culture has been allowed to run rampant through the halls of Steinbrenner Band Center, but to state matter of factly that the men of the band-- whom I count among my chosen family, who have been in my home, have met my blood relatives, and have shared more time, more memories, and more tender moments with me in the OSUMB than any other individuals in my life-- that they would ever treat a female as less than equal is repellant. I am five foot two inches tall on a good day. When I made the band I was 98 pounds. Even at my best, I continue to be a wispy a girl. And yet, there was never a time in my career as a band member that I felt in any way threatened, that I felt unsafe, or that I felt persecuted. There were many moments on The Ohio State campus in Columbus when I was afraid. Not once was that ever in the presence of another person from the marching band.

As an independent adult engaging in my own life, at no point had I ever felt my hand was forced while in the marching band. I was fully aware of my decisions as I made them and honestly, I can't think of any moments I regret from my time or would do again in a different way. Growing up can be a bumpy road for anyone. Being in a high pressure, incredibly public position of power in your early 20's proffers terrible possibilities. While there are always a few bad apples in any bunch, I don't feel that the great majority of the band took that position for granted. In fact, that yoke is worn with great
care and with the sense of responsibility that comes with being a representative, at least for a short time, of something far greater than anything we could ever accomplish alone. It hurts my heart to see the character of these people called into question; that this world that we live in is so quick to assume the worst in everything. There continues to be changes that need to be made with the culture of the marching band, but that culture is not unique to us. Lewd humor and alcohol consumption are not traits of Buckeyes alone, and while the time and place for such things are certainly not in the band hall, trying to rid college students of these vices is not a battle I would wish upon anyone.

As a member of the supposed persecuted party in this ongoing investigation, I stand with Jon Waters. I feel the decision to fire him from his place as director of The Ohio State University marching band is short-sighted and unjust. Yes, we live in a litigious society. Yes, we have seen the university make terrible mistakes in an effort to protect their own skin in the past. I'm asking that you take into consideration the great number of individuals who are willing to bear witness to Jon's personal character and his actions as both assistant and director of this band and that you change the tide. This investigation continues to suggest that victims are waiting in the wings for the call to come forward and yet the one man who has been committed to its members and the organization's name for half his life is being overlooked and a victim is exactly what he is.

Full disclosure: I don't think Jon has handled this investigation well. I do think he is still the best person to lead the band into the future and the only person who has successfully curbed ill-fitted tradition to date. There is a livelihood at stake here, one that has made some mistakes but has proven over time to be the driving force behind necessary change: the type of changes that are still needed in other organizations on this campus. At what point does the face of the university become more important than the individuals it serves? What volume must our voices reach before they will be heard?

There will always be work to be done to create safe environments, to grow kindness and patience, to fulfill the potential that each of us carry within ourselves to do good as we make decisions each day. When it comes to bureaucracy, I'm not the person who makes fists and stands in the rain to make sure my opinion is heard. I'm not even the person who would stand in line for free ice cream. But I'm sitting at my computer and I'm typing this note to you because sitting in silence is acquiescing that the way this has been handled is acceptable. I chose to write to you because as an alumna of this fine university established in excellence and as a person whose life has been greatly enriched by the OSUMB, I want better for both organizations from you than what you're currently offering. I chose to write to you because Jonathan Waters deserves more.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my thoughts and, formally, welcome to the Buckeye family. Here's wishing your experiences with Ohio State are as wonderful as mine.

Sincerely,

Brianne Reiss
President Michael Drake  
205 Bricker Hall  
190 North Oval Mall  
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Board of Trustees  
210 Bricker Hall  
190 North Oval Mall  
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Dear President Drake and Board of Trustees,

I would like to introduce myself. I am an alumna of the Ohio State University, having earned two degrees: a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (1984) and a Master of Science degree (2006), practicing as an Adult Nurse Practitioner. I made a personal choice to become a Life Member of the OSU Alumni Association several years ago. I am a proud 5 year member of the OSU Marching Band, having been a Squad Leader for my last two years and I was the first female from Sandusky, Ohio to make the band. I’m sure you have received many letters over the past few weeks, but I ask that you take the time to please read mine. My focus is unique, sharing in our background of medicine and ethics, a topic that you know well.

I’d like to briefly discuss the four values of medical ethics and apply them to the decision to fire Jonathan Waters. They are: autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence and justice.

*Autonomy.* This is respect for an individual. We know that in reference to a patient, we are not to coax or coerce someone into decision making. Education about risks and benefits are to be explained and he then makes his choice about a treatment or a decision. President Drake and Board- did you have all the facts and education about this decision to fire Jon? How could you make such a drastic decision when this report has been proven to not be scientifically sound? You, as a physician, understand about sample size, lack of data, reliability, etc. Were you coerced into a hasty decision? What pressure was
placed on you, our University President of less than one month?


_Beneficence._ This is the principle of providing good, of a benefit. The firing of Jon did _not_ promote the well being of others, including the new 2014 OSU Marching Band. Also, the public sharing of items in the nonfactual Giaros report invoked humiliation and shame to thousands of band alumni who now have to explain “we weren’t like that.” I was never sexually offended while in the band, but _now_ have to defend myself as a respected medical professional- and not as a sexualized, harassed female band member.

_Non-maleficence._ Many recognize this as “do no harm.” However, great harm has been committed to the band alumni, and most severely, to Jon Waters. Instead of firing him, I believe a different solution could have been enforced. Jon could have remained the director, while incorporating the steps you are currently using: additional staff support and additional education. The well being of our current band is at risk. Their respected and beloved leader has been yanked from their lives. They are being forced to endure lengthy Title IX lectures (which could have been an on-line, mandatory course to complete before the first day of school and not during time to learn music and a show for next week). These young students were learning many life skills from Jon beside music-he was teaching them to give back to their community. He was modeling an ‘attitude of gratitude’ and to ‘pay forward.’ Jon was teaching and molding these students for their future as adults.

The last value of ethics that I’d like to discuss is _Justice._ One needs to be _fair_ with all the people involved. President Drake, you have an opportunity and the ability to make things right and to provide justice. I know that you have received a plethora of information in disproving many facts of the Giaros report. The University did _not_ thoroughly review and assess the situation before making their decision. I would like to restate your quote from August 13th to the Columbus Metropolitan Club: “I have always been a person who did my best to find the facts and to act accordingly and appropriately on those facts and to move forward. And I will always do that.”

I would like to request the reinstatement of Jonathan Waters as the Director of the Ohio State University Marching Band. This would be the best step in moving forward.
In conclusion, I'd like to provide a passage you might recognize from Sir William Osler (1907):
“You are in this profession as a calling, not as a business, as a calling which exacts you at every turn self-sacrifice, devotion, love, and tenderness to your fellow-men. Once you get down to a purely business level, your influence is gone and the true light of your life is dimmed.” From: The reserves of life. St. Mary’s Hospital Gazette 13:95-98.

Please provide me with confirmation that you received my letter and I request feedback from the Board of Trustees regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Michelle P. Ruess Jackson
Adult Nurse Practitioner, Grant Medical Center
Former OSU Marching Band Member 1980-1984
Current TBDBITL Board of Governors member
Email: osurooster@aol.com
#westandwithjonwaters
#ourhonordefend
Allison Schaffer

President Drake,
First and foremost, welcome to The Ohio State University, the best university in the country as far as myself and many others are concerned. In fact, I loved it so much, I took a full 5 years to graduate. My name is Allison Schaffer, a.k.a. Princess, to those who affectionately called me that. I was Hall Council President of Baker Hall, played in the University Band, sang in Women’s Glee and was heavily involved in the Theatre Department. I was a manager for The Ohio State University Marching Band and the Athletic Bands from 1992-1994 and Head Manager for the 1993 Athletic Band season and 1994 football season.

Being a manager was an amazing experience for me from the get go. I was a 19 year old woman trying to figure out where I belonged in a campus full of very different people. I came from New Jersey and really didn’t know the history of Ohio State or the marching band; I just knew that, as soon as I found that organization and the amazing people that were part of it, I found the place I wanted to be. I took responsibility for my actions as an adult. I was never forced to drink, forced to take place in Midnight Ramp and NEVER hazed as implied in your report. I CHOSE to do these things, after all I was living the college experience, right? Yes, my nickname, Princess, was because I am an East Coast Jewish woman and the nickname is short for Jewish American Princess, but this was an affectionate term and not hateful by any means. As a matter of fact, I found that being a Jewish woman was great, I was able to educate those people who never met a Jew, or never had Jewish friends before, making them more diverse. I would have never had these experiences had I joined a social sorority, instead I would be paying to have friends which I got for free the minute I became a part of the band. Better yet, I call these people family... because we all get it! We have all been there and shared these experiences with each other... to me, that’s invaluable. I would never have gone to bowl games, loaded airplanes, met celebrities, participated in traditions and most of all met some of the closest friends that I have TO THIS DAY!

I was shocked to learn about the investigation into the band and the firing of Jon Waters. Jon is a stand up man who has nothing but the best intentions and actions. He has been trying to change that culture but, unfairly, you only gave him a year! One season! Thanks to your decision, the media has made all of the organization past, present and future sound like a bunch of animals. I assure you that this is not the truth and I feel you and all of those involved in this decision, didn’t take the time to speak to those of us who were there. I am saddened by the actions of the university that I proudly (usually) represent as an alumnus. Thanks to your actions, I have had to spend the last few days defending myself, my humility, my friend Jon Waters and most of all MY University!

Allison “Princess” Schaffer
OSU Marching Band
Manager/Head Manger 1992-1994
8/1/2014

President Michael Drake, MD
205 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, Ohio 43210

President Drake,

By now I am sure you have received tens if not hundreds of letters from disappointed or upset former members and friends of the Ohio State University Marching Band containing impassioned pleas for the reinstatement of Jonathan Waters. It has taken me some time to compose my version of such a letter because, frankly, I have had to regain my composure first.

My name is Joseph Sekel. I am a proud alumnus of the Ohio State Marching Band. (On my third tryout attempt, I made it into the band as a snare drummer in the early 1980s.) Prior to July 24, I would have said that I was a proud engineering alumnus of the Ohio State University as well. But, after three weeks on the job and with one swift and misguided action, you have put me in a position of having to choose between an allegiance to my alma mater or a loyalty to my beloved marching band, its current members and to thousands of its alumni brothers and sisters. Given no other choice, my allegiance will always be to the OSUMB and my OSUMB family. I hope you have the capacity to redress your actions of July 24 by reinstating Jonathan Waters so I can again claim to be a proud alumnus of the Ohio State University.

It is said that a well-written alma mater (song) can evoke a profound connection between one’s spirit and his or her school. I cannot help but to think about Carmen Ohio, a song that I sang and played many times, somewhat differently right now...perhaps, much like a soldier who would fly the flag upside down to signal distress to anyone in a position to help. At risk of being disrespectful to Carmen Ohio, which is not my intent, I would like to use it to assist me in conveying my feelings:

“Oh come, let’s sing Ohio’s praise, and songs to Alma Mater raise.” Praise is an expression of admiration or approval. I do NOT approve of the manner in which your investigation of Jon and the band was conducted. Too many opposing testimonials are coming forth from those who were referenced in the report, but were curiously not interviewed with any context, if they were interviewed at all. To me, this suggests that the report was prepared in a way to justify a predetermined outcome or rush to judgment.

“While our hearts rebounding thrill, with joy which death alone can still.” There is no joy, sir, in effectively being labeled a homophobic, anti-Semitic, sexist and sexual deviant. But, with your administration’s careless handling and publishing of this report and its claims, you have effectively done just that, tarnishing the reputations of thousands of us. We are professionals, grandparents,
parents, sons, daughters, soldiers, church laity and so on. You have offended and insulted all of us with your administration’s false claims and amateurish handling of this issue. As a side note, I do not make a habit of donating to institutions that insult me.

“Summer’s heat or winter’s cold, the seasons pass the years will roll.” The so-called “two month investigation” was conducted earlier this summer during the marching band’s offseason. During this period, am I to understand that the investigators could only manage to interview a handful of marching band members? I find it completely incredulous that the administration’s investigators could only track down that small subset of members and, somehow, could not draw on the university’s vast recording-keeping resources to track down and interview a larger, random sampling of members with pertinent information (to form a more complete account). How can you possibly make any just determination based on such a limited sampling of data? To support a more complete, accurate and fair investigation, I request to be interviewed because I have relevant information regarding this investigation.

“Time and change will surely show, how firm thy friendship ... OHIO!” I stand with my OSUMB family. Our friendship is as firm as it has ever been. We are resolute. We will never give up. We will fight to defend our honor and the honor that belongs to this band and to Jonathan Waters. Please do the right thing. Please reinstate Jonathan Waters as the Director of the Ohio State University Marching Band without further delay. I am proud to stand with Jon!

Please provide me with confirmation that you received my letter and I request feedback from the Board of Trustees regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Sekel
TBDBITL, I-Row, 1981-83
BSEE 1984

Cc: Board of Trustees (Jeffrey Wadsworth, Chair)
    Archie Griffin, President/CEO, The Ohio State Alumni Association
    Betty Montgomery
    David Axelrod, Esq.
8/10/2014

Mr. Archie Griffin
Longaberger Alumni House
2200 Olentangy River Rd.
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Archie,

My name is Joseph Sekel. I am a proud alumnus of the Ohio State Marching Band. You are no doubt receiving tens if not hundreds of letters from upset former members and friends of the Ohio State University Marching Band asking for your support of Jonathan Waters. I can only hope that my letter is found within your stack of letters and read by you.

My father’s name was also Joseph Sekel. He played football as a freshman for Woody Hayes at the Ohio State University in the late-1950’s. He would have loved to play longer, but with his wife pregnant with me, he decided that he needed to go to college part-time so he could work and have money to take care of his budding family. But, boy, did he love Woody! He would describe Woody as the ultimate field general who was hell on the field but the nicest, most caring father-like figure off the field. As an aside, I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Hayes not long after Woody’s passing. When I told her my dad’s name, she responded with the years that my dad played and his position. Needless to say, I was astounded. She said that the football players were family to her and Woody, and that they made it a point to remember each and every player year after year. Clearly this confirmed by dad’s sentiment.

I rarely saw my father cry. In fact, I can only recall three instances of it: when his father died, when Woody passed away and when the Gator Bowl incident resulted in Woody’s dismissal from the university. Although my dad understood the gravity of the Gator Bowl circumstances, he often said that “it was a tragedy” and that “no one, especially someone that so loved the university and its students, should have to go out that way.”

I too had very memorable encounters with Woody. But my encounters with him came as a result of being in the band. You see, when I approached my teen years, my father wanted me to follow in his footsteps by playing football, a game he loved. But, not having his size and overall physique, I instead became drawn into music and playing the drums. I could tell that this disappointed my father. But, being a great dad, he held that disappointment deep within and managed to support my music and band activities one hundred percent. When I told him that I was choosing Ohio State for college over the University of Cincinnati or the Air Force Academy because I wanted to be in the Ohio State Marching Band, I could see his eyes light up as if I was indeed following in his footsteps.
When I made the band, my dad drove four hours round trip for every home game to see the band...and of course to watch the game. He would make sure he arrived in Columbus early enough to see the band’s dress rehearsal, on the stadium parking lot, and the Skull Session in St. John Arena. Of the Saturday morning marching rehearsals, he would say that without our instruments we looked like a rag-tag bunch of goof-ups from his seat on the bank of the Olentangy. But, he would go on to say, as soon as we started marching AND playing, the discipline and the precision returned and was overwhelming. It was then clear to him that we were the best of the best. We WERE that band which Woody often heralded as the only group on campus that worked harder than his beloved football team.

The last day I enjoyed with my dad was a few years after my graduation from Ohio State. We watched a televised Saturday afternoon OSU football game together from the comfort of his favorite sofa. They showed the band on the television. My dad looked at me and told me how proud he was that I had been in the marching band. Later that night, he passed away in his sleep. I know deep in my heart that it would make him even more proud that I was reaching out to you, on behalf of all my TBDBITL brothers and sisters, imploring you for your help. Because, simply stated, you were my dad’s hero.

As mentioned above, the band afforded me opportunities to experience Woody between his departure from coaching and his passing. At a senior tackle night in Ohio Stadium, Woody was handed the baton. He ascended the director’s ladder and conducted us during the playing of “Fight the Team.” Woody was waving the baton frantically and not in rhythm. It didn’t matter. We were glued to him as we played our fight song better than ever. After the song, Woody addressed us with an outpouring of his love for OSU, the band and its traditions. I don’t recall what he said but I do remember that there wasn’t a dry eye in the place. At that moment, I could understand why that man was so loved.

My most-lasting memory from being in the band was marching in Script Ohio on the day that Woody dotted the “i.” Being at the opposite end of the script, I could still tell when Bruce Hart, our drum major, led Woody onto the field. Ohio Stadium exploded with cheer and applause. That was the only time that I could NOT hear the drum that I was playing. I clipped a photo of Woody and Bruce from the local newspaper. A couple of years later, when I learned that Woody Hayes was going to be in my small Ohio hometown’s Memorial Day parade, I found that clipping and asked Woody to sign it. He did. I have attached it to the end of this letter.

In closing, Archie, I understand and respect that you have many pressures and constituencies in your role as President of the Ohio State Alumni Association as well as your role of Sr. Vice President for Alumni Relations. I, along with my fellow OSUMB brothers and sisters, only ask for the complete consideration of all the facts and fairness for Jonathan Waters and the band. Like Woody, I know that you hold the band, its members and the alumni in the highest regard. The university’s questionable handling of this situation and the firing of Jon has broken our collective hearts.

Joseph M. Sekel • 2
But, make no mistake, it has brought us closer together and strengthened our bond as well as our resolve. Please, I beg of you. Please use your considerable influence within the university and the OSU Alumni Association to right this wrong. Let's together honor Woody's memory by making sure that Jon does not have to further endure a similar tragic end to his OSU career. Please strongly encourage the Ohio State University administration to immediately reinstate Jon (with back pay). Please stand with us as we stand with Jon.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Sekel  
TBDBITL, I-Row, 1981-83  
BSEE 1984  
cc: Urban Meyer

Enclosure: Photo of Woody Hayes and Bruce Hart
O' Captain my Captain

The past couple of days have weighed heavily on my heart as I have witnessed an organization (and individual) that I have held so dear to my heart be exposed, insulted, mocked, persecuted, misrepresented, and finally dismantled by the very alma mater that I believed was dedicated to the betterment of that same organization, its members and the community around it.

What I have witnessed over these past couple of days has led me down a path I never thought possible, questioning my allegiance to a University that has been in my heart since I can remember even having the ability to remember. While I did not grow up in Ohio, my parents (both Ohioans) raised me on the core values that I believe were instilled in them by such a great state and its leading university: discipline, loyalty, scholarship, benevolence, family (actual and metaphorical), and empathy. I emphasize the latter two core values because I believe they are especially important in the context of these recent events.

My first true encounter with The Ohio State University Marching Band is undoubtedly similar to many others. I was five or six years old, travelling from Las Vegas to Columbus to go to my first Ohio State game with my father and grandfather. Times were different back then. I learned that my grandfather had never attended college because of his need to support his family and play a role in World War II. Similarly, my father, whom I thought had graduated from Ohio State, was forced to graduate at another institution due to his required military service at the time. Nonetheless, their allegiance to this great university was unwavering, and had been impressed upon me from minute one of my existence.

Upon arriving in Columbus, it was a typical grey and dreary fall day with the leaves changing, the clouds hanging over and rain looming. Our first stop was high street, where they took me to Buckeye Donuts to drink hot chocolate and play connect four before walking around campus and showing me where my mother attended her classes as a student some twenty years earlier. The trees and buildings were beautiful and nothing like I had seen in Las Vegas. All of the fans and students were so excited just to be alive, engaging in another great Saturday of college football and festivities. It didn’t feel like it was about winning or losing, or being number one, but just being a part of a great institution during truly great activities on such a great day. As I continued around campus, this pride echoed through the hallways of every building and resonated in the tone of every voice.

The next stop was St. John’s Arena, where my father began to tell me stories about the band. I remember him saying “if you listen real close, you can hear the band coming. Listen for the drums.” I sat and listened, eager to be the one that heard the band first. The fans would start to clap and die down, and clap some more. Then, out of nowhere, the entire Arena erupted into screams and applause, and with a quick exit, the band came out, so crisp, so clean, so pristine. The quickness of the steps and movements, I remember, were so precise that I could barely contain myself. And then they played

And I knew....

The music, the fight songs, the pride, all so overwhelmingly strong, that I couldn't imagine any better place in the world to be on any football Saturday. I knew that this was something I wanted to be a part of. I saw the effect it had on the fans around me, the inspiration they drew from it and the sheer fun each member was having. I didn’t see depression, coercion, or harassment, but instead pure happiness and joy from the sons and daughters who were laughing, dancing with one another and visiting their families up in the stands. Once called to order, their professionalism and discipline was distinct, each member working together to accomplish one task...greatness.

And I knew...
Fast forward twelve years (and past an immeasurable number of return visits to watch TBDBITL) to my arrival on Ohio State's campus as an entering freshman. For the past twelve years, I had been practicing my trumpet, attending music camps, and taking instruction from local TBDBITL alum in preparation for this moment. As with most freshman auditioning for the band, I was forced to move in two weeks early into an empty dorm suite. Tryouts began and I quickly learned that, while I could play, I was in over my head from a physical standpoint.

And I was cut....

First cut.... (4.5 average marching score for those who know what that means...ouch)

For those of you who have never experienced first cuts, it is a spirit crushing ordeal, one that makes you feel worthless and want to give up on your dreams. They read off the numbers and ask you to go to the other room. At first, you hope that they are just moving you or reassigning you, or that you are going in to another "extra session" where they will provide additional assistance, but then you hear the director start talking to the larger group in your absence, and you know that, notwithstanding how hard you’ve tried, you’ve failed.

Enter Jonathan Waters, then a graduate assistant, and many other band staff. They walked into the room to give you the bad news, however, instead of simply thanking you and sending you on your way, they tell you war stories about how they got cut, or even first cut, and were able to overcome it to become band members and even squad leaders. They encourage you to engage in the athletic band program, participate in spring band, attend summer sessions, and come back the next year better than ever. They tell you how valuable you are to the organization and to never give up on the music. They still hope.

And you try again...

Over the next year, I came to know Dr. Woods, Jonathan Waters, and Chris Hoch quite well. As directors and staff, they constantly encouraged me to push myself to the limit and learn from those who had been a part of the organization for some time (“vets” as I would learn they were called). They let me travel, as a freshman, on tournament trips, which only motivated me more. When Spring Band came about, Jon was always there, encouraging me to pick up my feet and turn my corners square. Finally, Jon and Dr. Woods offered me the opportunity of a lifetime, a spot in volunteer band, actually marching in a script.

And I failed again...

Some of you have seen a video of the Script Ohio performance on August 24, 2002. For those of you who have but can’t remember it, let me remind you. It is the one where a bozo collides with a trombone player at the “h” crossover and has to run back to his script spot, in front of 106,000 people. I was that bozo, who had finally been given this opportunity to prove that I should be a member of the greatest marching band in the world, and I blew it (in front of my parents no less) on its biggest stage. That was me, and as heart crushing as being first cut the year earlier, there was no comparison between that and this.

With tryouts only two days later, I returned to my grandmother’s home, only to sulk and consider if I was worth of even trying out at this point. There I stayed until three hours before candidate tryouts were to begin, when I got a call from my father. “No, I don’t think I’m going to tryout this year. I got the opportunity to march, that’s all I ever wanted.” I said to him. “Are you crazy,” he said, “If you don’t go to these tryouts because of one mistake, after having spent your entire life pursuing this dream, I’ve truly overestimated you as my son.” For the next hour, I sat and thought back to the words of encouragement that Jon Waters and other band staff had given me throughout the prior year, and my father was right. I needed to go back and do this. Otherwise, I was ignoring the very thing that TBDBITL was about: figuring out a way to learn from your mistakes and driving through them in order to be a part of something truly great.

And I drove through it....
Tryouts were tough, but I made it, as a regular no less. My squad leaders, Henry Lee and Nick Strickling, two of the most supportive and instructive band members I have ever met, were nothing short of encouraging and positive every step of the way. Along with some fourth and fifth year members in the row, Henry and Nick made it clear that all of the senior members in the band were there to help us with any problems we may have. This included help with marching, music, and even more personal issues, like studies, jobs, relationships, or problems within the band. It became apparent that being a member of this organization was more than just being a number ("T10" and later "T9" in my case), it was being part of a family. This is a sentiment that was reflected every step of the way by every member, and echoed by band leadership. There was never a moment where directors or staff made us feel like we could not talk to them if we needed help.

Throughout my two years in the Ohio State University Marching Band, I witnessed many things, both on and off the field. Some were positive and some might be construed by others as negative, but one thing I never saw was leadership condoning any activity which acted to harass any other member, or place them in such an uncomfortable position that they felt they had no recourse. In fact, that leadership, which included Jonathan Waters, always made it clear that if there was anything that you (as a student) felt wasn’t right, you should immediately bring that to the attention of your squad leader, and if that got you nowhere, you should bring it to them directly. I had such a moment, and brought it to the attention of a senior member of my row (not even a squad leader). With great concern, the senior member took care of it immediately, and within a couple of days, things were much more positive and the problem completely resolved.

There has been a lot of talk recently about students being "forced" to engage in activities like taking oaths of secrecy, marching in their underwear, engaging in "derogatory" song singing, performing "rookie tricks," performing "physical" challenges, completing rookie "midterms", engaging in "sexual" and allegedly "derogatory" activities on busses, and creating/reading derogatory publications. What the university and news outlets fail to discuss, likely because of their decision to act with haste instead of reserve and thoroughness, is that so many of these alleged "events" are misrepresented and so many positive aspects of the band have been outright ignored.

First and foremost, directorship and student leadership never forced anyone to do anything in TBDBITL, except give 110% on the field when practicing and performing. From your initial summer session until your last day in band, there are only a few statements that can sum up the position said directorship/leadership: "Enthusiasm", "Pick up your feet", "Turn your corners square," "Drive, Drive, Drive", and "Drive through it". These are the bedrock principles of what we are all taught by this leadership core from the moment we become members. We are taught to work hard, push through the pain, and give everything we have to our performances and our lives. As long as we do that, we have earned the right to call ourselves members and alumni of The Best Damn Band in the Land.

Leadership and directorship always made it known that they were there to help the students in any way possible. Whether it be trouble with classes, family problems, or trouble within the organization, this leadership core always encouraged communication with both squad leaders and the directors so that assistance and the appropriate steps could be offered in making the experience the best it could possibly be. In fact, to my knowledge, never did a director, squad leader, or senior member fail to meet with anyone who had a concern about the band, its actions (on and off the field), or its direction. On many occasions members were honored to have directors write letters of recommendation for medical school, law school, and the like.

With regards to the alleged "activities" as represented (more misrepresented) in the University's "report", band leadership did not condone any activity which acted to discriminate or harass any other individual, and such was made clear IMMEDIATELY after every member's inception into the organization. As an example, each year band directorship arranged a meeting with the newly selected band to go over certain rules, policies and procedures. These policies and procedures were deeply rooted in the same TITLE IX that the University now claims Jonathan Waters did not take steps to enforce. During this meeting, Directors, including Jonathan Waters, explained how hazing, sexual discrimination, sexual harassment and inappropriate conduct would be inexcusable, and if
such were to occur, it should be brought to the attention of the Directors immediately. Every student was required to sign an acknowledgement to these policies. That being said, it cannot be denied that some of the alleged activities did occur, however, under very different circumstances than portrayed in the University's report, and certainly without the knowledge of the Directors, who were very much dedicated to the process of eliminating such alleged behavior.

While the University has chosen to take an unnecessarily negative approach towards Jonathan Waters and the Ohio State University Marching Band, as a whole, for these alleged "activities," what is more disheartening is its attempts to misconvey the facts surrounding such and its further attempts to now vilify Former Director Jonathan Waters in its efforts to justify its almost unilateral and knee-jerk reaction. It is important to note that, the report, which purports to have talked with five current and five former marching band members, was prepared during a time period when the band is effectively dormant and while many students are away for the summer. This, in and of itself, acts to question the integrity of a report which, if taken in its entirety as true, would lead every reader to believe that every man and woman, gay or straight, white or minority, believes themselves to be "victims" of this "horridly offensive" organization. The inconvenient timing of and quick-to-act decision making in this report has, in essence forced the silence of hundreds, if not thousands of current and past members of this organization who might share opinions contrary to those depicted in the report. This includes many who are women, minorities, and those with alternative sexual preferences.

Had the University thoroughly interviewed current and past members of the band, they would have seen that several of its highest ranking members are and have been both women and minorities. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Dwight Hudson and Oliver McGee, both African American drum majors, and integral parts of OSUMB history. During Mr. Hudson's tenure, then Director Dr. Paul Droste changed band rules so that Mr. Hudson could return for a third consecutive year because, to quote Mike Harden from the September 1979 issue of Ohio Magazine, "DWIGHT – At halftime, he owns the house that Woody built." This is an honor that only three other drum majors have had in OSUMB history, and is the only time a drum major has had that honor since 1930. Both Dwight and Oliver were also elected "Most Inspirational Bandsmen" in 1978 and 1980, respectively, an honor based entirely on the votes and support of fellow band members.
- Michelle Graf, the first female drum major in the Ohio State University Marching Band, and Kathryn Mitchell, 2003 Drum Major and 2002 Assistant Drum Major.
- Willie Sullivan, an African American male who served as Assistant Director for 12 years.
- Erica Neidlinger, the first female Assistant Director (1998-1999), and Lisa Galvin (2005). Lisa Galvin also served as a Squad Leader of R-Row and, in 2008, joined the staff as a Music Arranger.
- Marcia Lareau, the first female member of the Ohio State University Marching Band Music Arranging staff, with her first show on November 8th, 1986, receiving a standing ovation.
- Wilson Murray, the first African American OSUMB member elected as "Most Inspirational Bandsmen" in 1965.
- Marcel Reeder, an African American who was elected "Most Inspirational Bandsmen" in 1985.
- Colleen Nutter, the first female band member who was elected "Most Inspirational Bandsmen" in 1986.
- Pamela Bork, a female who was elected "Most Inspirational Bandsmen" in 1996. (As a side note, it is interesting that Ms. Bork expressed no issues with the alleged "sexualized culture" of the organization when she was receiving this award and during her no less than 16 year tenure thereafter, but only conveyed her alleged concerns after leaving the band in a disputed fashion).
- Erin Klingbeil, a female who was elected "Most Inspirational Bandsmen" in 1998.
- Amanda Howenstein, a female who was elected "Most Inspirational Bandsmen" in 2001.
- Wesley Clark, an African American and the only person in OSUMB history to be elected "Most Inspirational Bandsmen" twice. (2003, 2005).
- Aaron Bell, an African American who was elected "Most Inspirational Bandsmen" in 2006.
- Cara Ricci, a female who was elected "Most Inspirational Bandsmen" in 2008.
- 53 woman who have held the position of Head Manager, Head Secretary, and Head Librarian
within the organization.
• The uncountable list of women and minority "I" dotters.
• The uncountable list of women, minority, and LGBT Squad Leaders and Assistant Squad Leaders that have been in the band over the past forty years.

Finally, there is Kristine Tikson, who I believe represents the essence of what the Ohio State University Marching Band is all about. Kristine originally enrolled at the Ohio State University in 1979, majoring in Accounting. Graduating Summa Cum Laude in 1982, Kristine spent the next 28 years of her life pursuing her career, but always regretted not having tried out for the band. In 2010, Kristine retired at 48 years old and decided to pursue her dream yet again. Although she had been a clarinet player originally, she began taking lessons, practicing the mellophone and attending summer sessions in order to prepare for what would certainly be a rigorous tryout.

Early on that following summer, however, disaster struck, and an MCL injury would make it impossible for her to audition. This wouldn't stop Kristine, however, who instead of quitting, continued attending summer sessions, simply to watch and learn. After allowing her body to recover, Kristine started an intense training regimen, which included intense cardio, interval cardio, muscle strengthening exercises, and daily music practices. In order to gain playing and marching experience, Kristine enrolled in Spring Athletic Band and actively performed at the Ohio State Spring Football Game. After attending summer sessions through the summer of 2011, Kristine finally tried out, only to be cut.

Initially planning not to try out again, Kristine changed her mind, crediting the "positive feedback" she received from the directors and some students on "Make the Band Night." Using this positive energy, Kristine pushed herself even harder, and was given a spot within the 2012 band. When asked about her experience, Kristine stated "The members of the band have accepted me and have not made a big deal of my age difference. They provide me with daily inspiration - they are so dedicated and talented. Membership in the OSUMB has been rewarding in so many ways. I consider it an honor and a privilege to wear the uniform." Because of her inspiring story and her dedication to core principles of the Ohio State University Marching Band, Kristine became the only first year OSUMB member to ever be elected "Most Inspirational Bandsmen" by her fellow peers. It should be noted that Director Jonathan Waters presented that award.

It is stories like these, and many others that are now being shared all over the social platform, that the University's quick-to-act and ill-timed report acted to suppress. Certainly, if one were to look at the University's report in a bubble, with no knowledge of the OSUMB, its history, its values, its leadership, or its traditions, one could be outraged, but to do so would create such an injustice against the thousands of past and present members who know otherwise. We have no choice but to act now, unified and strong.

"Membership in the OSUMB has been rewarding in so many ways. I consider it an honor and a privilege to wear the uniform."

This is a sentiment that is reflected by most current and past members of the Ohio State University Marching Band, not a select few with individual axes to grind and personal vendettas (those whom the University conveniently chose to interview). This is an organization that has been dedicated to treating everyone equally, whether they be male, female, gay, straight, transsexual, white, or minority. It has been one to honor, rather than discriminate against those who are different, it has always strived to expand its horizons and it has frequently celebrated that diversity and expansion.

For example, just this past season, the TBDBITL Alumni dedicated part of their halftime show to celebrating "40 Years of Women in the Band." The relevant portion of the show, which was performed on September 7, 2013, can be seen at http://youtu.be/vztAMzzjhoI?t=11m, and featured the five "pioneer" women who took that first step of removing a long standing tradition of TBDBITL being an all-male institution. The band, in honor of these women, played Hang on Sloopy. Surely these are not the actions of an organization that would celebrate a culture of discrimination or sexual harassment.
When watching the performance, the announcer says something which rang true forty years ago and rings true now, “Change is not easy!” Change is never easy, and when a group as large as the Ohio State University Marching Band has been practicing a certain way and following certain traditions for decades, any attempts to change such will be met a fiery resistance like none other. On one hand, it is that dedication and heart that has made TBDBITL what it is. On the other, it means that things cannot change overnight, and those who seek that change must have the courage and strength of a thousand warriors. Only one who has been deeply rooted in that tradition can truly understand the intricacies and difficulties of making those changes which are necessary to make the organization a better place for all students.

There is no man or woman more qualified to make that stand than Jonathan Waters himself. As a member of the band from 1995-1999, as Graduate Assistant Director from 2001-2002, as the Assistant Director from 2002-2011, and as Director from 2012-2014, Jonathan has dedicated his career to instituting that change when given the opportunity.

Below is a short, non-exhaustive list, of just some of the things Jonathan Waters has done in his 21 months as director to ensure change, and some of the things the University Report Seriously Misconstrues:

- As Director, Jonathan Waters did, in fact, prohibit the consumption of alcohol while attending any away games. This topic is completely neglected in the report, and instead, the University completely relies on the statement of Pam Bork, who claims to have left the band because of alleged alcohol abuse and sexual conduct. Instead of interviewing others, the University takes her statements as true, and neglects to entertain the notion that there is quite possibly an ulterior motive for her conveniently timed statements, considering she had no public complaints about the band during the prior 18 years she “volunteered” there, or when she received her “Most Inspirational Bandsman” award. Had the University elected to engage in a more thorough and proper investigation, or given other band members an opportunity to be heard, it would have discovered that Mr. Waters did, in fact, institute policies to protect against these issues.
- As Director, Jonathan Waters did, in fact, end “Midnight Ramp” in June 2014, and addressed it with squad leaders prior to that. While the University’s report conveys “Midnight Ramp” as an event where students were forced to march down the ramp in their underwear, had the University interviewed more aggregate sample of members, it would have learned two things. First, no student was forced to participate in any activity. If a student did not want to do it, they were not required. Second, “Underwear” was a figurative term. For some, underwear meant a pair of gym shorts and a tee shirt. For others it was, well….a birthday suit. A student specifically described (inaccurately so) in the University report as having an offensive nickname recently told the media, “I certainly never witnessed or experienced pressure from anybody in the band to do anything I was not comfortable with at all….It’s a tradition meant to welcome people into the family and into the band. I did my first Midnight Ramp wearing a tank top and shorts that provided full coverage.” Her interview can be seen here:http://abc6onyourside.com/news/features/top-stories/stories/band-scamandal-former-osu-marching-band-member-named-investigation-talks-33668.shtml#.U9bXQJv0yYk

Even Assistant Director Smith stated, "some students wore pajamas or shorts instead of underwear." This serves as clear evidence that no one was forced to do anything. Nonetheless, in the face of years of tradition, Director Waters ordered such an event ended effective this coming year. (As a side note, the University’s report curiously fails to investigate whether other University officials "knew, or should have known" of "Midnight Ramp", but simply places the blame solely on Mr. Waters. It is possible that a more thorough investigation of these concerns could leave the University with an egg on its face?).
- As Director, Jonathan Waters did, in fact, inform students that they needed to “go easy on the nicknames” and, as an Assistant Director, Mr. Waters actually disciplined a student for a highly offensive nickname. The University presents the thought that Mr. Waters had the authority to ban “nicknames” all together, but such would be ignorant of the fact that the nicknames were given from students to students outside of band, and such a policy would have no effect on the students in that situation. All Mr. Waters could do was try to control their use inside and outside of band, but as the
report indicated, most offensive nicknames were kept away from band leadership. The report also embarrassingly misstates facts regarding these nicknames. While it speaks of “Jewboobs” being a nickname given to a Jewish girl with big boobs, the University never actually made an effort to interview the woman who was given that name. Once interviewed by the media, she explained her nickname was actually “Joobs”, the Jewish faith had nothing to do with it, and she consented to the nickname. She said investigators never contacted her and, if they had done so, she would have set the record straight. Her interview can be seen here: http://abc7onyourside.com/news/features/top-stories/stories/band-scandal-former-osu-marching-band-member-named-investigation-talks-33668.shtml#.U9bXQJV0yUk

• As Director, Jonathan Waters removed the term “Rookie” and replaced it with “First Year Member” in an effort to ensure that no student felt demeaned by the term.

• As a Director, Jonathan Waters ended the publication of the so called “Trip Tic.” This was another long standing tradition that Mr. Waters eliminated virtually as soon as he became director. The fact that the University report holds it against him for knowing of its existence when he ended its publication at the beginning of his reign is somewhat nonsensical. To quote one band member not interviewed by the University, “When he became director it was ended very forcefully.”

• As Director, Jonathan Waters had speakers come in to talk about alcohol and to discuss discrimination against women. This occurred during the 2013 season and was completely absent from the University report. Had the University interviewed additional students from that season, it likely would have discovered such.

• The University report publishes a “2006 Unofficial Songbook” as evidence that Jonathan Waters failed to take steps necessary to stop a sexualized culture, but failed to interview any reliable students regarding when and how often the book was referred to, or whether it was ever present at band functions. It also fails entirely to account for the fact that, by its own credits, it is created by students, for students. It also draws attention away from the fact that its newest “version” is eight years old, six years prior to Mr. Waters being named director, and there is no indication that leadership played any role in its creation. Had the University interviewed a larger collection of members, it would have been revealed that, anytime such publication was found by leadership, past and present, it was immediately confiscated, the student disciplined, and the document destroyed.

In essence, when the University chose to conduct its report at a time when so many individuals were not available and in a fashion that was designed to act quickly at the expense of thoroughness, the opinions of so many, including some un-interviewed persons who were actually represented in said report, had their stories of positivity, enthusiasm and “daily inspiration” silenced. Even if you take these few possibly misrepresented “worst cases” as true, the University cannot hide behind the fact that, these individuals and now hundreds, if not thousands of others, make it clear that now Former Director Jonathan Waters was actively taking steps to correct situations.

We, past and present members of the OSUMB, are a family. That is what we asked for, and that is promised each other, maybe not through an oath, maybe not in writing, but through our hard work and dedication to the same goals. We are committed to our music, our marching, our traditions, and to each other, and when one who we have so believed in and has been with us on that path for almost twenty years is shot down, mutilated, and embarrassed, in the blink of an eye, without due process, and without even the most remedial efforts to interview the very subjects of some of the allegations, we must stand up to defend him.

Interestingly enough, this is not the first time Ohio State’s new president has engaged upon such a quick-to-act hiring/firing path. He has already been forced to apologize to one prior institution for the sudden hiring, firing, and rehiring of a dean “without consulting senior faculty early enough or often enough”, and now it appears he may have done it again. While last time, he claimed to have “learned a painful lesson”, it seems to be more and more apparent that the lesson wasn’t strong enough. His story can be found here: http://www.ocregister.com/articles/faculty-77613-drake-chemerinsky.html. It’s time to make a stand.
Jonathan Waters, you've been a wonderful leader, and brought about much needed change. You are an inspiration to us all, and we will not let you be the scapegoat for our actions, inactions, or misdeeds, whatever they may be.

O' Captain my Captain.......WB
Damian R. Sheets
Jay Sheridan

This is a long post, mainly for those that are not part of my OSUMB family. One of the most important lessons that I learned from Dr. Jon Woods is to live by the 24 hour rule before commenting. This has taken longer. Since the new Ohio State President Drake and this report has essentially called all of us drunken perverts, it has taken me a while to be able to complete thoughts together. After reading comments on the official OSUMB page, it truly upsets me how we are all now being judged. I played trombone in F Row from 1991-95. Still very PROUD.

Who are the members of The Ohio State University Marching Band?

We come from Anytown, USA. From small towns like Elmore, OH to the suburbs like Dublin, or the city. We cover about every geographic, economic, political, religious, ethnic, racial, sexual orientation realm of the spectrum. We have all grown up being called names like "band geek" "band nerd" etc. We all still worked hard on this one thing we all loved- marching band. How can such a uniquely diverse group work so well together on the field?

We all simply wanted to be the best. We wanted to be part of the Best band. And, we had to earn it.

Tryouts

Each member has spent many hours preparing for the tryout process. Trips to Columbus a couple times a week, practice at regional summer sessions, practice at home, alone. We each spent two days in the heat of summer being drilled over and over and over again to the point where, at dinner, you try to pick up your fork, and your brain says "Left Flank, Right Flank". We did this so much, it was easier than walking. Finally, Wednesday evening came when we were selected. Hey, you made the band! Time to relax! WRONG. This is when we got our music. Oh, you tried out on 2nd trombone, well, you will now play 1st trombone, and you will now need to re-learn all the school songs...by Friday. AND, here are the charts to the first show, pregame and halftime...And did I mention that we perform Friday night at a high school game? Time to work. This is about how we all started. And we wouldn't have traded it for ANYTHING. Some of us took one year, two years, even three years to get here. But, we all did. Some stayed one year, two years, five years, it doesn't matter- we are all the same- members of The Ohio State University Marching Band.

Trust

This is a very, very important factor for marching band members. Although, to an outsider, the formations on the field look like they flow effortlessly, that is often NOT the case. I wanted to be able to trust those around me to be able to march their part perfectly. I had the opportunity to march near a baritone squad leader during a star formation. Right after we turned at the top of the star, we turned and went back around. I trusted Nate to turn correctly so that I did not hit him with my slide. On Friday, during Squad Leader music checks, Nate was not in his spot and an alternate filled in. At the turn, she did not turn and my slide smacked down on the top of her baritone. Bent slide. Chipped tooth. Spitting blood. We trust our fellow band members. This is what makes the OSUMB one large family. We trust each other. On the field, the OSUMB marches as one. No distinction between individuals. We look the same from a distance. Why? Because we are a group, not a bunch of individuals.

Work/Play
This is who we are. We work hard. Endless hours of work. We were expected to be on time (aka 10 minutes early) and to work hard. Basic expectations. On the quarter system, I received 5 credits for my Math 116 class. 5 hours a week, one midterm, one final- that was about it. (Bill Knight, remember this class?). Marching band with 10 hours class a week, plus several hours memorizing music, plus cleaning and polishing instrument, plus ALL day Saturday game days...2 credits. We didn't do this to pad our GPA. We did this to be the best. We worked everyday to be the best. Our directors expected the best, everyday- especially when he asked for "one more time" at 6:10 and practice ends at 6, it is dark, and cold. He wanted us to be better. And always better. We had/have the best music arrangers allowing us to play good music every week. We worked hard, and when it was time to play...we played hard. We had our share of fun. Was too much alcohol consumed. Probably. Any different than any other college students? Probably not.

Hazing/Harassment

Have I ever been hazed in the marching band? NO. Have I ever been harassed? NO. Never. Period. Have I ever taken part in hazing or harassing? Not a chance. No way. We knew the University defined rules. Never crossed them. Period. There was an incident at Michigan State during this time, and we were educated on hazing rituals, etc. Let me shed some light on some of the issues brought out in the report.

Nicknames- I am proud of my nickname. During my first tryout year (91) an upperclassman must have seen some promise in my marching and started to shout encouragement to me. However, as we were only referred to as a tryout number and I didn't talk to very many people, he started calling my Little Buddy. Most nicknames don't stick. A few do. Most are normal names. Sputnik. Tater. Little Buddy. Trigger. Mumbles. What. Harmless names given to individuals of a group. Not ashamed. Period.

Midnight ramp. We were never forced to go. My first year, I did not. Didn't want to. I didn't know what to expect and just didn't want to go. I was told the next day that I was missed. Most people wore boxers, shorts, tank tops, etc. Not much different than going to the beach.

Changing on the bus. Really? This was an issue? This is common among high school bands. Amazingly enough, changing facilities for 250 college students aren't available on every street corner. Sometimes, we just have to do what we have to do. We expected it. We prepared for it. We found out what happens when we dropped the band off at an Ohio Turnpike rest stop Raxx Restaurant late at night. With 3 workers. Do I need to explain what happened? Again, most of the guys wore shorts/boxers the women wore shorts/tanks. It was never a big deal. Ever.

Song lyrics. Maybe 20 years ago, "obscene" lyrics would be shocking. But in 2014? Ever hear anything recent? Is President Drake going to fire Coach Meyer if the team plays music with obscene lyrics? Guaranteed those lyrics are worse than anything in a marching band songbook.

Verbal abuse? Did we get yelled at? Of course. And we deserved it. Dr. Jon Woods only yelled when he needed to. And he meant it. However, afterwards, it was fixed and he never held a grudge to anyone. Sometimes, we screw up and we need someone to put us back on track. Abuse, no.

Do many things of the past need to change? As we are in the age of digital media and camera phones, it is imperative that ALL groups be more careful in questionable areas. Jon is the right choice. Jon is the best choice. This is who we are. This is why #westandforjon.
Jocelyn Smallwood - "A Letter from Donk"

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 03, 2014

"A Letter from Donk."

Dear Dr. Drake, Dr. Steinmetz and Dr. J,

I have spent a great amount of time the past few days weighing whether or not I should write to you. I ultimately chose to do so only because I felt my comments would add a unique and valuable perspective to the conversation regarding the recent dismissal of Jonathan Waters. Like several of my female colleagues in the band, my name was included in the 23-page report released last week. However, so far as I know, I was one of the few who were actually interviewed during the investigation...

While I take issue with much of the report that was compiled by the university, my greatest concern was echoed recently by several of my female colleagues in the band. Many of us were surprised to find ourselves included in a list of “sexually explicit” nicknames. Even more surprising to me was that at no time during my interview can I remember being asked about the details of my nickname, the circumstances under which it was given to me, or, perhaps most important, my feelings about my nickname. While the authors of the report may feel confident in their ability to draw their own conclusions about the feelings, opinions and intentions of others without asking them, I would argue that in this case, their clairvoyance has failed them miserably. Thus, I feel it is my right and duty to clear up several issues about the fourth name listed in the report: Donk.

Donk is not a malicious or offensive nickname. Donk is a person. Donk is a five-year member of the band, a former i-dotter, and a two-time squad leader of KL-Row, which also happens to be a predominately male row. Donk is a daughter, sister, friend, a woman and, most importantly, an independent, clear-minded person. Donk is not a moniker that was placed upon me without my consent, and it is most certainly not something of which I am ashamed.

What angers me the most is that, in spite of my feelings, I along with several others on the list have been mischaracterized as victims of “sexual harassment” without being asked directly for our input. Never in my life have I felt uncomfortable being known as Donk. It has appeared on shirts, social media, in papers for classes; in the label I stuck in my band hat and on a piece of duct tape in my raincoat not because it is a joke, but because it is my name. It is who I am.

Although when I say “never in my life,” what I really mean is never before last Thursday. I now find my nickname listed in myriad news reports as proof of the alleged horrible, sexually aggressive culture of the OSUMB. While I am just as disappointed in the media for not bothering to do their homework, I would hope that a report dealing with an issue as serious as terminating the employment of one of the university’s most visible, respected figures would have been undertaken with more care. In my five years in the band and since my graduation, I’ve discussed my nickname and where it came from with my friends, family, coworkers, bosses, alumni and random people passing me on the street. Odd then, that seemingly the only people who were
uninterested in learning more about my nickname were those responsible for putting together a report about sexual harassment in the band.

But, at the center of this issue is an investigation that I feel was deeply flawed and executed with great carelessness and little concern for finding the truth. As someone with a deep understanding of the band, I would think that the hour I spent in the interview would have been used to gather the information I have about these issues and experiences. But as I recall, I was asked only a few general questions about the majority of the content in this report. Had you asked me, I could have told you that many of the examples in the report occurred long before Jonathan Waters was director. I could have told you that before we name rookies, we speak to each of them individually to ensure that nothing in their name touches upon any area they might find offensive. Had you bothered to ask, I could have told you that a large amount of the evidence on which the report relies is outdated or inaccurate. Or, perhaps, that is why they didn’t ask me?

I am well aware of the fact that the opinions of individuals often differ greatly. And I would guess that few people are making the argument that there is nothing in the culture of the band that needed to change. I am also certain that you have heard numerous examples of how the man you fired last week was the fiercest advocate for culture change in the band, joined in his efforts by Chris Hoch and Mike Smith and the majority of the band members. And had I been asked, I also could have offered numerous examples.

The truth is that this band makes strong women. It makes strong, smart, witty, confident and, therefore, beautiful women. As I have said before publicly, this band creates strong women because it treats us as equals. To make the band, individuals must be proficient in two areas: they must play well and march well. Gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, political view and socioeconomic status do not matter. In November, 2012, an African-American woman named Donk dotted-the-i against Michigan. It wasn’t because the men in my section decided to let me. It was because I worked hard and emerged on top. And on November 24th, when I realized my dream in front of more than 105,000 screaming fans, my fellow band members celebrated alongside me, not because I had broken a gender/racial barrier, but because we’re family and that’s what we do. Appropriately, last Thursday night, I once again found myself being supported by those same people. They are not nicknames on a list. They are not details in an investigation. They are not examples of harassment. They are my family. And the report does little justice to the truth that this band supports and nurtures women.

Please do not insult me as an individual by suggesting that I am so ignorant and so helpless that I somehow have managed to spend five years being consistently sexually harassed and not realize it. Do not treat my name as something that should be condemned when it is something I will continue to wear as a badge of pride.

There are negative things in our world—this is a fact of life. That does not mean that nothing can or should be done about them. However, it seems a shortsighted response to paint an entire organization with a broad brush when you only bothered to interview a handful of people about what has happened. The characterization of my name is simply one facet of this carelessness.
In closing, I still care deeply not only for the band, but for my university. That is why I write to you. The manner in which this report was put together is alarming. And if it is alarming to a twenty-three year old recent college graduate, I would hope that after hearing my story you as leaders, would, at the very least, look at this report and the manner in which it was produced with more scrutiny than you have up to the present time. Good management decisions must be based on accurate, well-researched, timely information. The report produced by the University’s compliance office, which served as the basis for the decision to fire Jonathan Waters, was none of those things.

I hope that in the future I can continue to serve my band, my university and community with pride and honor, and I will do so as a proud alumna both of this institution and of its band. Someday, if I am lucky enough to have children, I hope that I can share a love for Ohio State with them, just as my parents did with me. To echo the sentiment of another band alum I heard recently, I am certain with every fiber of my being, that if I have a daughter who wants to try out for this band, I will drive her across the country to try out. Moreover, when I do, I will make sure that she knows her value is not determined by what is said in a report, or in the news, or behind closed doors in a meeting. For that, I will tell her, look within yourself.

Respectfully yours,

Donk
Jocelyn Smallwood
TBDBITL, 2009-2013
Janet Reid
Board of Trustees
210 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, OH 43210

August 6, 2014

Dear Ms. Reid,

I am a graduate of The Ohio State University College of Arts and Sciences (1985, B. S.) and The Ohio State University College of Medicine (1989, M. D.). I completed a residency in internal medicine and a second residency in anesthesiology. I now practice anesthesiology.

I played trumpet in X-Row in the OSU Marching Band from 1981 to 1984.

I have been an active OSU Marching Band alumnus for decades. I participate in concerts, parades, alumni reunion games, and even have traveled to underprivileged high school band rooms to encourage minority and underprivileged students to participate in music programs at The Ohio State University. I am fiercely proud of our university and would do anything to uphold the honor of the institution and promote its mission. I mentor undergraduate and medical school students and host students from The Ohio State University College of Medicine for clinical rotations in anesthesiology.

Two of my sons are currently trumpet players in the Ohio State University Marching Band. I know of no other organization that offers so much and provides such a safe environment as that of the OSU Marching Band. If my 17-year-old daughter played a brass or percussion instrument, I would not think twice about encouraging her try out and become a member of The Ohio State University Marching Band.

I understand that The Ohio State University is looking for facts that support Jonathan Waters’ case to be reinstated. There are scores of facts available starting with several hundred current marching band members. Then there are the thousands of marching band alumni. They should all be given the chance to be interviewed just as the extremely few number of individuals who complained were given the chance to speak.

As a band parent of four years and a band alumnus, I have spent countless hours over the past two decades at the stadium band room and with the band at home and on the road. I personally witnessed Jonathan Waters’ improvements in the band culture even during the short time he has been director.

I wholeheartedly believe that Jonathan Waters should be reinstated as director of The Ohio State University Marching Band. He is most assuredly the right person for the job and is part of the solution, not the problem.
Please provide me with confirmation that you received my letter and your feedback on my comments.

I request to be interviewed because I have relevant information regarding this investigation.

Respectfully,

Norman A. Smyke, Jr., M.D.
1636 Roundwyck Lane
Powell, Ohio 43065
614-557-3520
nsmyke@me.com
John R. Kasich  
Governor, State of Ohio  
77 South High Street  
30th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  

August 18, 2014  

Dear Mr. Kasich,  

The current Ohio State University Marching Band Director scandal has affected my family and myself. Two of my sons are in the Ohio State University Marching Band this year. I am an active marching band alumnus.  

As a taxpayer of the State of Ohio, I feel very disappointed by the actions of the President of The Ohio State University and by the Board of Trustees in the firing of the band director, Jonathan Waters. The flawed Glaros Report and the refusal of the president and the trustees to even consider a fair defense of Mr. Waters is deplorable.  

My sons and I have been made to feel humiliated and harassed because of the negativity of the situation. Colleagues and coworkers asking personal questions about the situation in public has affected me professionally.  

I feel that the Governor’s office needs to be aware of the impact of this situation upon loyal Ohio taxpayers and OSU alumni as well as current students of our renown state university. I have included below text from my letters that were sent to Betty Montgomery, Chris Glaros, Archie Griffin, Dr. Michael Drake, and the OSU Board of Trustees. Thus far, the only response I have received has been a form letter from Archie Griffin.  

Dear ________,  

I am a graduate of The Ohio State University College of Arts and Sciences (1985, B. S.) and The Ohio State University College of Medicine (1989, M. D.). I completed a residency in Internal medicine and a second residency in Anesthesiology. I now practice Anesthesiology.  

I played trumpet in X-Row in the OSU Marching Band from 1981 to 1984. I give the marching band a huge amount of credit for helping me get into medical school. The band taught me how to manage my time and showed me value of pushing oneself to the limit in order to succeed! I studied alongside friends who went into medicine themselves and remain good friends with them to this day.  

I have multiple administrative, clinical, and research duties as part of my practice and I am well trained and very experienced in diversity and inclusion as well as respect and tolerance not just for patients but for all associates in health systems. I am very outspoken and would aggressively target any infringement upon these essential ideals.
I have been an active OSU Marching Band alumnus for decades. I participate in concerts, parades, alumni reunion games, and even have traveled to underprivileged high school band rooms to recruit minority and underprivileged students to participate in music programs at The Ohio State University. I am fiercely proud of our university and would do anything to uphold the honor of the institution and promote its mission. I mentor undergraduate and medical school students and host students from The Ohio State University College of Medicine for clinical rotations in anesthesiology.

For the past four years, my wife (an OB/Gyn physician) and I have traveled with the band as parents. We have seen the band members "behind the scenes" on buses, in hotels, in restaurants, and in other places. We have witnessed nothing but the respectful, dignified behavior that is seen when the musicians are in full uniform in public. Jon Waters has a very effective agenda of diversity and inclusion and is more successful than leaders of many other organizations of all sizes. He is a man of integrity, honesty, and a burning desire to achieve perfection in all aspects of the marching band; individual student success, positive representation of the university, as well as performance. If Jon were an anesthesiologist, I would welcome him to be one of my partners without hesitation.

Two of my sons are currently trumpet players in the Ohio State University Marching Band. I know of no other organization that offers so much and provides such a safe environment as that of the OSU Marching Band. If my 17-year-old daughter played a brass or percussion instrument, I would not think twice about encouraging her try out and become a member of The Ohio State University Marching Band.

I wholeheartedly believe that Jonathan Waters should be reinstated as director of The Ohio State University Marching Band.

Please provide me with confirmation that you received my letter and your feedback on my comments.

I request to be interviewed because I have relevant information regarding the investigation.

Respectfully,

Norman A. Smyke, Jr., M.D.
1636 Roundwyck Lane
Powell, Ohio 43065
614-557-3520
nsmyke@me.com

Thank you so very much for your time, Mr. Kasich

Sincerely,

Norman Smyke
Charles David Spohn (Son of Former OSUMB Director
Charles Spohn)

Posted by WeStandWithJonWaters WebAdmin 32sc on August 04, 2014

Letter to the Editor, Columbus Dispatch CHARLES DAVID SPOHN (CDSPOHN)

While I was never a member of the marching band, I enjoyed the gift of being raised around the band while my father served as both the Assistant Director and Director of the OSUMB. While there are clearly issues that must be addressed within the culture of the organization, I do NOT support the firing of Director Waters...

In many respects, I think Director Waters has already proven to have a commitment to improving the organization...as has been easily seen and heard in the tremendous results during the OSUMB's performances while he has served as director. I also firmly trust the opinions expressed by many current and former bandmembers that Director Waters was beginning to make headway in regards to improvements behind the scenes. I respectfully ask that the university reconsider the dismissal of Director Waters in favor of allowing him a probationary period during which he can fully institute the changes that are deemed appropriate by The Ohio State University. While I realize there are likely elements which would prefer to see a wholesale cleaning of the house within the leadership of the band, I am of the firm belief that because there are many honored traditions and cultural elements of the band which are worth preserving...as well as those which have no place in ANY organization at Ohio State...the best possible instrument for change is the former bandmember and most recent director who has devoted nearly two decades of his life to the OSUMB, the university, and to those of us who hold both organizations quite dear.
To whom it may concern:

> I am writing on behalf of my good friend and colleague Jon Waters, and the students, both past and present, of the Ohio State University Marching Band..

> I want you to be mindful that my association with the band dates back to 1974. At that time, I was hired as a musical arranger and I have remained on the staff until present day. I have served under Paul Droste, Jon Woods and Jon Waters. I consider all three gentlemen to be outstanding educators and, because of their great leadership, the band has always been recognized as one of the premiere programs in the country. Certainly, under the direction of Jon Waters and his staff, the popularity of the band has risen to an all-time high. Jon's innovations regarding animated show design is an accomplishment that has received worldwide attention and his appointment as the director of the band was well justified and richly deserved.

> Another attribute of great leadership is the responsibility of the staff and its director to serve as role-models while instilling behavioral attitudes that promote group success. When Jon Waters took over, I was impressed at how quickly he had established an exemplary pattern of behavior in the band with regard to group pride in a positive context. It was apparent from the beginning, and it has continued to blossom under his leadership.

> I, like many others associated with the band, am insulted and deeply hurt over recent accusations of negative conduct within the band program. Furthermore, as we are all discovering, the allegations are proving to be a gross misrepresentation of facts. Jon Waters is a good man that deserves better treatment. An entire nation of Ohio State Alumni are questioning the wisdom - and motivation - that is being displayed by our newly appointed President and his administrative associates. The sooner this is fixed, the better! Reinstating Jon Waters would be the right thing for Ohio State to do.

> James Swearingen
> OSUMB
> Arranging Staff
> 1974-2014
August 13, 2014

Mr. Chris Giaros
Assistant Vice President of Compliance Operations and Investigations
The Office of University Compliance and Integrity
1534 N. High Street
Columbus, OH 43201

Dear Mr. Giaros:

I'm sure that you have been receiving several letters and emails over the last several days, some of which are multiple pages long. I understand that you are very busy and reading through all of this correspondence is certainly extremely difficult. I hope, however, that you will take a few moments to read and consider what I have to say; in fact if I may be so bold, I believe you owe me a few minutes of your time. This is in consideration of the fact that you cited my experiences in your report regarding the culture of The Ohio State University Marching Band without first allowing me the opportunity to confirm, deny, or clarify any of the information pertaining to me. Even so, I will try to be respectful of your time by keeping this as brief as possible. Despite the rollercoaster of emotions this whole ordeal has put me through, my primary objective in writing you this letter is to clear up some factual inaccuracies that were included in your final report. The specific statements I would like to focus on and my accompanying commentary are as follows:

- Your report claimed that the meaning behind my "sexually explicit" nickname could be found on websites like UrbanDictionary.com (footnote on page 5). This is not true. I have read through every definition of this word on Urban Dictionary and not one of them comes close to the actual meaning behind my nickname. In actuality the first definition listed, which I'm assuming is the one you believed to be correct, is far more explicit than the real meaning behind my name. This is troubling to me because the majority of my social network knows me by this nickname, and most of those people did not know there was a meaning behind it at all - not because I'm ashamed or embarrassed but because it simply never came up as a question. But now that this report has been published without my input I have been forced to busy myself with damage control by explaining to friends and family that the name I have used proudly for the last 5 years does not actually refer to a sex position. They were misled by the report to believe otherwise, which was completely unnecessary and very much unappreciated.

- To try and prove that Jonathan Waters was enabling a "sexualized culture" within the marching band your report claimed that he regularly used my nickname to address me, especially when he was upset (page 6). This is also inaccurate. He regularly referred to me only as Jeanette, which was typical of the way he addressed all of his students. Additionally, I struggle to remember a time he was ever
outwardly upset with me; so the notion that he used my nickname as some form of discipline is simply untrue.

- Lastly, your report claimed that as a “rookie trick” the upperclassmen forced me to rub chests with another female member of the band (page 7). This is yet another inaccuracy. First and foremost, this was not a rookie trick. At no time were we asked or told by the senior members of the band to perform this action. This anecdote was presented in such a way that made it sound sexual and degrading, when in reality it was no more than a goofy shimmy done by two girls standing side by side, often to comedic effect due to our vastly different body types. It was two friends acting silly with one another, with the sole intent of making others laugh. Most importantly, it was done off-campus and of our own accord. Because of how this was portrayed in your report, the media (and as a result the public) is now under the impression that female rookies were made to perform similar “sexual acts” in order to “earn” rookie names. This couldn’t be further from our actual experience. In fact it has become glaringly apparent that the individual who described this to the investigators did not have an understanding of the close and trusting relationships we maintained with our rows, or who we are as people for that matter. Anyone with any knowledge of Alexandra and myself would know that we would never tolerate being subjected to harassment of any kind, sexual or otherwise; and luckily for us, we never had to.

Mr. Glaros, I understand that you had a job to do and I’m willing to believe that you had good intentions in writing and submitting this report. As a young professional who is early into a career in Human Resources, I understand this responsibility and I do not take lightly that my decisions and actions can have an influence on the decision to terminate a person’s employment. When assisting with investigations it is my job to be as objective as possible, thoughtfully consider all sides, and make a recommendation based on the information I have; and if it ever comes to light that my information was incomplete and resulted in the wrong decision being made, I like to think that I would have the courage and integrity to take responsibility for that and do everything in my power to right those wrongs. I sincerely hope that you are willing to do the same.

I formally request written confirmation that you received my letter, as well as specific feedback regarding its contents. My email address is provided above if that is your preferred method of communication.

Our Honor Defend,

Jeanette

Jeanette “Tiggles” Town
S-Row, 2009-2011
Former OSU Marching Band Member Mentioned in Report Speaks Out

BAND SCANDAL: Former OSU Marching Band Member Mentioned in Report Speaks Out - WSYX - Columbus, Ohio Top Stories - Breaking News, Weather, and Traffic

DOWNTOWN COLUMBUS (James Jackson) -- We're hearing from a former member of The Ohio State University's marching band. Former band director, Jon Waters, was terminated earlier this week, after a report saying he allowed a culture of sexual harassment.

ABC 6/FOX 28 talked to a woman, who is identified with a sexually explicit nickname in the university's 23 page report. She did not want to be identified. "The people who gave me this name were the same people who taught me and coached me for a whole summer, who gave me pep talks when I thought I just wasn't going to cut it, who became and still are my best friends and a family to me," the woman said.

She goes on to say the name was not shameful or sexist, but a preferred name. Now, she says she feels objectified and sexualized from the way the university and media handled the situation. "And despite being mentioned several times in this report, not once was an attempt made by any on the investigating team to contact me and find out if anything that was being written about me was accurate," the woman said.

The woman adds, Waters never referred to her as her nickname, only her first name.

OSU's marching band and the Columbus Symphony Orchestra performed at Picnic with the Pops, Saturday night, in the Columbus Commons. As the crowd gathered, a plane flew a banner over the event, saying, "We Stand With Jon." Kyle Hudson started a campaign on the website, indiegogo.com, taking donations for the banner. He says they met their financial goal in two hours.

As the pilot flew the banner over the event, the crowd clapped. ABC 6/FOX 28 talked to band members parents in the crowd. Scott Mills says this year will mark his son's third year in the band. "I thought it was great. We saw everybody pointing and we looked up there and it was like. Jon's a great guy and the kids are devastated," Mills said.

Mills says Waters was a good band director and made the group better. "With Jon, the last two years have been so different. That it is getting better. That sure, you know. They're college kids for God sakes," Mills said.

Also at Picnic with the Pops, Waters' supporters passed around signs saying, "We Stand With Jon," while the bands played.
Leigh VanHandel, Ph.D.

As a female alumna of the Ohio State Marching Band (1989-1991), I find myself compelled to
join what I'm sure is a large chorus of voices you have heard recently regarding the firing of Jon
Waters. I find his dismissal to be a short-sighted decision, and one made based on a
sensationalized and one-sided view of an organization.

I'm saddened by all of the conclusions that people and the media are jumping to. In an effort to
sensationalize the story, the band is being referred to as “hypersexualized” and “misogynistic”.
There are implications, if not outright assertions, that female students were routinely made to do
things they felt uncomfortable doing, and that they were treated poorly by other ensemble
members and by the staff. That was absolutely not my experience in the marching band.

In my three years in the marching band, I never once felt pressured to do anything I was not
comfortable with. The first year I made the band, I was told about the Midnight Ramp tradition,
and told that if I chose to attend, I could wear whatever I was comfortable with. What I chose to
wear provided as much coverage as if I was wearing a tank top and loose-fitting shorts. It was a
celebration and bonding experience with the 224 other people with whom I had just spent two
grueling tryout days. Nobody forced me to go, and there were members of my row who, for their
own reasons, did not attend. I also never felt as though the environment was anything other than
what would normally happen if you put 225 healthy, intelligent, and creative 18-22 year olds
together in a group.

I enjoyed my time in TBDBITL immensely; I learned discipline, teamwork, and responsibility in
that band. I was given the opportunity to work on arrangements for the band, and for some of the
small ensembles, and that helped to foster a love of music in me that led me to eventually get my
Ph.D degree in music theory from Stanford University. (I now am an Associate Professor of
Music Theory at Michigan State University.) I have said many times that I am actually prouder
of trying out for and making the OSU marching band than I am of my Ph.D. degree.

A culture cannot be changed overnight; it takes time, and most importantly it takes the members
of the culture having respect for the leadership. It is my understanding that Jon Waters was
successfully addressing some of the elements within the band culture. The band members respect
Jon Waters, and given time and the proper support from the university, I believe he would have
been able to enact changes in the band culture that would have preserved the unique character of
the ensemble and brought it into line with 21st century sensibilities. Instead, Jon is being
punished for a culture that was in place far before he was even a member of the ensemble, much
less its director, and is not being given the opportunity to continue to raise the level of excellence
of the ensemble. I believe the decision to fire him was short-sighted, and is not in the best
interest of the ensemble or of the university.

Respectfully,

Leigh VanHandel, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Music Theory, Michigan State University
July 30, 2014

Jeffery Wadsworth, Chair
The Ohio State University Board of Trustees
210 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Dear Mr. Wadsworth:

I can honestly say that the five years I spent as a member of the Ohio State University Marching Band made me the person that I am today. I first became aware of the band when I was about nine years old. My older brother had just graduated from high school and subsequently became a member of this organization. I would listen to all of the band's albums and memorized the words to Across the Field, Buckeye Battle Cry, Hang On Sloopy, and Carmen Ohio.

When my brother would come home for a visit, if he happened to have his OSUMB uniform with him, I would always try on the hat, the spats, and the crossbelts. I also thought it was kind of cool when my brother, a music major who played tuba and Sousaphone, got to dot the I in Script Ohio. By that time I was almost 13 years old and understood a little more about what the band meant to the University and so many Buckeye fans around the world.

Despite my knowledge of the band, I had no aspirations to be a part of it. At that age, the thought of going to college was the furthest thing from my mind. It stayed that way for many years. I was a decent student in high school. I rarely brought home any homework, put little effort into studying, and was regularly pulling grades of B or C in core classes. I was in my school music program and participated in orchestra, jazz band, concert band, symphonic band, wind ensemble, and marching band. I earned straight A's in all of those classes. I played the tuba and Sousaphone, just like my brother.

As a past member of the OSU marching band, my brother obtained tickets for the September 10, 1983, football game against Oregon. This also was the game at which the alumni band would be performing. My brother was marching that day, so he gave the tickets to me and my father so we could enjoy the game. I remember my brother telling us, “Whatever you do, don't miss the band's Skull Session.”

I'm sure you’ve been to a Skull Session and are familiar with the format. Following the band's entrance into the arena and a few activities to pump up the audience, the band begins its session with a warm up. In keeping with tradition, the first song they play is the school fight song, Across the Field. They begin the piece slowly and quietly. They performed the music at this reduced tempo and volume “one time through” until it's time to repeat the song. At this point, the band kicks into full tempo and volume. With the playing of a single note (a B-flat for the Sousaphones), my life changed forever.
My God. What just happened? I was hit by an incredible wall of sound that transformed me from a directionless, 17-year-old kid starting his senior year of high school into someone who had to be part of that band. The football game was secondary. It was that moment—that note—that caused me to set a challenging goal for myself. I wanted to go to Ohio State and try out for the band the following fall.

Besides getting accepted to OSU, the most important thing I had to do was convince my mom that I could do it. My track record as a student said otherwise. I shared my plan with my mom as soon as I returned home from the game. She said, “Are you sure? I always saw you attending somewhere like Cuyahoga Community College.”

Ouch. “Tri C” as it was known didn’t have the best reputation as a challenging place to learn. Kids in school called it “Tri High” because of its perception as nothing more than a continuation of high school. This is where the bargaining with mom started. I promised to work harder than ever my senior year of high school, and then we’d see about applying to OSU. With a little extra effort, I nearly pulled straight A’s my entire senior year. Seems a B or two snuck in there along the way, but I at least proved to my mom that I could put forth the effort to get good grades. She agreed that I could apply to OSU and, assuming I’d be accepted, try out for the marching band. Then came the ultimatum: “You can go, but if you don’t make the band next year, you’re coming back home to attend Tri C.” Panic and motivation set in simultaneously.

Making the band as a freshman isn’t easy. Each year there are more than 400 students who try out for one of the 225 spots. Even veteran members must try out annually to retain their place in the band. Now, even though returning members have to try out each year to retain their membership in the band, it’s almost a given that they’ll be marching the next year. However, there are no guarantees; I’ve witnessed veteran members lose their spot in the band during tryouts.

I don’t recall exactly how the numbers worked out, but I remember my odds of making the band weren’t very good. In addition to freshman trying out for the first time, there were older students returning who hadn’t made the band in prior attempts. Assuming all of the returning Sousaphone players would retain their spot, there was something like 20 people competing for four or five open positions. The two days of tryouts were grueling. They always have been and I hope they always will be. The days are filled with marching drills, practicing music, conditioning, and memory busters in which long sequences of marching steps are shared once, maybe twice, before you must perform them from memory.

The second day of tryouts is when cuts begin. After the morning session, the first round of cuts occurs. I was as nervous as I’d ever felt. All of the candidates gathered in the band room and the list of those not making the cut was read. During tryouts you’re a number, not a name. My heart sank as I heard, or at least thought I heard, my number called. I went into the room where those who are cut receive a brief message of consolation and encouragement to come back next year. I gave them my number to get my walking papers, and it turns out I wasn’t on the list. I had actually made it past first cuts. I remember it plain as yesterday: “Get back out there...you’re not on the list...hustle!”
Following afternoon tryouts on day two, members break for dinner and to get cleaned up before returning that night for the announcement of who made the band. Everyone gathered again in the band room and the director began reading the numbers of those who had earned a spot in what many believe to be the greatest college marching band in the country. It was finally time to read the numbers of the Sousaphone rows. Little by little my confidence wavered as the numbers were called. Halfway through and my number still had not been called. I started preparing myself for the inevitable. Goodbye TBDBITL, hello Tri High. Out of 28 numbers called for the Sousaphone row, mine was the very last to be read. Relief and elation set in. I called my brother first, then I called my mom. Those are two conversations I will never forget.

I started as an alternate and eventually earned a regular spot in the band. I marched five seasons, the maximum allowed, and graduated six months after my final ramp entrance into Ohio Stadium. I memorized hundreds of pieces of music and drills. I went to the Rose Bowl, Citrus Bowl and Cotton Bowl. I played for presidents. I played with a pep band at Earl Bruce’s house when he was fired as the head football coach. I performed in countless parades and concerts for fans around the country. I marched up the 18th fairway of Muirfield Village Golf Club and played the national anthems of every country represented during opening ceremonies of the 1987 Ryder Cup golf matches. I was named a Squad Leader by my peers and proudly served in that role my last two years in the band. I got to “Dot the I” three times in Script Ohio, one of the greatest honors in the band and the greatest of all traditions in college football. I had a new group of brothers and sisters who cared about each other, watched out for one another and worked together toward a common goal. I learned leadership skills. I learned to respect authority. I learned humility. I learned graciousness. I learned punctuality. I learned how important it was to become involved. I learned that hard work is the way to get what you desire in life. I’ve been to weddings of bandmates, smiled at birth announcements and learned just how much it hurts when one of your former bandmates is taken from this world far too young.

The OSU Marching Band began in 1878 as a military band and consisted entirely of males until 1973. Did some of the reported “culture” exist when I was in band from 1984-88? Sure (my nickname was “Bob Hope,” by the way), but it was not the predominant culture. If I didn’t want to participate in something, I simply said “no” and my decision was honored. I was never forced to do anything I didn’t want to do. I was never “sworn to secrecy” or forced to take such an oath. Here’s the thing that perhaps some people don’t understand. I and every one of my band brothers and sisters reserve the right to choose what we share about our respective band experience with anyone, be they family, friend or stranger. Those experiences are what give us a special bond. When we meet someone who we discover also was in the band, we introduce ourselves by name and, more importantly, by row number. Through this commonality we treat each other as though we’ve been lifelong friends. How firm thy friendship.

Many of our alumni hold amazing credentials and lead distinguished careers in their chosen profession. The band repeatedly has proven itself capable of transforming young men and women into responsible adults and leaders in our society. Clearly it is capable of transforming itself, but deep-rooted traditions do not change overnight, and they do not change simply because someone says they have to. The change must be organic.
Though some traditions are a century old, we’re in a different day and age. Just because a tradition has existed for a long time doesn’t mean it’s right by the standards of the day. If anything, more should be done to help young, impressionable students – regardless of the organization in which they are involved – understand what those standards are. I guarantee the vast majority wouldn’t have a clue because that’s not what 18, 19 and 20-somethings are tuned into at this age.

Traditions have come and gone from the organization. As I understand it, work was being done to eliminate some of the more questionable ones and build that culture of understanding when news of Jon Waters’ firing broke. To me, it’s somewhat ironic that the man who was trying to make this change, and whom the students trusted and respected to lead them through this change, is now gone. The positive, international reputation earned by the band last year was erased in a matter of seconds. Many of us alumni are watching and waiting to see what happens next.

Members of the TBDBITL Alumni Club are proud of their involvement with the OSUMB. If the University deems that it is time for a change in the culture of the band, then engage us. We are the individuals who paved the way for current members. We are no longer college students. We are adults with an understanding of the need for change and the skill sets to help make it happen. You will not find a group of individuals more interested and willing to do what is necessary to maintain the integrity of the band’s reputation and tradition of excellence.

The Ohio State University Marching Band is not the organization being portrayed in national headlines, radio sound bites or TV reports. It’s an organization that sets high expectations, prides itself on excellence, and gives students an opportunity to grow as musicians and young adults. Without it, I wouldn’t be the person I am today. I wish the same experience for everyone who decides to pursue their dream of one day becoming part of it. It has been and will remain The Best Damn Band In The Land.

Thank you for your time. I request confirmation that this letter was received and I request feedback from the Board of Trustees on this letter.

Sincerely,

Gregory D. Viebranz
KL Row 1984-88

CC: Ronald Ratner, Vice Chair; Alex Shumate, Vice Chair; Algenon Marbley; Linda Kass; Janet Reid; W. G. Jurgensen; Clark C. Kellogg; Timothy Smucker; Cheryl Krueger; Michael Gasser; Brent Porteous; Erin Hoeflinger; Alex Fisher; Abigail Wexner; G. Gilbert Cloyd; Corbett A. Price; Alan VanderMolen; Stacie Seger; Steven Loborec
Robert L. Windle
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August 16, 2014

President Michael Drake
The Ohio State University
205 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall
Columbus, OH 43210

President Drake:

At this point, I am certain that you and your office have been showered with letters in support of Jon Waters and his reinstatement as Director of the Ohio State University Marching Band (OSUMB). Having seen many of these letters, I am impressed with the analysis, the depth and the passion that has gone into them. I am not sure what I can add that distinguishes my thoughts from others.

My first Saturday to march into Ohio Stadium was as a freshman Sousaphone player on my 18th birthday, September 28th, 1957. Next month I will be 75 years old and I am as proud of the OSUMB today as I was on that distant day in 1957. I spent four years in the OSUMB, served as a Squad Leader in 1960, served as President of Kappa Kappa Psi, Eta Chapter (the national band honorary fraternity) in 1960-61, and was one of three Sousaphone players featured on the October 13, 1958 issue of Sports Illustrated. I am a charter member of TBDBITL Alumni Club, Life Member of the OSU Alumni Association, and served two three year periods since 2005 on the Board of Directors of the OSU Alumni Club of Greater Cleveland.

Sadness and disappointment were my initial reactions when I read the Glaros Report and learned of the decision to fire Jon Waters. Then, anger came after that as more information surfaced. I feel as though I have made several rounds through the grief cycle since July 24th, but the one thing I cannot accommodate is acceptance. I feel the Glaros Report is deeply flawed and that the absence of any sense of due process for Jon Waters is totally lacking. As I begin to write this letter, I hear that the Board of Trustees will not consider Jon Waters’ request to consider reinstatement. The University’s handling of this is sad beyond words. If the goal was to get rid of Jon Waters at all costs for stated or unstated reasons, there are several ways it could have been done without dragging his name through the mud and stripping him of his dignity. I have worked in higher education for several years and am no stranger to the machinations and the power plays that can occur in academe. Sadly, my alma mater has taken human resource management to a new depth.
I'm not sure what I can add to the one-way dialogue that has occurred. I seriously doubt anyone will actually "read" what I have said or that these words will make any difference. I will assume, though, that maybe somewhere in the bowels of OSU, an administrative assistant just might tally these letters and to that degree I want my voice to be counted. At least I can rest knowing I tried to make myself heard.

When my 75th birthday rolls around next month, I will fondly recall marching that first football game on my 18th birthday and the pride of being a member of the OSUMB that I will carry to my last day. Unfortunately, my pride in The Ohio State University has diminished because of its refusal to acknowledge the possibility that perhaps it acted in haste. I have always defended OSU when it is accused of being "too big"; the handling of the Glaros Report leads me to realize just how really "small" it has become.

Our honor defend,

Robert L. Windle, MA, LPC, GCDF  
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, 1961 – The Ohio State University  
OSUMB 1957-1960; Squad Leader, 1960  

Copies:
Mr. Blake Thompson, Secretary of the Board of Trustees  
Mr. Chris Glaros, Esq.  
Ms. Betty Montgomery, Esq.  
Mr. David Axelrod, Esq.
General Letter from Some of the Women Alumnae of the OSUMB

http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2014/07/28/Ohio_State_band_alumni_march_for_Jon_Waters.html

As female alumnae of the Ohio State Marching Band, we would like to speak out against recent allegations against Jon Waters, the Director, and the organization of the marching band as a whole. We find the report on which his dismissal was based to be a sensationalized and one-sided view of an organization, and would like to contribute our views, as women and former bandmembers, to the conversation.

The official report consistently referred to a “sexualized” culture within the band, saying that the culture “facilitated acts of sexual harassment, creating a hostile environment for students.” The report also implied, if not outright asserted, that female students were routinely made to do things they felt uncomfortable doing, and that they were treated poorly by other ensemble members and by the staff. If the report had spoken with other female members of the band, or former members, the picture painted of interactions with band members and staff would have been strikingly different. The vast majority of female alumni did not have the experience described in the report; for us, the male members of the marching treated us as the equals we were. As strong, intelligent, athletic women, we did not need nor want to be treated in any other way; we did not need to be coddled or protected. And just like the male members, we were all told that we did not have to participate in any activities that made us feel uncomfortable.

A common thread running through many of the female alumnae’s recent comments regarding the band is that we are stronger, independent and more successful women because of our time in the band. We learned the value of hard work to make the band and maintain our spots, of teamwork in working with others, and learned to respect ourselves and others in conflicts to work things out when necessary.

The university’s report focused on the use of nicknames for first-year members of the band, highlighting twenty-one nicknames they deemed as “sexual.” What the report fails to consider and acknowledge, however, is that these nicknames are given to both males and females, are generally given with the consent of the nicknamee, and that the nicknames are not used in a derogatory fashion.

The report highlights two nicknames in particular: Tiggles and Joobs, erroneously cited in the report as “Jewoobs (given to a Jewish student with large breasts)”. It is surprising, given the report’s in-depth discussion of these nicknames and whether or not they were offensive, that nobody conducting the investigation contacted either of these women to inquire whether they took offense to the nicknames given to them, or whether any of the events reported by the complainants ever actually occurred.

Both women (Jeanette “Tiggles” Town and Alexandra “Joobs” Clark) have since penned eloquent responses to the report. Both ladies had the same reaction: their nicknames were given to them with their consent and approval, they were never offended by the names, the names were never used in a derogatory manner, and they were never (as was suggested in the report) used by
Jon Waters or the band staff. Most importantly, it was not until the publication of their nicknames in the university report that they felt objectified, sexualized, depersonalized, and violated – by the university itself, and by the general public. Why the author of the report felt the need to comment both on Alexandra’s religion and breast size, and why that information needed to be included in the public report, is beyond comprehension.

The Ohio State marching band is one of the very few organizations anywhere where men and women are held to the same exacting standards, both in terms of musical and physical performance. The use of Title IX to argue that Waters did not take actions to eliminate what the report deems “harassment” is a misapplication of Title IX, the goal of which appears to have been an attempt at a legal justification for the immediate dismissal of Waters.

The report states, “… only one witness stated that there had been transition in the culture of any kind.” The authors of the report interviewed a small number of people, all of whom apparently had some connection to the original complainant or were referred by other witnesses. That is not a representative sample, and is certainly not representative of the opinions of numerous band members, both male and female, who state that Jon Waters was making efforts to change the culture of the band from the time he was appointed as Assistant Director under Jon Woods. These opinions have been expressed to the media, on social networks, and in letters written to President Drake and others involved, and would have been available to the authors of the university report had anyone asked.

The report later states: “Intending to eliminate sexual harassment over a period of years does not constitute sufficiently prompt or effective action.” As any leader can tell you, it is impossible to change a culture immediately, and it is also impossible to change a culture by simply changing the leader. In order to change a culture, you have to have the respect of the culture, and to work within the culture to educate and reform practices. Jon Waters had the respect of the band members, and he was in a unique position to be able to effect change; however, he was not given the time or the institutional support from the university necessary to enact the changes in the band culture that would have preserved the character of the ensemble and brought it into line with 21st century sensibilities.

The manner in which he was fired, the release of the university report and the supporting material, and the media sensationalism that has followed, has destroyed not only Jon Waters’ reputation, but that of the band itself, its current and former members, and of the university. The decision to fire Jon Waters was short-sighted; it was not warranted, it was not what was best for the organization, and it was not what was best for the university.

We are female alumnae of The Ohio State Marching Band, and we Stand With Jon.
Act of kindness had lasting impact on lifetime Buckeyes

Saturday August 2, 2014 5:02 AM
Comments: 2 535 91 669

Last August, Jonathan Waters, then-director of the Ohio State University Marching Band, honored my wife, Phyllis Kaldor.

As she was dying of cancer, the band made her an honorary member of TBDBITL.

Gray Day is the band’s traditional final practice before the first home game. Last year on Gray Day, Waters let Phyllis dot the “i” inScript Ohio and then gathered the band around her and led the singing of Carmen Ohio.

In my 50 years at OSU, I have never experienced a more moving moment; even band members were crying.

At Phyllis’ funeral, marching-band members surprised us by showing up in uniform, together with Jon, who led them in closing the service with Carmen Ohio and the OSU fight song.

Their appearance was a surprise; we did not ask them to come, thinking that if we asked, there would be many more Buckeye fans who would love to have the band at their funerals.

Both Phyllis and I received all our degrees from OSU and worked at OSU since graduating more than 30 years ago. I was director of biostatistics for the OSU Comprehensive Cancer Center and Phyllis was Director of Nursing for the James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute.

To our family, Waters always has been caring and compassionate, a wonderful representative of our university. The image of him with Phyllis wielding his baton will forever be in our home and our hearts.

DONN C. YOUNG

Columbus
Letter to the editor: Ohio State Marching Band supports its LGBT members

July 30, 2014
Brian Gill
brian.gill.176@gmail.com

Letter to the editor:

As a five-year member of the Ohio State Marching Band (2005-09), I have been deeply upset by the recent events. I am writing, not to only show support for Jon Waters, but to address the overall culture of the group. Jon has been one of the main driving forces of change and inclusion for the band. I feel so strongly about the marching band and Jon Waters that I feel the need to step out of my comfort zone to show my support. As most of my close friends know, the issues I wish to address are not something I bring up in conversation or when I introduce myself to others. I am a son, a brother, a friend, a musician, a colleague, a Buckeye, and I’m gay. It is nothing I am ashamed of. It is part of me, not who I am.

I graduated from a small high school, in a conservative town in Ohio. I didn’t have much support before coming to OSU and didn’t really accept who I was until I was a member of the band. It was then when I found support and acceptance through members in the band. My row (Jr-Row/Percussion Section) became my closest friends and allies and, as stated by many others this weekend, my family. They supported me when I needed it, teased me as their brother when I did something stupid, and I did the same for them. I knew that I could count on any of them for guidance, support and acceptance. I could be who I was and it was perfectly fine; I felt safe.

The band is a melting pot of religion, political views, cultural beliefs and personal experiences. The band represents one of the most diverse student groups on campus in this aspect, as well as the variety of its members’ academic studies, ranging from accounting to zoology and everything in between. It would be a lie to say that I didn’t hear things that might have made me uncomfortable at times. I never once, however, felt like an outcast, harassed, disrespected, unsafe or unwelcome during my tenure in TBDBITL.

There have been many “traditions” that have been brought up, but the one I want to focus on is the “Unofficial Song Book” of the band. Did this booklet exist? Yes. Was it issued to all band members? Absolutely not. I saw this booklet maybe once or twice in my five years in the organization, rarely even getting a chance to look through its contents. It was always passed between student members with the purpose of ensuring that the directing staff didn’t know about it. If the staff did find one, they confiscated it immediately. While I’m not justifying the lyrics or even the fact that these books existed, because I know how offensive they are, I’m stating that this is a thing of the past. We did not sing these songs on the bus, mainly because most members have never even seen these lyrics or songs. In fact, the bus I was usually on would sing much different songs, usually more consistent to Broadway show tunes or Disney songs.

I want to state that the acceptance and inclusion of the LGBT community is not something that the OSU Marching Band struggles with; it is an issue that society in general struggles with. While we as a society have been moving forward, the OSU Marching Band has always been strides ahead in this matter. Most of the lyrics and songs were written many decades ago, when acceptance and inclusion were nowhere near where they are today. The band has even helped grow allies for the LGBT community. Many of the members also come from small towns and first meet and become friends with LGBT students during their time in the band. We are able to have open conversations with each other and answer any questions to help all parties feel more comfortable and included.
I want to ensure that future members and those interested in becoming a member of TBDBITL know they will be entering a safe environment, where they will be accepted and supported for who they are. I am speaking out to show support for this organization that has given me so much, as well as for Jon Waters, who has always been supportive of me and someone I call a good friend. I cherished each and every moment I had in band, from my first ramp entrance, my last game, and never, ever losing to "that school up north." I have never missed an opportunity to march with the TBDBITL Alumni because I loved every moment I had with my band family. I am extremely proud to call myself a TBDBITL Alumni and will continue to work as an alumnus to ensure that it remains a safe place for all its members.

Go Bucks!

Brian Gill
Class of 2009
OSU Marching Band member 2005-09
brian.gill.176@gmail.com
COLUMBUS, Ohio - A former Ohio State University Marching Band member, who is gay, said he never felt discriminated against during his years on the band.

Brian Gill was a member from 2005 to 2009 when Jon Waters was an assistant director.

Waters was fired on July 24 after a two-month investigation revealed a sexually-charged environment in the band and inappropriate rituals.

Among the accusations was the unofficial songbook with several songs that have anti-gay lyrics.

Gill said he only saw the songbook once or twice in his five years on the band. He said it was never handed out by the directing staff. It was only passed between the more senior members of the band.

Gill wrote an article supporting Waters that was published on the website Outsports.

He said other people have reached out to him since it was published, sharing the same sentiments.

"People who were in the band in the 80's and they've said the same thing, that the band has always been that melting pot of different cultures and religions and interests and hobbies and all of that stuff and it all comes together and we have always felt supported and we always have each other's back," said Gill.

Gill said he wants future members to know they are entering a safe environment where they will be welcomed for who they are.

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