

[RANDOM POSTER]

August 31, 2009

Dr. David B. Burks
President
Harding University
915 E. Market Ave.
Searcy, Arkansas 72143

Re: President George W. Bush and the Distinguished Lecture Series

Dear Dr. Burks:

As a 1998 graduate of Harding University ("Harding"), I am writing to express my profound disappointment in, and extreme displeasure at, Harding for its recent announcement that President George W. Bush will speak at Harding as part of the 2009-2010 Distinguished Lecture Series, and I ask that Harding consider rescinding its invitation.

President George W. Bush does not deserve the opportunity to speak at Harding. The man's entire life has been a complete disaster; his very survival has been based entirely on his ability to trade on his family's name and to ride his father's coattails. His presidency was an utter failure. As President of the United States, he politicized scientific research; presided over the worst security failure in the history of the United States; created the largest governmental bureaucracy in the history of this nation; ordered the invasion and military occupation of a sovereign nation on false pretenses; bungled the federal response to a foreseeable national disaster; nominated a wholly unqualified individual to the United States Supreme Court; submitted and signed budgets that dramatically increased the federal deficit and ultimately bankrupted the treasury; allowed for the torture of an unknown number of individuals; disregarded citizens' civil liberties; weakened this nation's global stature; and sent over 4,000 United States soldiers to the death. And yet Harding apparently believes that this man is worthy of a speaking engagement?

Sadly, I am not surprised that Harding would welcome such a disgraceful individual to speak on Harding's campus, given Harding's apparently recent slavish devotion to all things related to the Republican Party. Such affection and allegiance is unbecoming to an institution which is allegedly committed to the integration of faith, learning, and living and to the development of Christian scholarship. Harding cannot validly claim that it is achieving either of those goals when it, through the Distinguished Lecture Series and other programs, repeatedly invites only those to speak on campus with whom it shares the same general worldview and, by extension or otherwise, continually excludes dissenting viewpoints the opportunity to be heard.

Perhaps you would find it to be an honor for Harding to be considered in the same league of schools as Bob Jones University, Regent University, and other similar institutions which appear to pride themselves more on their insular, bigoted, and politically-leaning reputation than on

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their educational excellence or on the strength of any particular academic program. I, however, would not. Indeed, I fear that my degree from Harding is continually being cheapened each and every time that Harding aligns itself with, and actively supports or promotes, as it does by inviting President George W. Bush to speak on campus, certain individuals, policies, groups, or platforms more on the basis of their alleged political affiliation than on the basis of whether such persons or commentary are worthy of our attention, beneficial to society, or in keeping with the University's mission.

The abject failure of President George W. Bush's presidency has made him no longer worthy of our attention. His years of public service have amply demonstrated that his policies and beliefs are of limited benefit to society. And granting President George W. Bush the opportunity to speak at Harding does nothing to further Harding's mission. Rather, it simply re-affirms Harding's apparent and unfortunate desire to be viewed as a university where only Republican Party thought is praised and taught instead of as a university where all ideas and viewpoints are considered and explored. Harding's alumni, as well as Harding's current student body, deserve better than that.

Accordingly, for all of the above reasons, I respectfully request that Harding rescind its invitation to President George W. Bush.

Sincerely,

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