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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gallaudet's Fernandes wants all state deaf schools closed down, protesters say

At Gallaudet University, the world's only university for the deaf, in Washington DC, the president-elect, Jane Fernandes, who is scheduled to take office on Jan. 1, 2007, harbors a dangerous anti-philosophy of education, which is harmful to the emotional and intellectual well being of deaf students. Protesters are continuing in their two demands that she either step down or have her appointment rescinded, and that no reprisals be administered to the protesters.

(PressMethod) - Widespread shock and dismay has spread through the American deaf community, as details about Gallaudet President-elect Jane Fernandes's philosophy of deaf education becomes known and more fully understood.

An exhaustive analysis of policy statements made by Gallaudet officials in the past several years, plus information obtained from contact with administration insiders has shown that, in the event that Fernandes is able to survive the protests against her and become the next president of Gallaudet, she will continue policies that will lead to the permanent closure of all state residential schools for the deaf.

How Jordan and Fernandes hijacked the worldwide Deaf Culture Movement

In March of 1988, Irving King Jordan, Jr. was the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Gallaudet University. The Gallaudet Board of Trustees had chosen him to be a token representative of the deaf community in the group of three finalists, as the pool of applicants for the position of the seventh president of Gallaudet University was narrowed down.

When, as pre-planned, the nondeaf finalist, Elizabeth Zinser was announced as the Board's choice to be the next president of Gallaudet University, Jordan, by his own admission, went along with the administration's "party line" (a term he used) and he did not participate in nor lend his support to the Deaf President Now protest movement (the "DPN"). In fact, Jordan stood up at an assembly and actually endorsed Dr. Zinser's selection.

Immediately after that endorsement, Jordan began to discover that he had chosen to be on the wrong side of history. As he explained to the Washington Post at the time: "I talked to more than 50 people, and when I realized that I had misread the extent of the students' determination and the support base for their action, I came out for them...It became apparent that the focus was no longer on the students at Gallaudet--but that it was a national and international concern."

What is striking about the above confession is that Jordan seems not to have inquired about the substantive nature of the Deaf President Now protest movement, but was simply, in effect, wetting his finger and holding it up to see which way the political winds were blowing.

His quick and unexpected appointment to the presidency of Gallaudet took attention away from the nature of his prior beliefs. In the excitement created in finally having a deaf person chosen to be president of Gallaudet, no one seemed to want to dwell too much on the question of whether or not Jordan was actually knowledgeable enough of, or friendly enough toward, the idea of deaf culture to be able to step into the new and politically powerful role that the Deaf Culture Movement itself created.

In fact, Jordan failed to satisfy either of these criteria. Not only was he hostile to the idea of deaf culture, but he began a conscious campaign to actively fight against the continuation and growth of it and, in essence, hijack the Deaf Culture Movement in the United States, which he proceeded to convert into a political "disability rights" campaign.

The Beginning of Philosophy, Science and Modern Culture

It is somewhat appropriate to say that there exists a "Deaf Liberation Movement" in the United States, since the deaf have indeed been struggling to liberate themselves from oppressors who attempted to rob them of their humanity by forbidding them to use language in a form that is natural to them. But in order to liberate oneself, one must first concentrate on self-development.

Societies, like individuals, must first be born. They pass through various stages, including stages of adolescence, as they evolve and mature. Outstanding members of societies push their cultures to new heights and upwards to new levels of maturity. In ancient Greece, it was first Thales, and then his student Anaximander who introduced new ways of thinking about the world--systematic ways of asking questions about nature and the universe that sparked a revolution in human culture and civilization.

Other Greek thinkers pushed the new methods further, and the immensely important Western traditions of philosophy and science were born. Science suffered a setback during the long period of the Dark Ages in Europe, but then made a comeback centuries later when a "rebirth"--the "Renaissance"--took place.

Deaf people join the Greek-initiated Philosophy and Science Movement in world culture

It is also somewhat appropriate to say that the social movement surrounding the Deaf President Now campaign in America in 1988 represented a "Deaf Renaissance," since it is true that the Deaf Culture Movement suffered a setback as a result of decisions made by certain types of educators of the deaf at the conference in Milan, Italy in 1880.

Actually though, the Deaf Culture Movement was continuing to develop and grow in the United States, even though it had to be continued behind the backs of those certain types of pseudo-educators who would have it extinguished.

Laurent Clerc, himself deaf, served as an indispensable and key figure in the growth of the Deaf Culture Movement in the United States. He had been born and raised in France and he was educated at the famous school for the deaf in Paris that had been established in the 1760s by Charles-Michel de l'Epee.

On May 20, 1816, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, the man who had been chosen by community leaders to establish the first school for the deaf in America, had an important meeting with Laurent Clerc at the famous school for the deaf in Paris. As a result of that meeting, Clerc made the momentous decision to leave France and travel to the United States with Gallaudet, in order to assist in the establishment of the new school for the deaf in Hartford (which still exists to this day.)

The deaf community in France was the first deaf community to join the Greek-initiated Philosophy and Science Movement of world culture. Now, through the soon-to-be towering figure of Laurent Clerc, it was time to continue this development, i.e., the Deaf Culture Movement, as it began to expand and take on international dimensions.

The school for the deaf in Hartford, Connecticut was an incredible success. Thomas Gallaudet married a deaf woman and their son Edward became interested in the field of education. A philanthropist and cultured man in Washington, D.C. named Amos Kendall was involved in establishing a school for the deaf there. In 1857 he, along with the other directors, hired Edward Gallaudet, age 20, to be the first superintendent of the school.

Edward Gallaudet had set himself the goal of establishing a national college for the deaf, and in 1864, a bill was signed into law by Abraham Lincoln which authorized the school to grant college degrees. Thus the college, which eventually became known as "Gallaudet College," and later "Gallaudet University," was born.

Edward remained in close contact with Laurent Clerc, whom he had grown up emulating. Also, many teachers fluent in American Sign Language were hired. As a result, Gallaudet College grew to be the center of the Deaf Culture Movement in the United States.

Just as Edward Gallaudet had planned, teachers were graduating from the college and establishing schools for the deaf all over the United States. These residential schools for the deaf then acted as feeder schools for Gallaudet College. An incredible synergy of the activities of this cultural confluence was exploding on the American scene, as deaf people in America began to assume their rightful place in world history and assume the responsibilities of self-development and self-determination.

Edward Gallaudet followed in his father Thomas's footsteps and himself traveled to Europe in order to investigate new methods that were being developed to teach speaking skills to deaf students. He returned home with a favorable report and encouraged the idea of speech training for deaf students, so that the minority of deaf students who could benefit would not miss out on the chance.

A rival method in deaf education was started by Alexander Graham Bell. Gallaudet and Bell had much contact and they participated in many discussions, but Edward Gallaudet never wavered in his confidence in the effectiveness and beauty of the sign language that his students were using, with which they were experiencing great results. Many deaf students were graduating from Gallaudet College and taking their place in society, right alongside their hearing peers, in important and worthwhile career paths.

Gallaudet College grew and took its rightful place amongst the world's most prestigious institutions of higher learning. In the Sorbonne, the French language is spoken, as French students use their native language in the development of their own culture, and as the Sorbonne plays its role in Western culture and world culture in general. At Oxford University the students and faculty speak English. At the Freie Universität in Berlin they speak German. At the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México they speak Spanish. At Gallaudet the faculty and students use American Sign Language for lectures and discussions, as well as the English language for reading and writing.

What is now called "American Sign Language" blossomed and came into full form at Gallaudet, Hartford, and at other locations in the U.S. It has successfully taken its place alongside the world's other great languages. Since deaf Americans live in an English-speaking society, Gallaudet University has always been a bilingual institution of higher learning.

One would not think it reasonable to go to France and ask the professors to accommodate someone who was struggling in the French language. It is up to that person to quickly immerse himself in the French culture and learn to speak French. The same principle applies at Gallaudet. Everyone has always been welcome, however it is assumed and understood that they will respect and appreciate Gallaudet's historic role as the center of the Deaf Culture Movement in the United States (and now also the center of the Deaf Culture Movement worldwide.)

Why deaf culture is often misunderstood

In 1964, an advisory committee was formed to study deaf education in America. The chairman was Dr. Homer D. Babbidge, Jr., the President of the University of Connecticut. Even though there was not a single representative from Gallaudet on the committee, and even though the committee was composed of professionals who were not fluent in American Sign Language and who also did not understand Gallaudet's historic role as being the center of the Deaf Culture Movement, and even though the members of the committee did not understand the true nature of the Deaf Culture Movement, the committee still reported accurately the following:

"In fact, in the course of hundreds of conversations by the staff [of the committee] not a single person [in the field of deaf education in the United States] was encountered who did not agree with the desirability of oral instruction for young deaf children."

Such a statement by such a committee should forever put to rest the false accusation that the Deaf Culture Movement is an exclusionary one. In fact, the Babbidge Committee correctly indicates that it is instead the proponents of the oral method for educating the deaf who are the "purists." The implication is clear.

The truth is that the Deaf Culture Movement, like most modern cultures, has been an inclusive movement which welcomes all comers. In most all countries where deaf people have formed communities and developed natural languages, everyone is invited to learn that particular signed language and participate in that local culture (be it French Sign Language, British Sign Language, etc.)

In America, deaf people of various backgrounds flock to Gallaudet, as they have done for 150 years, to learn American Sign Language and deaf culture, as a vehicle for a speedier, fuller and more effective educational process. Compromises must be made, because not all professors are deaf and not all are highly proficient in American Sign Language, but the historic role of Gallaudet as the center of the Deaf Culture Movement in the United States has remained unchanged.

Gallaudet University has a long and prestigious record of broadminded acceptance of peoples of all cultures, and is well known for its recognition that authentic human language is the proper vehicle for enabling conceptual thought and learning, and that knowledge and the development of professional and academic skills should be the ultimate goals of a university.

Jordan and Fernandes's deception

For eighteen years, Irving King Jordan, Jr. has taken advantage of the already inclusive nature of deaf culture, while viciously attempting to label those who promote it as being unreasonable "militants."

Jordan has successfully accomplished his goal of temporarily hijacking the Deaf Culture Movement in the United States and he has held it hostage for the entire eighteen years of his administration at Gallaudet, continuing every year to put on his dog and pony show before Congress, and flaunting his deaf voice in order to play on the sympathy of Congressmen who are led to view deafness as an unfortunate medical condition, and are then misled into seeing deafness as being mainly a disability issue.

Over the eighteen years of his administration, Jordan's salary has grown to be more than the salary of the President of the United States, while the quality of education at Gallaudet and its success at educating its students has significantly decreased.

Jordan is very aware that his advocacy for the creation, passage and implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act has led to the phenomenon of increasing numbers of deaf students attending local schools and universities, thereby taking a different path than many deaf students before them who assimilated themselves into the Deaf Culture Movement by attending state residential schools for the deaf.

Jordan has helped to bring about this situation and he has watched it happen and done nothing about it, in spite of the fact that the majority of deaf students who take this path are frustrated in their efforts, and their emotional and intellectual growth, as Jordan very well knows, is put at severe risk.

It is abundantly clear that he misunderstands the true nature of the Deaf Culture Movement and its place in Western Civilization. Out of ignorance, he marginalizes it and incorrectly characterizes the entire movement based on the actions of a very few people, whom he terms "militants." It is clear that in doing so, he is falling victim to the common phenomenon of psychological projection. When Jordan says: "You are a militant," what he really means is: "I (Jordan) am a militant."

Yes, it is true that Jordan has been a militant in his hijacking of the Deaf Culture Movement. This has been proven by recent events, in the unfair and immoral shepherding of Jane Fernandes in her career, and in the behind-the-scenes manipulations of the members of the Presidential Search Committee and the Board of Trustees in their recent selection of Fernandes to be the next President of Gallaudet (which is scheduled to be effective on January 1, 2007.) Jordan has repeated his mantra again and again: "Deaf people can do anything but hear." Others may use the saying honestly and wisely, but coming from Jordan, what it really means is this: "Disabled people who have auditory problems need a lot of help from the taxpayers of the United States and Congress in order to try to blend in and be more like their normal hearing neighbors." This is the true nature of Jordan's rhetoric, as is clearly shown by his actions.

Universities are inclusive by definition

The term "university" in English comes from the Latin word "universitas," which means "the whole," or "the universe," or "the world." In light of this fact, we come to an examination of Gallaudet's recent and current policy (written in 2005) called "Gallaudet University Strategic Goals." The document goes to the altogether redundant and completely unnecessary lengths of specifying that Gallaudet is an "inclusive" university.

We must ask the obvious question: Is there any other kind of university? And if no other type of university is conceivable, what is the true purpose of including that language in that policy statement?

Also, looking backward one year and examining the Gallaudet document "New Directions for Academic Affairs" (March 12, 2004) we see the following:

QUOTE:

Priority 3.1: Preserve Gallaudet's rich cultural heritage and promote the study and appreciation of Deaf culture, Deaf history, and American Sign Language.

UNQUOTE

Yet when we progress forward again to the 2005 "Strategic Goals" statement, not only is there no mention of deaf history or deaf culture in the document, but there is also no mention of American Sign Language. The word "sign" does not even appear in the document!

Instead of mentioning deaf culture, the Strategic Goals document makes a reference to Gallaudet supposedly being a "global educational and cultural center for people who are deaf and hard of hearing."

Again, all universities are "global educational and cultural centers" by definition. Since this is noncontroversial and refers to obvious facts that are universally accepted by all educated people, we must ask the question: What is the purpose of this statement?

It is clear that the "New Directions" document (with its inclusion of Priority 3.1) was just a smoke screen intended to pacify those people concerned about the university's plans and directions for the future. Had those been real priorities, a much different Strategic Goals statement would have been produced the following year in 2005, not the obfuscatory one that is analyzed here.

Jordan and Fernandes's private views

Insiders are reluctant to jeopardize their careers by openly reporting on Jordan's true sentiments towards deaf culture, though comments are made which indicate clearly that privately, Jordan is reluctant to grant any high regard to American Sign Language, or to sign language in general, or the worldwide Deaf Culture Movement of Western and World Civilization.

Jordan, who holds a Ph.D. in psychology, is a master manipulator of people and their perceptions. He would never simply blurt out his true feelings to the press, but we can get an idea of the ethos behind Jordan's philosophy by examining the startlingly uninformed and confrontational comments made by Frank Bowe, who is of Jordan's ilk, who made the following comments to the Washington Post in September of 1988, as Jordan was getting prepared for his upcoming official inauguration as president of Gallaudet University. Quoting Bowe:

"For too long, deaf people have stood by themselves, fought for themselves alone...But it is time for them to recognize that they share so much with people who are blind, who have cerebral palsy, and we all need to work together."

Bowe also states:

"To go back and look at ... deaf studies distracts us from the real challenge."

He displays his antipathy toward Gallaudet's historic role and his ignorance of the nature of the Deaf Culture Movement in Western history by referring to it as:

"This internal stuff--deaf pride, deaf culture."

This accurately reflects Jordan's private view that deaf culture is merely unimportant "internal stuff" which has nothing to do with the Greek-initiated Philosophy and Science Movement of Western civilization.

Nothing could be further from the truth, and no idea could be more dangerous to the promotion of the education of the deaf.

Jordan and Fernandes's public rhetoric

In public, we can continue to expect Jordan to pay lip service to the Deaf Culture Movement and occasionally offer policy statements which serve as window dressing (especially as a way to respond to this essay.) But it is easy to see that his public comments are highly obfuscatory in nature. (ASL translation of "obfuscatory": two 5-hands, palms together, slide top hand in arc over bottom hand.)

In his 2006 National Association of the Deaf (NAD) keynote address in Palm Desert, California, Jordan tried to pull the wool over our eyes by distorting the nature of his and Fernandes's plans for the future of Gallaudet. As has been explained in this essay, the Deaf Culture Movement has always been accepting of people of all types. That is not today nor has it ever been a controversial issue. Yet in his address, Jordan claims that: "We must work together to infuse these values into the entire deaf community."

Question: if these values are already present in the deaf community and have been present for 200-plus years (valuing deaf culture and accepting all types of people as members), then what is Jordan talking about?

The new paradigm for deaf education and its implementation

His keynote address makes his and his protégé Fernandes's methods and positions clear. According to Jordan, Gallaudet's Board of Trustees bears absolutely no democratic accountability to any body outside of itself, never mind the fact that Gallaudet is a creation of the Federal Government of the United States and is sustained by it. According to Jordan, the Gallaudet community must simply accept whatever nondemocratic decisions come from the Board, including who they choose to be president and what policies they approve.

Now Jane Fernandes has been chosen by Jordan to be his successor to continue in the attempted permanent hijacking of the Deaf Culture Movement.

Jane Fernandes also will not simply state her true opinions about the Deaf Culture Movement to the press. However, she lets the cat out of the bag in the following statement that she made to the Washington Post in May of this year (2006). As to the question (as the reporter summarized it) of: "who speaks for Gallaudet and who belongs there," Fernandes replied:

"The answer has to be it belongs to all."

It is very clear that what she means is that she is denying the unique, historic role of Gallaudet as being the center of the Deaf Culture Movement in America.

Looking again at the 2005 document called: "Gallaudet University Strategic Goals." From that policy, which was officially adopted by Gallaudet's Board of Trustees at Jordan's prompting and request:

QUOTE:

Strategic Goal #4: Gallaudet University is the university of choice for an *increasingly diverse* pool of potential students who are deaf and hard of hearing, and for hearing students who want to prepare for careers in the deaf community [emphasis added.]

UNQUOTE

It is very clear that the obfuscatory term "increasingly diverse" (which does not specify what type of diversity is being addressed or the contexts and circumstances involved) relates to the Jordan-Fernandes goal of ending Gallaudet's historic role in Western Civilization as being the center of the Deaf Culture Movement. They incorrectly view deaf culture as being a narrow-minded culture of exclusion and in-group conformity, which, history has shown, it most definitely is not.

They misunderstand the true nature of the Deaf Culture Movement and even the true meaning of "culture"--a term which has two interrelated uses, one usage referring simply to "way of life," while the other refers to civilization and learning.

They are committing an atrocious form of educational malpractice by having no conception of the true, expansive nature of a "university" (which means "whole" and "universe"), and they are attempting to turn Gallaudet into the educational equivalent of a consumer-oriented fast food restaurant where warm bodies provide for more money from Congress and allow for higher salaries for members of the administration.

Jordan quotes Lincoln saying that "a house divided against itself cannot stand," yet he doesn't understand the concept involved. A house must have a central design that is integrated with all of its parts and features. It cannot be simultaneously both a bungalow and a tree house, or both a skyscraper and a country cabin.

Likewise, a university cannot say "we have communication as our goal" and expect it to be a meaningful policy. What kind of communication? What are the specific steps to be taken?

Such an attitude on Jordan and Fernandes's part is representative of the fact that Gallaudet's historic role as being the center of the Deaf Culture Movement has already officially ended. That is the meaning of the 2005 "Strategic Goals" policy document.

Insulting behavior coupled with an arrogant attitude

We refuse to allow Jordan and Fernandes to continue to insult our intelligence with seemingly impressive quotes from seemingly important officials, such as the president of the Association of Governing Boards, who apparently knows nothing about Gallaudet's relationship with the Federal Government and knows nothing about the nature of democracy in America.

Gallaudet is funded by the taxpayers of America and has been funded by them for the past 150 years. Therefore, at this time the taxpayers bear the ultimate responsibility for and the ultimate authority over Gallaudet. We in the Gallaudet community are taxpayers. We now claim the prerogatives of ownership and our ultimate responsibility and ask that our fellow citizens join us in bringing justice to the situation.

Also in response to Jordan's 2006 keynote address, Gallaudet is not a country. South Africa is dealing with the aftereffects of apartheid. It is a government which has certain responsibilities to its citizens. Gallaudet is a school which has a different mission and must proceed according to specific plans. Every time a specific plan is made, other plans are necessarily passed over. A university cannot adopt all possible plans.

It is a ruse extraordinaire on Jordan and Fernandes's part to try to compare the situation between blacks and whites in South Africa with the situation at Gallaudet between people who are new to deaf culture and the people who are already assimilated. No such crisis of that type exists at Gallaudet or has ever existed, since the doors at Gallaudet have always been wide open for people of any type to join in, as the history of Gallaudet and the Deaf Culture Movement conclusively proves.

American Sign Language is the indigenous language of the deaf in America. Everyone is welcome to join in. If they do not respect the Deaf Culture Movement and do not want to learn American Sign Language, then why come to Gallaudet? Should Americans immigrate to France and insist that the Sorbonne accommodate non-French speaking people?

This is an issue which is much deeper than, and goes far beyond the question of civil rights. It has to do with those phenomena in society which make civil rights possible, namely a respect for the accomplishments of past generations and the ability of decent and civilized people to build on the progress of the past.

The existence of Gallaudet as the center of the Deaf Culture Movement represents untold number of hours spent by untold number of people, all striving to create this institution of beauty and efficacy which has contributed so much to Americans and the American way of life. We must not let it be destroyed by people who do not understand its true nature and true worth.

Not honest enough

It is clear that both Jordan and Fernandes are projecting their own psychologies onto the situation by characterizing the current protest movement as being a question of whether or not Fernandes is "deaf enough" (i.e., whether or not she is accepted as a person or as President-elect of Gallaudet because of the fact that she first started learning sign language when she was an adult.) Fernandes has continued with this viciously false rhetoric, in spite of very clear denunciations from the protesters who rightly point out that she is

attempting to drive a stake through the heart of the deaf community. She is fanning the flames of animosity that exist within the imagination of many of those deaf students who were subjected to a purely oral approach in their education who have not yet learned that they are very welcome to join deaf culture and learn American Sign Language.

She knows it's false rhetoric. We know it. Everyone knows it. The whole history of Gallaudet proves that it is false.

A bleak future for Gallaudet under a Fernandes administration

With Gallaudet University no longer carrying civilization's torch, in the form of being the center of the worldwide Deaf Culture Movement, state lawmakers will no longer be able to justify providing funding for the residential schools, since those schools will no longer be outposts of the Deaf Culture Movement and they will offer nothing that the students won't be able to obtain in their hometown schools. Of course Jordan and Fernandes will issue vehement denials as to the intended consequences of their policies, or even try to deny that they are the authors of Gallaudet's current policies, but they have in fact laid out a course which (to whatever extent they consciously realize) spells the demise of and ultimately the permanent closure of all of the state-sponsored residential elementary and secondary schools for the deaf in the 47 states where they exist, including Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

Most likely these policies will also eventually lead to the permanent closure of Gallaudet University, for the same reasoning as given above.

Now is the time for members of the Deaf Culture Movement and their supporters everywhere in the United States and abroad to take action to prevent the further hijacking of the movement and to prevent the death of what has been so effective a method of promoting culture, knowledge and achievement.

We must all write our Congressmen, especially key subcommittee chairmen and members in the House of Representatives such as Rep. Ralph Regula (2306 Rayburn HOB, Washington DC 20515), Rep. Steny Hoyer (1705 Longworth HOB, Washington, DC 20515), Rep. Ric Keller (419 Cannon HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515) and other influential congressmen whose official responsibility it is to oversee Gallaudet, such as the members of the House Appropriations Committee (especially the members of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health

and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies), and also the members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce (especially the members of the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness).

We should also communicate our grievances to key committee chairmen in the U.S. Senate, including Sen. Arlen Specter (711 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510), Sen. Tom Harkin (531 Hart SOB Washington, DC 20510) and Sen. Lamar Alexander (302 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510).

Let's also write to senators on the committees and subcommittees that oversee Gallaudet, including members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations (especially the members of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies), as well as members of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (and especially the members of the Subcommittee on Education and Early Childhood Development).

It's also important to write the official patron of Gallaudet University, namely, the President of the United States, and we should also remember to write the Vice President of the U.S. and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. Above all, let us not forget to communicate our grievances to the three congressionally appointed members of Gallaudet's Board of Trustees: The Honorable Ray LaHood of Illinois (1424 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515), The Honorable John McCain of Arizona (241 Russell Bldg, Washington DC 20510), and The Honorable Lynn Woolsey of California (2263 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515).

We must stop Jane Fernandes from becoming the next president of Gallaudet University. We must save the state residential schools for the deaf from being closed down and we must save Gallaudet University. The Deaf Culture Movement is a wonderful part of Western Civilization and it should be properly understood, valued and given the high esteem that it deserves.

As Irving K. Jordan himself stated to the Washington Post last May: "The protests are about much more than Jane Fernandes...It's about what it means to be deaf in the 21st Century."

It should be abundantly clear that Jordan, in that statement and in other statements he has made, is saying that he believes that Gallaudet's historic role as the center of the Deaf Culture Movement should be changed and that it should no longer be accepted as being the unique nature of Gallaudet University, contrary to its long and esteemed history and contrary to the tremendous results that have been achieved by the development and the spread of the use of American Sign Language.

We must not allow incompetent administrators who have a history of possessing very deficient interpersonal and communicative skills to take over the leadership of Gallaudet University, one of the greatest institutions in the history of the United States and the world.

The Deaf Culture Movement represents civilization in its highest form. We must not allow it to be destroyed by a handful of incompetent opportunists who misunderstand its role in the history of civilized man and also attempt to mischaracterize its nature and its supremely beneficial effects. We must save the historic Deaf Culture Movement, and thereby also support the profound values of Western Civilization, which were initiated by the ancient Greeks.

(End)

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For further information about this press release, please contact protest co-leader Brian Riley at (559) 431-6284.

For more information about Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc, please download the book titled "Tribute to Gallaudet" on the Gallyprotest.org Web site.

For more information about Amos Kendall and the establishment of Gallaudet College (then the "Columbia Institution"), please download the book: "Autobiography of Amos Kendall" on the Gallyprotest.org Web site.

For general information on the protest against Jane Fernandes being selected President-Elect of Gallaudet, see our website:

<http://www.gallyprotest.org/>

Thank you!

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