



Unity for Gallaudet Protesters Celebrate Presidential Succession and Congratulate Outgoing President Davila at University of the Deaf

As part of its year-long Political and Educational Integrity Campaign, Gallyprotest.org congratulates outgoing Gallaudet President Robert Davila and reminds the public to attend the upcoming inauguration of Gallaudet's newly chosen Tenth President, Dr. Alan Hurwitz. The Board of Trustees (<http://bot.gallaudet.edu>) has announced plans to form a Presidential Inauguration Planning Committee (PIPC), the membership of which will be announced soon, which will be comprised of two representatives from the Board of Trustees, two from the faculty, two from the administration, one from the University staff, one undergraduate student, one graduate student, one employee of the Clerc Center, and one alumni member. Gallaudet University, located in Washington, DC, only blocks from the US Capitol building, is a university of, by and for the Deaf.

Washington, DC ([PRWEB](#)) January 1, 2010 -- In his acceptance speech of October 18, 2009, incoming Gallaudet President T. Alan Hurwitz gave recognition to the remarkable accomplishments of outgoing President Robert R. Davila. President Davila accepted the job of university president during a time of institutional crisis. As a result of the valiant and brilliantly effective protest efforts of students, along with members from the ranks of the alumni, staff, and faculty, as well as members of the Deaf community at large, Gallaudet University's Board of Trustees, during the autumn of 2006, rightfully rescinded the intended appointment of the person then chosen to be the next Gallaudet president.

Dr. Davila correctly remarked in his acceptance speech of December 10, 2006 that the University had "many, many hot plates on the stove." Only a person with great self-confidence, experience, and trust in the collective wisdom of Gallaudet's various constituencies, who had ousted an incoming president, would have had the courage to accept the position of Gallaudet President at that moment in time. We congratulate President Davila on the outstanding exercise of political courage which he displayed and for the outstanding results he achieved during his tenure as President, and recognize the extent of the immeasurable improvements that he, acting in concert with all of Gallaudet's democratically empowered constituencies, was able to implement--improvements which have established an outstanding legacy which will provide opportunities for the edification of future generations of Gallaudet students, as well as benefits to all Americans and to the citizens of our cosmopolitan world.

As a result of these heroic achievements, President Davila, along with members of Gallaudet's constituencies, have supported, enshrined, and made great strides toward ensuring the perpetuation of the concept, principles and tenets of cultural pluralism in our democratic society. As expressed in a statement drafted by members of the Faculty, Students, Staff and Alumni coalition in May 2006: "The term 'multiculturalism' has been often used in the particularist sense, and has been seen as a call to cultural separatism. Instead, we use the term in the pluralist sense as a way to describe our vision of being a part of the whole of American culture, while still cherishing those cultural characteristics that are dear to us." Dr. Davila also supported this pluralist philosophy in his December 2006 speech, as he so eloquently explained: "We are in a position where the world looks to us. Gallaudet is sacred, and our acknowledgment of the importance of American Sign Language and diversity are two key issues for us. We're a diverse group of people here. That has a very broad meaning. We all come from very different backgrounds. We have different thoughts, different opinions and a variety of different aspects that we bring to this campus. We want to create a positive, supportive, pluralistic environment."

All academic institutions, per the definition of the term "culture" and per the concepts of the transmission and generation of knowledge, are cultural institutions. Gallaudet University, having a bilingual mission to serve students who use American Sign Language and English, is, therefore, an institution of not only American Deaf culture, but is also an institution to culturally (i.e., signing) Deaf students of the entire world who are either fluent or willing to become fluent in ASL and written English and are admitted to study at Gallaudet. There can be no such thing as Gallaudet having an "academic" function which is separate from or neutral toward the concept of Deaf culture or culturally Deaf people, since every aspect of academics is cultural by definition and since culturally Deaf people comprise the social wellspring which gives life to the institution of Gallaudet.

The genius of the message of the Unity for Gallaudet protesters of 2006-2007 is that there can be no true diversity which is not constituted within a frame, or frames, of unity. Unity and diversity are inseparably and existentially bound together. There cannot be one without the other. The attempt to perpetuate a frameless (i.e., pseudo-) concept of diversity in the notorious "all things to all people" style represents a type of sophistry which enables a "divide and conquer" tendency on the part of a hegemonic, anti-pluralistic social force. There is no such thing as a social "firewall" which separates culturally Deaf from non-culturally deaf people, since every deaf person who signs, to whatever degree that person signs and to whatever degree that person has adopted visually-oriented values, is also, to those same degrees, a culturally Deaf person. Believing otherwise has the effect of granting sanction to the concept of cultural appropriation and the perpetuation of exploitation. Every non-signing deaf person who enters the gates of Gallaudet also begins a lifelong process of enculturation with his or her first step, to be welcomed by the open arms of those who have come before, as part of a crucial process which is repeated elsewhere.

The "ship of Gallaudet" is on the right course. There is no disaster looming ahead which would call for a drastic change in the direction of the "ship's" course. On the contrary, the magnificent and creative coordination which the Gallaudet University community exhibited during the period of the curricula reforms and enhancements of 2007-2008, under President Davila's tenure, serve as a shining example to universities and university systems all over the world, especially those that are undergoing curricula-, administrative-, or governance-related crises of the type which have spurred justified protests in Europe and elsewhere around the globe.

The existence of creative human thought does not originate in and is not fundamentally attributable to the operation of monetized or market-oriented economic forces, but rather economic and monetary phenomena should only properly be seen as tools used in creative human endeavors. As Edward Miner Gallaudet, co-founder of Gallaudet, wrote not long after the Institution's founding: "As eternity is longer than time, as mind is stronger than matter, as thought is swifter than the wind, as genius is more potent than gold, so will the results of well-directed labors toward the development of man's higher faculties ever outweigh a thousand fold any estimate in the currency of commerce, which man can put upon such efforts."

"The earth belongs to the living," and Gallaudetians now stand united in spirit with like-minded and responsible people all over the world who support education in the service of democracy, and truth in the service of freedom. In the immortal words of Laurent Clerc, given at the inauguration of our beloved institution: "There is no dress which embellishes the body more than science does the mind." And just as the pursuit of science, in its general and broadest sense, serves as a bedrock of our democracy, so too should Gallaudet strive to educate students not in the shallow spirit of the type of mindless careerism of those who "live to eat" at the gluttonous table of the ephemeral, rather Gallaudet should first teach them to "eat to live," to empower them to become the poets, philosophers and educated cosmopolites of our modern times who, whether boldly participating in the creation and implementation of an international treaty or gently considering the entreaties of loved ones toward



the creation of a sense of Gemütlichkeit at hearth and home, let it never be said that a single graduate ever walked the hallowed halls of our alma mater without learning to appreciate that which really counts, so that they might stand tall on the shores of the infinite and be counted among those making the hero's journey, as part of that quest of the ages toward the achievement of greater happiness for one and all, and the attainment of the sublime.

All passages above not otherwise attributed may be attributed to, and are the opinion of Gallyprotest.org (<http://gallyprotest.org>).

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