

NEW YORK POST EXCLUSIVE

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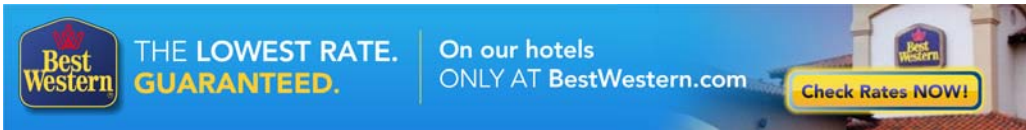


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'HOSTILE' GEORGE WASHINGTON

May 7, 2007 -- WALTER Kehowski, a math professor at Glendale Community College in Arizona's Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD), wishes he'd never e-mailed his fellow employees Thanksgiving greetings last November.

PRINT
 EMAIL TO A FRIEND
 DIGG IT

While reading a Web log, Kehowski found George Washington's "Thanksgiving Day Proclamation of 1789" and decided to send it along to the Maricopa community the day before Thanksgiving, 2006. Using an e-mail address commonly used to send out announcements, Kehowski e-mailed the text of the proclamation - and a link to the Web page on which he'd found it . . . on Pat Buchanan's site.

Within weeks, five employees filed harassment charges against Kehowski, claiming his message was "hostile" and "derogatory" because the link he'd included also led to Buchanan's comments about immigration.

A holiday greeting containing a link to a blog, which readers can either visit or simply ignore, doesn't fit any definition of harassment. Yet, instead of dismissing the bogus allegations, the MCCCD administration ruled that Kehowski had violated the district's Equal Employment Opportunity policy and technology policies that ban e-mails that are unsolicited or not work-related.

Yet in a single month (March 2007) individuals used the same listserv to send e-mails ads on how to purchase goats for Ugandan orphans and reminders on the health benefits of bananas - hardly work-related info. MCCCD Chancellor Rufus Glasper put Kehowski on paid administrative leave and asked the district's Governing Board that he be *dismissed*. Kehowski has since appealed the decision, with a hearing set for June 5.

Until then, a professor teeters on the edge of being fired, all because he sent out a Thanksgiving greeting written by the first U.S. president.

Authored by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (thefire.org).

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