

## **WEILAND\_REBECCA**

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**From:** Kathryn Jeffery <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 17, 2023 7:38 PM  
**To:** AMINOFF\_SUSAN-AOL; GREENSTEIN\_NANCY; PETERS\_TOM; QUINONES\_MARGARET; SNELL\_BARRY; RADER\_ROB; ROY\_SION  
**Cc:** SENIOR\_ADMIN\_STAFF; ADAMS\_JOHNNIE; SMITH\_GRACE  
**Subject:** By The River Rivanna

SMC Trustees,

This weekend the SMC Theatre department is scheduled to open a play written by a former SMC employee-public information officer, Bruce Smith and directed by SMC Professor Perviz Sawoski. It seems that a student in her class associated with or who was aware of the play contacted Professor Sherri Bradford in Black Collegians to share concern about the sensitive and controversial content of the primary storyline of the play, which deals with a romanticized perspective of a relationship between an enslaved person and the slave owner of that plantation. Sherri Bradford and Jermaine Junius, a new SMC communications instructor who is also chair of the Pan African Alliance, both went to watch a rehearsal of the opening act of the play and reportedly become so overwhelmed that they could not stay to watch the whole play.

Interim VP Jason Beardsley called my attention to this developing situation on this past Friday, and since that time he has met with Perviz Sawoski to request the opening of the play be possibly delayed in the hope that there could be a discussion with those speaking out about the possible negative impact of the play on students and employees. This was done in the interest of concern for SMC community members, especially students. This intervention approach was NOT an attempt to cancel the play; but, rather to acknowledge the issues being surfaced and to communicate sensitivity regarding the difficult and volatile subject of slavery in America.

During Senior Staff meeting today we discussed ways to help our community through this dilemma. We were informed by legal counsel Bob Myers that freedom of speech has a legal basis and he advised against any administrative action that could be perceived as an attempt to cancel the production. We did NOT attempt to cancel the show. Additionally, there is the issue of academic freedom, which governs how a faculty member teaches their classes. And the production of this play is part of a class taught by Professor Sawoski.

I am writing this email to you to provide background should you be contacted by college personnel or students expressing their point of view for or against the play. Also, you should know that the Pan African Alliance along with members of other affinity groups at SMC are planning to protest the play outside the theatre during its opening this weekend, Oct, 22-24 and perhaps even next weekend as well. The play is scheduled to run for two weekends.

I have talked with several of you over the past few days to let you know of this developing situation. I assure you; we are working in earnest to strategically and respectfully navigate the space between the principle of academic freedom, freedom of speech and the care we must demonstrate for SMC community members who have openly expressed sadness for what several feel is a lack of sensitivity to the subject of slavery, one of the play's central themes. I have discussed this approach with faculty leaders of Academic Senate, Faculty Association, Senior Staff, Associated Students, and the Student Equity Center.

## WEILAND\_REBECCA

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**From:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 15, 2023 10:28 AM  
**To:** SAWOSKI\_PERVIZ; CARTER\_DIONE; KING\_SASHA  
**Subject:** By The River Rivanna email to students

**Importance:** High

Hi Perviz,

I would like to send the following email to students—possibly as a video message since the email is so long.

I would like to start reaching out to students as soon as possible. Please take a look and share your thoughts. We can hop on the phone. I am copying Dee Dee and Sasha here as they may be assisting me with the calls and logistics.

Bruce has contacted me, but I have not responded. You are my primary contact on this matter. I will reach out to Bruce as a courtesy, nonetheless.

Thank you,  
Jason

Dear Students,

I hope this message finds you well as the SMC community navigates through an important matter regarding the scheduled production of *By The River Rivanna* by G. Bruce Smith. As you may know, this production has sparked concerns within our community, particularly in regard to its portrayal of the complex dynamics between a white slave owner and an enslaved African man. As the Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs at SMC, it is my job to help the college navigate this issue gripping our community and to guide us toward the best possible outcome for all involved. Since I cannot help guide the college without hearing from the *students* at the college, I am writing to you with a request for input. And I will apologize now for this really long email.

Before I go any further, I must be candid about two things: First, and you may already have heard this, many in the SMC community feel this play should not be produced. I am one of those people. However, at the very same time, a second thing is also true: You, the students, your hearts and minds, are *the* most important concern in all of this discussion. I want you to know that. Everyone wants what is best for you; everyone is concerned about how you will be impacted by this play—whether it is produced or *not* produced. That may sound patronizing, but I can assure you it is true. Those who wish the play would not be produced, and those who would like to see it on the stage—both groups are absolutely focused on your wellbeing. In fact, it is out of that concern that I write to you now: I am reaching out because your voices must be heard in this discussion.

To start, I want to acknowledge the remarkable commitment and dedication that each of you has demonstrated by preparing for this production. Your courage to take the stage and the tremendous effort you have invested in preparing for your role are truly commendable. No matter what happens, whether you are a

lead actor or a lighting tech, nothing can take away your accomplishment as an artist thus far. You have worked very hard to prepare for your tech rehearsal on Tuesday. You should be proud of that work.

In fact, I am writing to ask you about your work—how you think and feel about your work on a play that some consider very controversial. Now, I realize that asking for your view of the play *at this* point in its production may seem strange. We are well into the semester, and your costumes are nearly ready. It's late, and I understand. It's precisely because you are so close to the culminating performances that I am reaching out to speak with you directly. I would really like to know your thoughts and feelings about the play, so I am asking that you take 10 minutes to think about the questions below and let me know when you and I—or a member of my team in Academic Affairs—can speak with you about your responses to the questions below. You are also welcome to respond to the questions by email, if you would prefer.

Please know that this is an opportunity for you to express your views, and there is no right or wrong response. Your honest feedback will be instrumental in shaping our approach.

Your responses will remain confidential and be used solely for the purpose of understanding your perspectives. Your responses will *not* be shared with your instructor.

If you would like to talk over the phone or by Zoom with me or one of two Deans in Academic Affairs who will be assisting me with these conversations, please let me know by email and I will reach out to set something up for Monday or Tuesday (ideally).

Questions:

1. How do you feel about your involvement in the play?
2. Have you personally encountered any challenges or concerns while preparing for your role in the play?
3. If you were able to step away from the production of the play without any negative impact on your grade in the class, would you step away?

Please know that your courage participating in this play is greatly appreciated, and I am here to support you throughout this challenging conversation. Please take your time to consider these questions, and if you are comfortable, share your thoughts with us by replying to this email.

Thank you for your dedication, and I look forward to hearing from you.

## WEILAND\_REBECCA

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**From:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 15, 2023 5:21 PM  
**To:** MUNOZ\_MARIA  
**Subject:** FW: Potential censorship of our production

Here's that exchange in which you are mentioned. I had a conversation with Bruce Smith earlier today. He is digging in, like Perviz, on the notion that the students should get to have a private performance by invitation only.

-Jason

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**From:** SAWOSKI\_PERVIZ <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** Sunday, October 15, 2023 at 4:03 PM  
**To:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>, LONDON\_JAMAR <[REDACTED]>, MORSE\_PETER <MORSE\_PETER@smc.edu>  
**Cc:** KING\_SASHA <[REDACTED]>, CARTER\_DIONE <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Re: Potential censorship of our production

Thank You.

*Perviz Sawoski*

*Chair, Theatre Arts*

*Santa Monica College*

*she/ her*

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**From:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 15, 2023 4:02 PM  
**To:** SAWOSKI\_PERVIZ <[REDACTED]>; LONDON\_JAMAR <[REDACTED]>; MORSE\_PETER <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** KING\_SASHA <[REDACTED]>; CARTER\_DIONE <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Re: Potential censorship of our production

Good afternoon,

Perviz, thank you for including me and Sasha on your email. I agree with the way you have characterized one of the conversations and set of options that you and I discussed. As you may know, even the private viewing of the play is a significant concern among some SMC faculty, staff, and students.

With understandable concerns on both sides, we are going to have to work hard to find an amicable solution.



## WEILAND\_REBECCA

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**From:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 20, 2023 4:01 PM  
**To:** SMITH\_GRACE  
**Subject:** Fwd: Do NOT send your Children to SMC

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**From:** SAWOSKI\_PERVIZ <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 20, 2023 1:19:48 PM  
**To:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>; Kathryn Jeffery <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** MORSE\_PETER <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Do NOT send your Children to SMC

Please see this.

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** James Stevenson <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** October 20, 2023 at 12:33:20 PM PDT  
**Subject:** Do NOT send your Children to SMC

CAUTION: This email originated outside SMC.

Hello Parents, Students, and Community Members

I'm here to ask that you please do Not attend Santa Monica College because they do Not care or Respect Black People.

My name is J.R. Stevenson, I'm an Outreach and Recruitment Specialist for Santa Monica College. Unfortunately, I'm recommending that if you're a Black Student or Parent of a Black Student to please Not attend Santa Monica College.

This is because Racist and Prejudice People like G Bruce Smith who was the WORST Public Information Officer in Santa Monica College History that he was replaced by the Best PIO in Grace Smith. Then SMC Faculty Member Perviz **Sawoski are planning to debut a play that romanticizes and fetishizes the horrific tragedy of Slavery. The Play is called "By The River Rivanna".**

**Both of these Non-Black People are so clueless and ignorant to the tragedy that Slavery played in the history of Black People that they are trying to entertain Audiences with our Horrors and Psychological Damages.**

If we chose to frame this issue as a freedom of speech issue, and only that, then I can see your point about the immateriality of the script.

But it *isn't* just a freedom of speech issue.

Imagine that this play had been written a year ago, and the Theatre Arts department decided to solicit feedback from the SMC community. Almost without a doubt, we would not be here today because the issue of our *community* would have then been addressed, and a different play would have been produced, one that did not make people immediately upset to be associated with SMC and to have colleagues who are proceeding with so little regard for the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of their coworkers.

So before we thrust this situation into the difficult framework of “free speech” and “academic freedom,” let’s please see it and address it as a community concern, first. Peter, many in that community are faculty members, whom you represent. I hope you will reach out to hear their concerns. I am also available to talk.

Best,  
Jason

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**From:** MORSE\_PETER <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 16, 2023 11:50 AM  
**To:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>; LONDON\_JAMAR <[REDACTED]>;  
SAWOSKI\_PERVIZ <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** KING\_SASHA <[REDACTED]>; CARTER\_DIONE <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Re: Potential censorship of our production

Folks,

The script is *immaterial* to this situation.

This is an academic freedom and first amendment/free speech issue and the content of the play is not something that any of us should be pretending that we can assess - or even *should* consider assessing.

Peter

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**From:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 16, 2023 11:45 AM  
**To:** LONDON\_JAMAR <[REDACTED]>; SAWOSKI\_PERVIZ <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** MORSE\_PETER <[REDACTED]>; KING\_SASHA <[REDACTED]>; CARTER\_DIONE <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Potential censorship of our production

Here you go.

Best,  
Jason

310-434-4113

she/ her

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**From:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 16, 2023 2:00 PM  
**To:** SAWOSKI\_PERVIZ <[REDACTED]>; MORSE\_PETER <[REDACTED]>;  
LONDON\_JAMAR <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** KING\_SASHA <[REDACTED]>; CARTER\_DIONE <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Potential censorship of our production

Hi Perviz,

Before we get too head long into accusations of censorship, I want to re-emphasize the element of community here. Perviz, I assume that you feel the play makes a positive contribution to our nation's attempt to mitigate the harmful legacy of slavery. I don't think you would be involved with the production unless you felt that way.

So, with that assumption in mind, it doesn't seem like a stretch to make the further assumption that you would *not* want to be involved in a theatrical production that undermines the struggle to undo the legacy of slavery. If this assumption seems fair, then please consider the strangeness of this moment—a moment when many of our African American colleagues are deeply upset by the idea that this play would be produced. These are colleagues who have read the latest script, as I have. They are deeply upset, as I am, because they do not see the play as *helping* to mitigate the harmful effects of slavery on African Americans; in fact, they see the play as inflicting further harm.

Given that I know you mean well, that you mean to contribute positively to the American dialogue about race, racism, and the legacy of white supremacy, I am struggling to understand why you would want to go forward with a production that is viewed as hurtful by the very people whom you had meant to support. This is what I mean when I say that before this is a censorship issue, it is a community issue. And, *as* a community member, I am asking you to address the community issue in a meaningful way.

Finally, you ask for specific citations of objectionable scenes and dialogue: Off the cuff, I can say that any scene in which Jackson exchanges his freedom and subjectivity for bondage is deeply troubling; there are at least two such scenes. Similarly, the mirroring of that relationship in Aidan and Grady is also problematic; Aidan in some ways is manipulating Grady's 'destiny' and holding him captive by withholding information about him. That manipulation mirrors the master-slave dynamic to which Jackson is beholden. Then there is the issue of Charlotte's description of her being raped by Tom Murdoch. I don't have words to describe how upsetting that clause is to me, and how offensive it must be to others. Suggesting that an enslaved woman could have been a willing participant in her own rape because she wanted a child is just ludicrous.

Lastly, I come back to the same question: If they Theatre Arts department wants to contribute to a healthier, stronger community, why are they attempting to produce a play that will undermine and fracture our community?

-Jason

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**From:** SAWOSKI\_PERVIZ <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 16, 2023 1:31 PM  
**To:** MORSE\_PETER <[REDACTED]>; BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>;  
LONDON\_JAMAR <[REDACTED]>

Please call me at your earliest convenience. [REDACTED]

Thank you,  
Jason

Jason Beardsley (he/him)  
Interim Vice President, Academic Affairs  
**Santa Monica College**  
1900 Pico Blvd. | Santa Monica, CA 90405  
T 310-434-8054

<image001.png>

[smc.edu/resources](http://smc.edu/resources)

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**From:** WARD\_EMMA <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** Thursday, October 12, 2023 at 7:18 PM  
**To:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Invitation – By the River Rivanna

*Sent on behalf of Perviz Sawoski & the Theatre Arts Department*

Jason Beardsley  
Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs

Dear Jason Beardsley,

We would like to invite you to attend a performance of our upcoming production, *By the River Rivanna*, a new play by G. Bruce Smith, directed by Perviz Sawoski, musical direction by Frank Basile. The show opens on Friday, October 20th, at 7:30 pm (for all other dates and times, please see the attached flyer).

If you are able to attend, we would be happy to issue two complimentary tickets to you. To claim your tickets, please reach out to our Administrative Assistant at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. We ask that you provide the date and time that you wish to attend, as well as your preferred email address and phone number.

We hope you will be able to attend our production. We would greatly enjoy seeing you there.

Thank you so much!

Cheers,  
Emma

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Emma Ward  
Administrative Assistant I, Theatre Arts  
Santa Monica College



*she/her*

## WEILAND\_REBECCA

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**From:** SMITH\_GRACE <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 23, 2023 5:07 PM  
**To:** Victor Chambers; BEARDSLEY\_JASON; Ashanti Blaize; [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** CEBELIHLE HLATSHWAYO; Renee Bartlett-Webber; Samaiya Kirby; SMITH\_GRACE  
**Subject:** RE: PLEASE RESPOND: Information on Students Voting for Play Cancellation

**Importance:** High

Victor:

Thank you so much for your patience! Below is the information that we are able to provide. I hope this is helpful. I've pasted your questions and SMC's responses immediately under in bold. Good luck with this story. Thank you and the Corsair staff for your important work in keeping us all informed.

1: How was the decision to ask the cast members to vote on the play's premiere made? Why was it **Jason Beardsley** who conducted the process on Thursday night?

**Jason Beardsley did not conduct the process.**

2: Were Bruce Smith and Perviz Sawoksi consulted and in agreement with having the vote decide whether the production moved forward or not?

**The college consulted with the play's director/Theatre Arts Department Chair Perviz Sawoski.**

3: What was the final vote tally? Can you confirm what Bruce Smith has shared with us:

"The first vote resulted: 9 wanted to cancel, 7 wanted to go ahead and 4 wanted to delay. Voted on a private showing for family and friends: 12 wanted to go ahead, and 8 didn't want to go ahead with the show. The students had a discussion and decided if there were 8 people who didn't want to go forward, that they shouldn't go forward at all."

**Confirmed**

4: Finally, what did the SMC administration plan for the students' academic standing if the play were to be canceled? How would it affect their grades and their path towards graduation?

**Grading is the responsibility of the instructor per Title 5 and SMC Administrative Regulation 5310 (Grades, Article 5300: Academic Standards).**

**It is our understanding that there will be no negative consequences to the students.**

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**From:** Victor Chambers <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 23, 2023 12:47 PM  
**To:** SMITH\_GRACE <[REDACTED]>; BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>; Ashanti Blaize <[REDACTED]>;  
**Cc:** CEBELIHLE HLATSHWAYO <[REDACTED]>; Renee Bartlett-Webber <[REDACTED]>; Samaiya Kirby <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** PLEASE RESPOND: Information on Students Voting for Play Cancellation

## WEILAND\_REBECCA

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**From:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 13, 2023 7:21 PM  
**To:** SULLIVAN\_LINDA; RUDOLPH\_ROBERT; TRAUTWEIN\_PAUL  
**Subject:** Re: Urgent - please read

Hi All,

With apologies for the alarm, I would ask that you take a pause on any action related to my original request. I will circle back next week to confirm one direction or the other with you.

Thanks,  
Jason

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**From:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** Friday, October 13, 2023 at 7:13 PM  
**To:** SULLIVAN\_LINDA <[REDACTED]>, RUDOLPH\_ROBERT [REDACTED],  
TRAUTWEIN\_PAUL <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Urgent - please read

Hi Linda, Paul, and Rob,

I apologize for contacting you on a Friday evening. I would like to pull a theatrical production from the ticket sales website that appears to be powered by HomeTown Ticketing.

<https://www.smc.edu/calendar/tickets.php>

The following event should be removed or disabled as far as ticket sales go:

By the River Rivanna

Please call me if a conversation would help: [REDACTED]

Thank you,  
Jason

## WEILAND\_REBECCA

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**From:** BRADFORD\_SHERRI <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 18, 2023 3:50 PM  
**To:** BEARDSLEY\_JASON  
**Subject:** Student in a theater arts class

Hi Jason,

One of our student workers shared with us today that she is in a theater arts class. She said that she is required to attend ALL of the productions this semester including the River Rivanna and has to write about it. She does not want to attend at all.

I asked her permission to tell you about it and she is also willing to talk with you if needed. Her class is Theater Arts 31 and her name is Esthela Moncada.

*Sherrí Bradford, M.S.*

Program Leader & Counseling Faculty  
Santa Monica College  
Black Collegians Program Umoja Community  
Direct Line: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[www.smc.edu/blackcollegians](http://www.smc.edu/blackcollegians)

[www.umojacommunity.org](http://www.umojacommunity.org)

Follow us on Instagram @blackcollegianssmc

**Black Collegians Program**

**umoja**  
COMMUNITY



[REDACTED]:

Sherri said she'd welcome a call from you and to share her phone # with you. So plz give her a call vs email.

10/14/23 11:12 AM

Good morning, curious if u spoke with Dr.J and Sherri? And how it went?

10/14/23 1:41 PM

Jason Beardsley:

Would you be free to talk? I just got off phone with Perviz

10/15/23 6:11 PM

[REDACTED]:

Let me know if u want to talk tonight or tomorrow

Jason Beardsley:

Now?

10/16/23 5:36 PM

[REDACTED]:

Just wanted to let u know that tickets can still be purchased.

10/16/23 7:23 PM

Sorry I missed ur call. Let me know if u want to connect tonight or tomorrow

10/19/23 11:25 PM

Jason Beardsley:

Mums the word but it's done.

10/20/23 7:05 AM

[REDACTED]:

Yay!!!! Thank you Jason for your leadership throughout this whole process! You truly walked the walk! Now I hope you can truly enjoy a bday weekend celebrating your awesomeness! I appreciate u. Pls take some time to take care of yourself.

Jason Beardsley:

I would not have been able to do it without you, Maria. Truly. Your counsel and steadfastness were absolutely critical—and ARE absolutely critical. Thank you. And may you enjoy a peaceful weekend with your family, as well!

10/20/23 3:37 PM

Great email re: healing session

[REDACTED]:

Thank you! I needed to hear this

They can see the play when/ if it opens. I will not let persons come in and undermine the thought and work that has been put into the play by all involved. Theatre is a place for challenging, shocking and thought provoking ideas. It is not meant to coddle the community.

Jason Beardsley:

Hi Perviz—I would like to update you on the performance dates and the conditions under which they may ensue. Please let me know when we can talk. Thank you.

Good morning, Perviz. I wanted you to know that I do not see any ticket sales advertised for Rivanna on our website—and I was not aware that they would be taken down nor involved in any decision to do so. An advertisement for Avenue Q is now apparent. I have asked Rob for more information.

[REDACTED]:

I had pulled it, but now we are republishing it.

Jason Beardsley:

Thank you for your note.

I am going to make a survey box for you, in case you would like to use it. Will have Yes and No cards and a question: Should the play go on? You are free to use it or not. I can bring it to you after the rehearsal or even leave it somewhere safe for you. Let me know

[REDACTED]:

Maybe 3 levels-

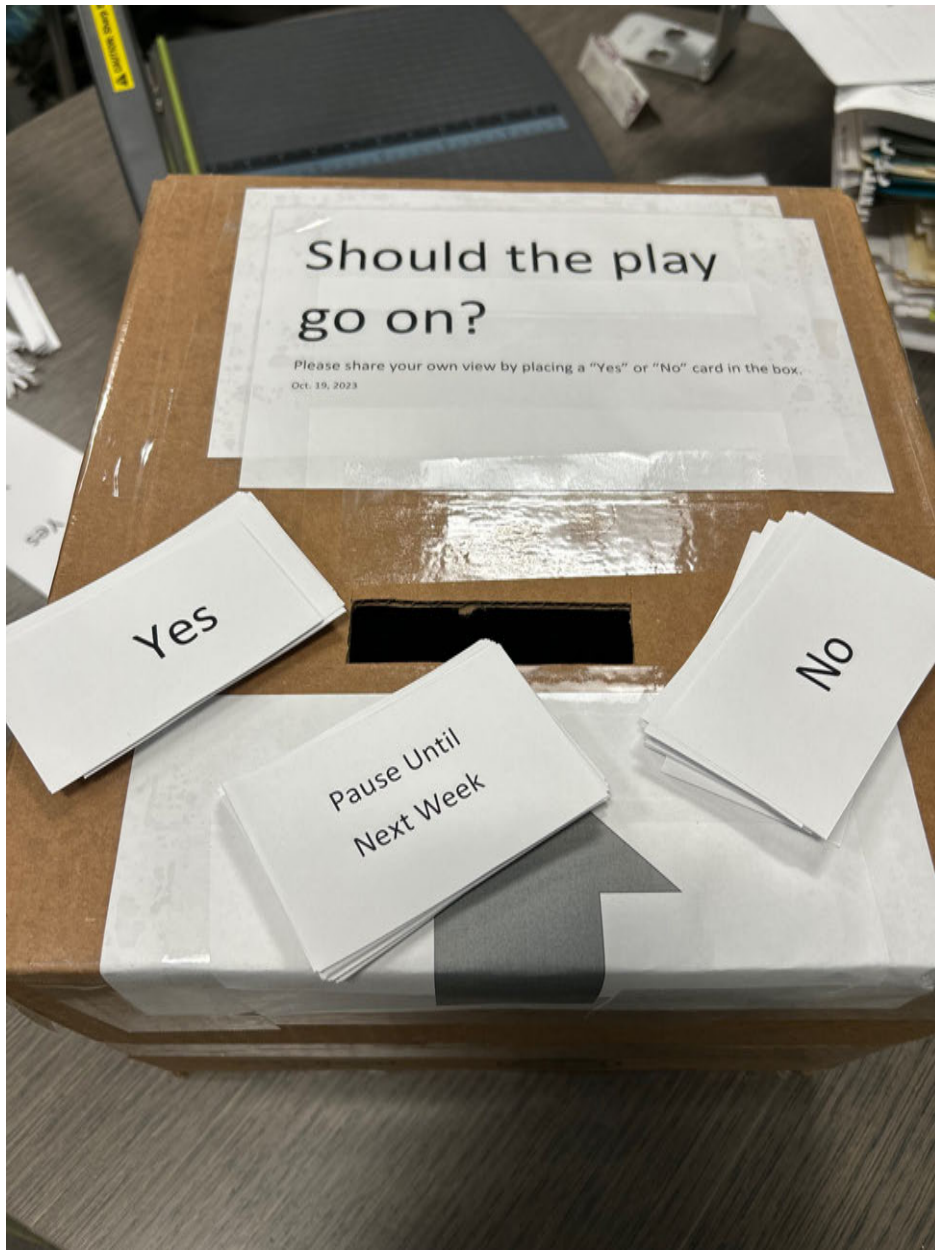
Jason Beardsley:

Sorry what is 3 levels?

[REDACTED]:

Yes, no, pause until next week

Jason Beardsley:



If there is a place I should leave it, or if you would like me to bring it over after the rehearsal, just let me know. I am flexible and will be here. Thank you.

[REDACTED]:

Maybe bring after the run we're about to start. So in 2 hours

Jason Beardsley:

Ok thank you. Will do so. I'll stand by for your text in about two hours?

[REDACTED]:

Ok  
Come now

## WEILAND\_REBECCA

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**From:** Kathryn Jeffery <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 20, 2023 5:51 AM  
**To:** SENIOR\_ADMIN\_STAFF; ADAMS\_JOHNNIE; SMITH\_GRACE; FILA\_SUSAN;  
MUNOZ\_MARIA  
**Subject:** Update on By the River Rivanna

Everyone,

On Thursday evening I attended the full dress rehearsal of By the River Rivanna. At the end of the rehearsal, I asked the cast if they would consider pausing the opening by one weekend so that a facilitated college forum could be held to discuss the play and hear from the director, cast and others. The cast weighed in on whether to 1) pause the opening one week. 2) open as scheduled, or 3) not open the play. The cast voted to when asked if they wanted to have special performance for friends and family, the cast voted overwhelmingly against doing this.

I want a knowledge that the Director had incorporated input she received and showed concern for the students in the show and the broader SMC community. She seemed very open to addressing concerns that had been expressed over the past two weeks.

Summary; The cast of By the River Rivanna has voted to not open the show as scheduled.

Kathryn

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## Fwd: By The River Rivanna

Kathryn Jeffery <[REDACTED]>

Fri 11/17/2023 10:53 AM

To: WEILAND\_REBECCA <[REDACTED]>

Cc: MYERS\_ROBERT <[REDACTED]>; KILIAN\_LETICIA <[REDACTED]>

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**From:** Kathryn Jeffery <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 18, 2023 11:04 AM

**To:** KILIAN\_LETICIA <[REDACTED]>; Robert Myers <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** FW: By The River Rivanna

FYI

Kathryn

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**From:** TUITASI\_MICHAEL <[REDACTED]>

**Date:** Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 9:47 AM

**To:** Kathryn Jeffery <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** RE: By The River Rivanna

Hello Dr. Jeffery,

The message was well written and very informative. It's also very neutral and only stating the facts.

Good Job.

Mike

---

**From:** Kathryn Jeffery <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Tuesday, October 17, 2023 7:38 PM

**To:** AMINOFF\_SUSAN-AOL <[REDACTED]>; GREENSTEIN\_NANCY <[REDACTED]>;

PETERS\_TOM <[REDACTED]>; QUINONES\_MARGARET <[REDACTED]>;

SNELL\_BARRY <[REDACTED]>; RADER\_ROB <[REDACTED]>; ROY\_SION

<[REDACTED]>

**Cc:** SENIOR\_ADMIN\_STAFF <[REDACTED]>; ADAMS\_JOHNNIE

<[REDACTED]>; SMITH\_GRACE <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** By The River Rivanna

SMC Trustees,

This weekend the SMC Theatre department is scheduled to open a play written by a former SMC employee-public information officer, Bruce Smith and directed by SMC Professor Perviz Sawoski. It seems that a student in her class associated with or who was aware of the play contacted Professor Sherri Bradford in Black Collegians to share concern about the sensitive and controversial content of the primary storyline of the play, which deals with a romanticized perspective of a relationship between an enslaved person and the slave owner of that plantation. Sherri Bradford and Jermaine Junius, a new SMC communications instructor who is also chair of the Pan African Alliance, both went to watch a rehearsal

of the opening act of the play and reportedly become so overwhelmed that they could not stay to watch the whole play.

Interim VP Jason Beardsley called my attention to this developing situation on this past Friday, and since that time he has met with Perviz Sawoski to request the opening of the play be possibly delayed in the hope that there could be a discussion with those speaking out about the possible negative impact of the play on students and employees. This was done in the interest of concern for SMC community members, especially students. This intervention approach was NOT an attempt to cancel the play; but, rather to acknowledge the issues being surfaced and to communicate sensitivity regarding the difficult and volatile subject of slavery in America.

During Senior Staff meeting today we discussed ways to help our community through this dilemma. We were informed by legal counsel Bob Myers that freedom of speech has a legal basis and he advised against any administrative action that could be perceived as an attempt to cancel the production. We did NOT attempt to cancel the show. Additionally, there is the issue of academic freedom, which governs how a faculty member teaches their classes. And the production of this play is part of a class taught by Professor Sawoski.

I am writing this email to you to provide background should you be contacted by college personnel or students expressing their point of view for or against the play. Also, you should know that the Pan African Alliance along with members of other affinity groups at SMC are planning to protest the play outside the theatre during its opening this weekend, Oct, 22-24 and perhaps even next weekend as well. The play is scheduled to run for two weekends.

I have talked with several of you over the past few days to let you know of this developing situation. I assure you; we are working in earnest to strategically and respectfully navigate the space between the principle of academic freedom, freedom of speech and the care we must demonstrate for SMC community members who have openly expressed sadness for what several feel is a lack of sensitivity to the subject of slavery, one of the play's central themes. I have discussed this approach with faculty leaders of Academic Senate, Faculty Association, Senior Staff, Associated Students, and the Student Equity Center.

*I have asked Interim VP Jason Beardsley to communicate to Perviz that a statement should be read to the audience at the start of each performance of the show to ensure the audience is made aware that the play contains sensitive content related to slavery that could be disturbing. Also, VP Michael Tuitasi is working with SMCPD Chief Adams to have trained personnel present on opening night to help manage a peaceful protest and/or deescalate tensions that might arise. And we are hoping to provide a facilitated talk-back discussion/session after some nights of the play to allow the audience, director, playwright, and actors to debrief what has been experienced during the performance.*

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

Kathryn

### Fwd: Your Support is Needed!

Kathryn Jeffery <[REDACTED]>

Fri 11/17/2023 11:28 AM

To: WEILAND\_REBECCA <[REDACTED]>

Cc: MYERS ROBERT <[REDACTED]>; KILIAN LETICIA <[REDACTED]>; Robert Myers <[REDACTED]>

Bob,

I did not respond to Jermaine's email below.

Kathryn

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From: JUNIUS\_JERMAINE <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2023 12:38 PM

To: Kathryn Jeffery <[REDACTED]>

Cc: PRESTON\_BARRY <[REDACTED]>; QUINONES\_MARGARET <[REDACTED]>; AMINOFF\_SUSAN <[REDACTED]>; GREENSTEIN\_NANCY <[REDACTED]>; PETERS\_TOM <[REDACTED]>; RADER\_ROB <[REDACTED]>; ROY\_SION <[REDACTED]>; student.trustee <[REDACTED]>; BRADFORD\_SHERRI <[REDACTED]>; ROSS\_KRISTIN <[REDACTED]>; WINN\_JOCELYN <[REDACTED]>; JIMENEZ\_PAUL <[REDACTED]>; ROMO\_REBECCA <[REDACTED]>; LAWLER\_HANNAH <[REDACTED]>; MORENO\_MARISOL <[REDACTED]>; ANDERSON\_STEPH <[REDACTED]>; DELOACH\_CHANTE <[REDACTED]>; MUNOZ\_MARIA <[REDACTED]>; JOHNSON\_EARTHA <[REDACTED]>; CHI\_SANG <[REDACTED]>; LONDON\_JAMAR <[REDACTED]>; MEYER\_ELISA <[REDACTED]>; FILA\_SUSAN <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Your Support is Needed!

Hello Dr. Jeffery,

It is with a heavy heart that I write this correspondence. Yesterday, I sent out an email to the members of our employee-based constituency group, the Pan African Alliance. As President of the Alliance, I reached out to rally members in support of a campus student equity concern that has been brewing for the past few weeks.

To provide you with some context, I have been working diligently with Sherri Bradford, Program Leader for Black Collegians, along with other campus equity stakeholders regarding intervention for the play production set to debut this Friday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 in the Theatre Arts Department titled "By The River Rivanna." The play, which was written by G. Bruce Smith, former Public Information Officer for SMC, embraces a romantic version of the terrible and tragic legacy of slavery, sexual abuse and exploitation in our country, in addition to trafficking in stereotypic tropes.

To be clear, the concern at hand is the lack of care and support for our Black students and employees, not censorship. Sherri and I were invited to attend a rehearsal of the play last Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup>. After Act One of the rehearsal, Sherri and I were so deeply impacted with emotional trauma of what we

experienced, that we could not stay for Act Two. These were the takeaways and the lingering questions Sherri, and I were left with:

- The play is not historically accurate
- The play trafficked themes of sexual abuse of black male and female bodies
- How are we vetting people, so harm doesn't come to students and staff who are allowed access to the campus community (is the criteria steeped in an equity framework)
- This equity issue has not been publicly addressed by senior administration
- The unfolding of this event is the embodiment of systemic racism at its core
- How we got here, why we continue to stay here, and the institutional response

We appreciate that ongoing dialogue has taken place this week among the ranks of senior administration of the college concerning pausing the production; so, campus wide equity focused community conversations could take place to examine the best ways to mitigate harm. However, we are aware that a decision has been made to allow the production to proceed as planned and debut this Friday.

We feel compelled to share with you that the decision to soldier forward leaves us deeply concerned on behalf of the constituents we represent and our students. It is understood that the college has an obligation to uphold "academic freedom" and "the free exercise of speech." Nevertheless, moving forward with the production has left a cross section of Black employees, Black students, and our equity allies/stakeholders to feel abandoned by the college. This action has further signaled that our need to be protected and affirmed has gone unnoticed; along with our social/emotional wellbeing and health being perceived as expendable. While it may not have been the intention to cause this harm, the action of allowing the production to proceed, nonetheless, is hurtful.

On behalf of the constituency, we represent and our equity stakeholders, we are asking you to reconsider. This is an issue of racial trauma and racial justice. It also speaks to the racial climate of the college, which includes a lack of sensitivity for peoples of African ancestry. If you would like to set aside some time to meet and dialogue further about the matter, we welcome the invitation. Please know that without a remedy to mitigate the harm imposed by debuting the production of the play, "By The River Rivanna", we will have no other recourse but to resist and protest for change.

Onward and Upward,  
 Jermaine Junius, PhD  
 Pan African Alliance

*Co-Signatories*

Black Collegians Program Umoja Community  
 The Latino Center  
 The Latinx Collective  
 Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Alliance (APIDAA) Steering  
 Ethnic Studies Task Force  
 Faculty Senate, Equity & Diversity Committee  
 Equitizing Gateway Courses (EGC)  
 Equity Steering Committee  
 Student Equity Center  
 Equity, Pathways, and Inclusion (EPI)  
 History and Ethnic Studies Department

***Jermaine Junius, Ph.D., LCSW***



*Assistant Professor*  
*Communication & Media Studies Department*  
*Santa Monica College*



## FW: About the play

MUNOZ\_MARIA <[REDACTED]>

Fri 11/17/2023 12:47 PM

To:WEILAND\_REBECCA <[REDACTED]>

Cc:Robert Myers <[REDACTED]>

Maria Muñoz, Ph.D.

She/Her/Ella ([Learn about pronouns](#))

Interim Dean of Equity, Pathways and Inclusion (EPI)

Santa Monica College

310-434-4407

The EPI Division is committed to closing our racial equity gaps.

To meet our commitment, the EPI division:

- Collaborates with the various institutional bodies and key stakeholders to develop, align, support, and assess equity-focused decision-making, programming, education, training and activities to promote and advance equity, pathways and inclusion
- Fosters greater collaboration, synergy, action, and change to build engaging, culturally-responsive, inclusive, and equity-centered experiences for all our college campus community (students, faculty, staff, administrators) who belong to historically racially minoritized and disenfranchised groups.
- Identifies and work towards removing policies, practices, and procedures that create inequitable barriers and experiences to the access and success of all our college campus community (students, faculty, staff, administrators) who belong to historically racially minoritized and disenfranchised groups.
- Centers a culture of care and belonging, both inside and outside the classroom, to improve the racial climate at SMC
- Draws from existing scholarship and evidence-based practices to provide leadership, support, education and accountability in advancing equity, pathways and inclusion.
- Works to cultivate an environment at SMC where equity and inclusion is infused in everything we do



---

**From:** Weaver\_Deirdre <[REDACTED]>

**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 at 11:15 AM

**To:** SAWOSKI PERVIZ <[REDACTED]>, MUNOZ\_MARIA

<[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** Fw: About the play

Hi Perviz,

The student came to me about a week ago and expressed feeling very upset after hearing from other students about the play coming up "*depicting his people in not a good way.*" He said he heard there was a whipping scene that was audible and was very distraught about it. I did ask him to email me his thoughts so I could share them with you. See below.. his email says less than what he's expressed in several conversations now, and I will share more when we meet later today.

Good morning Perviz,

Deirdre and I would like to schedule a time for us to meet with you to share a student concern that was brought to our attention re: By the River Rivanna. It's a bit urgent as Deirdre is flying to NYC tonight and not back until Thursday next week. If there's a chance to jump on a zoom call today anytime between 10:30-1:30pm, we would greatly appreciate it. Please let us know.

Thanks!

Maria Muñoz, Ph.D.

She/Her/Ella ([Learn about pronouns](#))

Interim Dean of Equity, Pathways and Inclusion (EPI)

Santa Monica College

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6. Works to cultivate an environment at SMC where equity and inclusion is infused in everything we do

<image001.png>

## FW: Self-Advocacy Observer Contribution from Tremonisha Putros

MUNOZ\_MARIA &lt;[REDACTED]&gt;

Fri 11/17/2023 2:29 PM

To: WEILAND\_REBECCA <[REDACTED]>  
Cc: MYERS\_ROBERT <[REDACTED]>

Maria Muñoz, Ph.D.

She/Her/Ella ([Learn about pronouns](#))

Interim Dean of Equity, Pathways and Inclusion (EPI)

Santa Monica College  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** MUNOZ\_MARIA <[REDACTED]>**Date:** Friday, October 20, 2023 at 8:49 AM**To:** Putros, Tremonisha <[REDACTED]>**Subject:** Re: Self-Advocacy Observer Contribution from Tremonisha Putros

Good morning Tremonisha,

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU for your kindness, support and advocacy! I appreciate you deeply for taking the time to share with me your thoughts and giving me the space to share in our session earlier this week. The support I received was so needed. I am so happy to report that the play will not be moving forward! I am so thrilled for our students and community. I'll share more when I see you at the next session but for now I get to work on how to support our students to heal from this experience.

In community!

Maria Muñoz, Ph.D.

She/Her/Ella ([Learn about pronouns](#))

Interim Dean of Equity, Pathways and Inclusion (EPI)

Santa Monica College  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Putros, Tremonisha <[REDACTED]>**Date:** Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 11:49 AM**To:** MUNOZ\_MARIA <[REDACTED]>**Subject:** Self-Advocacy Observer Contribution from Tremonisha Putros

CAUTION: This email originated outside SMC.

Dear Dr. Munoz,

It's [REDACTED]  
d

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---

**From:** SAWOSKI\_PERVIZ <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 29, 2023 2:43 PM  
**To:** Weaver\_Deirdre <[REDACTED]>; MUNOZ\_MARIA <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Fw: your concerns

Hi Dierdre or Maria,

I haven't heard back from this student yet. Would you happen to have his SMC email?  
Perhaps I can reach him there?

thanks,

Perviz

*Perviz Sawoski  
Chair, Theatre Arts  
Santa Monica College*

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
*she/ her*

---

**From:** SAWOSKI\_PERVIZ  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 6:50 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** your concerns

Dear Dagmawe,

I understand you have some concerns about our upcoming production of *By The River Rivanna*.

Would you like to meet with me to see how I can help you?

I can be available sometime next week at limited times. If you let me know your availability, I'll be happy to schedule you.

Thanks,

best,

*Perviz Sawoski  
Chair, Theatre Arts  
Santa Monica College*

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
*she/ her*

Text Message  
Fri, Oct 20 at 1:01 AM

[REDACTED]  
JJ I know it's late. I'm on the phone with VP Beardsley.  
AND THE PLAY IS OFF!!!

[REDACTED]  
I'm glad to hear.  
Let me know what you want to do. I'm here for you.

Update when you can.  
Wondering how it went down.

[REDACTED]  
JJ I'm still on the phone with Jason... I'll call you when we wrap up

Fri, Oct 20 at 2:58 AM

[REDACTED]  
Can't sleep so I'm gonna dream awake of what comes next:  
  
I'm hoping therapy is offered to the student cast.  
And that they get to choose the next play and the new  
Black playwright in residence.  
And a scholarship for 4year.  
And a formal apology from the college.

[REDACTED]  
I can't either I'm on phone with Jermaine now lol 😊 I love that !!

[REDACTED]  
JJ These are all great ask! And I specifically brought up your 1st ask concerning therapeutic support for the cast!

Fri, Oct 20 at 5:02 AM

[REDACTED]  
What in the holy hell? This roller coaster is something else!  
  
Can I dream awake too? I love all of these asks. My dream is that Perviz is no longer chair. But they only have three full timers in their department. Merge temporarily with another department and remove Perviz as chair

SB

SB

She is toxic and we don't want a Black playwright in residence to have to deal and report to her

Fri, Oct 20 at 6:44 AM



to "I know it's late. I'm on the phone with VP Beardsley. AND THE PLAY IS OFF!!!"

Wow thankful to rise to this. Curious of course.

Dreamstate I will also add 1) For faculty champions of integrity in pedagogy to lead conversation and CHANGE in the contract and policy for parameters in "freedom of expression" and "academic freedom". 2) Inquiry into the legal and financial risk to the college due to play - were both sides of the risk consulted or just the FA ? Did legal look at ALL precedents regarding all legal arguments in response to the play or just the FA and the San Diego case to avoid it and make that recommendation based on that limited analysis 3) Inquiry into an abuse of power (in all its direct and subtle forms) of the instructor/director and student/performer dynamic. 4) Inquiry of students, staff and fellow faculty regarding Perviz as Chair and bring light to other ways she has avoided and disregarded oversight and disrespected others.

SK

I have more but will leave it there. Thank you for being family through this. Jermaine appreciate you beyond words.

Yes! An investigation by an outside entity is needed to help repair some of the damage created.

Please let me know when she officially confirms her decision in an email.

I need to see it in writing.

SB

Sasha - allllll of thaaaatttt. And I hear you, Mari.

Just reading this AMAZING news and so HAPPY for our

students and community. Thank you Jermaine for your leadership throughout all of this and I am humbled by the solidarity experienced with so many to protect our students and community! Jermaine, let us know if you're up to still meeting to discuss next steps BUT please take some time to take care of yourself. Love to u all

██████████  
❤️ to " Just reading this AMAZING news and so HAPPY for our students and community. Thank you Jermaine for your leadership throughout all of this and I am humbled by the solidarity experienced with so many to protect our students and community! Jermaine, let us know if you're up to still meeting to discuss next steps BUT please take some time to take care of yourself. Love to u all"

Fri, Oct 20 at 8:59 AM

██████████  
Just arrived at my office hoping to open the email to see if that message from the president's office.  
Nothing yet.

How is that possible?

JW  
I know! We need to let the folks who were planning to protest know whether to do next!

██████████  
U know she can't make decisions! Plus ██████████ writes everything for her lol 😏

██████████  
Hey y'all, I'm just getting up. When ██████████ and I spoke last night after I talk with ██████████, we both felt it would be important to still hold space this evening instead of protesting provide a healing space so people can process, vent, or reflect on the events of this week. We already have the room reserved...

And I think this would be, an amazing opportunity for EPI to host all of the affinity groups and signatories to the letter that went to Dr. Jeffrey in sponsorship of a healing space this evening.

Any thoughts?



JJ

And talking to text , so I hope this all makes sense

Jocelynn Winn

JW

Yes, I like this idea

Officially the protest is still on, until she publicly announces that it's not happening.

I love this, [redacted]!!! Let's do it!!!!

If the college formally calls off the production, we can use the orientation hall space to process, as Jermaine beautifully detailed.

There's still pain and anger that should and needs to be cared for. We should not expect senior management can properly attend to the collective injury.

♥️ to "If the college formally calls off the production, we can use the orientation hall space to process, as Jermaine beautifully detailed.

There's still pain and anger that should and needs to be cared for. We should not expect senior management can properly attend to the collective injury. "

Just arrived at my dr appt and waiting. Love, love the idea to hold a healing and reflective space this evening. You can count on epi to support this effort and others as we build them together. As soon as I get back to my home office I'll get working but u can count on food from epi and supporting the logistics and being a thought partner on how to best our students and community today and the days to come.

It's 10am. Still waiting on that office of the president message. 🕒

Y'all sure they're not making a move on us??? 😬

A student sent this to me from the Corsair

[https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flinkprotect.cudasvc.com%2Furl%3Fa%3Dhttps%253a%252f%252fwww.thecorsaironline.com%252fcorsair%252f2023%252f10%252f20%252fsmc-by-the-river-rivanna-production-is-cancelled%26c%3DE%2C1%2CeRZaAcQ8dNwPOpbPDRd1pZFdF8mk5IPvczYttXINZ3hMu2QGVqkPDwJ2fmjUa9FZlyopKy7AshA\\_2mLU\\_McP\\_EkHgbnvycMYtaZ-TqzvGywgwBJ1jsic6S%26typo%3D1&data=05%7C01%7Cbradford\\_sherri%40smc.edu%7C28e54c5f51af4882fdf608dbd191c3db%7Cbe95da8a67ab4574a292eeb9e5694a69%7C0%7C0%7C638334196259155278%7CUnknown%7CTWFBpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQljoiv2luMzliLCJBTil6lk1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&data=yaH4zGa7A2ZjWgueCMWlxsewEOiQe%2Bv3v6tYDJLWOfE%3D&reserved=0](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flinkprotect.cudasvc.com%2Furl%3Fa%3Dhttps%253a%252f%252fwww.thecorsaironline.com%252fcorsair%252f2023%252f10%252f20%252fsmc-by-the-river-rivanna-production-is-cancelled%26c%3DE%2C1%2CeRZaAcQ8dNwPOpbPDRd1pZFdF8mk5IPvczYttXINZ3hMu2QGVqkPDwJ2fmjUa9FZlyopKy7AshA_2mLU_McP_EkHgbnvycMYtaZ-TqzvGywgwBJ1jsic6S%26typo%3D1&data=05%7C01%7Cbradford_sherri%40smc.edu%7C28e54c5f51af4882fdf608dbd191c3db%7Cbe95da8a67ab4574a292eeb9e5694a69%7C0%7C0%7C638334196259155278%7CUnknown%7CTWFBpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQljoiv2luMzliLCJBTil6lk1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&data=yaH4zGa7A2ZjWgueCMWlxsewEOiQe%2Bv3v6tYDJLWOfE%3D&reserved=0) (https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flinkprotect.cudasvc.com%2Furl%3Fa%3Dhttps%253a%252f%252fwww.thecorsaironline.com%252fcorsair%252f2023%252f10%252f20%252fsmc-by-the-river-rivanna-production-is-cancelled%26c%3DE%2C1%2CeRZaAcQ8dNwPOpbPDRd1pZFdF8mk5IPvczYttXINZ3hMu2QGVqkPDwJ2fmjUa9FZlyopKy7AshA\_2mLU\_McP\_EkHgbnvycMYtaZ-TqzvGywgwBJ1jsic6S%26typo%3D1&data=05%7C01%7Cbradford\_sherri%40smc.edu%7C28e54c5f51af4882fdf608dbd191c3db%7Cbe95da8a67ab4574a292eeb9e5694a69%7C0%7C0%7C638334196259155278%7CUnknown%7CTWFBpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQljoiv2luMzliLCJBTil6lk1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&data=yaH4zGa7A2ZjWgueCMWlxsewEOiQe%2Bv3v6tYDJLWOfE%3D&reserved=0)

SB

Stating the production was cancelled and look at Perviz's comments at the end

SB

Ridiculous!!!! She means the harm the play did to us!!!

JW

Gaslighting

SK

Yup predictable. Nope. 🙄

██████████  
Jermaine, please have someone join that phone call with the president.

Best practice is to not be alone with such a high stake issue.

Fri, Oct 20 at 12:16 PM

I'm back now and we have pizza and drinks ordered for tonight. Delivery will arrive at 5pm.

Sat, Oct 21 at 7:58 AM

██████████  
After hearing the students last night I woke up this morning with joy and happiness! I'm so thankful for all of you and the work you've put in for our students!!!! I know we were all destined to meet in this time and space for this purpose!! If I know one thing in this lifetime WE got it right this week!! I'm proud to be SMC because of y'all!!! We are the best part of SMC!! Have a great weekend everyone!!!!

SB  
I love you, Wendi. You are truly Big Sista Almighteeeee! You always come into the space with wisdom and great counsel. And yes - last night was sooo amazing. I'm so glad that we could be in a space together. I swear it felt like a family reunion!!

I was also reflecting - I will never forget ██████████ (the student who spoke) asking me how to get a play shut down. And I remember saying I don't know, I've never seen that done before.

SB

Who knew that a few weeks later, we would be here. 😍

iMessage  
Mon, Oct 16 at 5:27 PM

I keep trying to call u each back but the call won't go through. I'm sorry. But I will try to connect with Jason and see where we are at.

Tue, Oct 17 at 12:56 PM

My hope is crushed. Just learned that the play will move forward as a result of "academic freedom". Such BS!!!!

[REDACTED]  
I heard. We have to get ready to mobilize for a protest on Friday

SB

[REDACTED]  
This is devastating! I am bobbing and weaving in and out of traffic blasting my gospel, driving 90 mph. I will be on campus this afternoon. We will be planning a protest for Friday for the debut of the play. Maria if you are on campus today I would love to get with you so that we can talk further, even if you're not on campus I will definitely call you within the next two hours.

JJ

[REDACTED]  
Don't you DARE be driving like this, Jermaine! If you die, I will KILL you!!! LOL

SB

[REDACTED]  
Chile... I'm gonna live! There's work to be done...

[REDACTED]  
And I just looked down at my phone. I didn't see everybody that was a text thread. I want to get with all of you all this afternoon!

JJ

I'm here on campus and I definitely want to be part of the planning! Plz let me know when and where to meet you. If u want we can meet here at the epicenter anytime after 2:30

[REDACTED]  
I just got pulled over by the police 🚔

Sasha on the phone 📞 with me!

JJ

Jesus help ...

Oh no! Plz let us know you're ok.

Valeria & Thomas also would like to join us

Sasha stayed on the phone with me... I'm okay.  
I was going 90mph apparently, but the officer gave me a  
break and wrote the ticket for 75mph.  
Jesus be a fence!

JJ This event has triggered me!!!

Tue, Oct 17 at 2:34 PM

Happy to hear you're safe and, hopefully, now on campus.  
Plz let me know if we have a time and location.

Hi all, I spoke with [REDACTED] a little bit ago and shared that  
Thomas is cool with us meeting at the student equity  
center. Does that work for everyone? 4pm?

If anyone needs to zoom in, we're setting up the owl system  
and will send a zoom link soon.

EJ Hi! Could someone please send me the zoom link?

JJ I just parked...

I'll join the convo in a bit. Asking history department to  
support the statement.

[REDACTED] is working on setting up the zoom link and will send  
it out shortly

He's sending it to marisol and eartha directly.

[REDACTED], please add History Department/Ethnic Studies as  
a co-signatory.

Eartha Johnson

EJ

I think it would be helpful to reach out to other colleges to get support in writing and perhaps in person. Could we get a copy of the script?

SB

I can send you a copy of the script

1 Reply

EJ

I can also reach out to my peeps at the chancellor's office.

SB

I can send you a copy of the script

1 Reply

EJ

Got it. Ty!

EJ

I'll be back for Friday

EJ

I think a representative from each constituency group should be the go to for media



#NOT Proud to be SMC

SB

**Eartha** it makes me think about what Ashanti said about only having a couple of folks. But maybe there could be someone else from one of the other groups.

Wed, Oct 18 at 8:08 AM

Good morning.

Wondering if you feel comfortable sharing the script with [REDACTED] and to ask for her support. Maybe she can raise our concern with Black organizations from Santa Monica and they can pressure the president or BOT members to rethink the performance.



Sherri Bradford



█ is coming to the protest. I've been in communication with her about this and thank you for reminding me to send her the script

SB

And I think that's an amazing idea, █

█ called me this morning and the █ has linked the play in the article. We can forward it to her. I'm driving so when I get stationary I can send it

JJ



Playwright or Wrong? — The | Corsair  
thecorsaironline.com

JJ

Hmm.  
No mention of sambo and diminishing of sexual violence in the slave system.  
No mention of the collective's concern over student and community trauma.

This piece reads like it's mainly an issue on controversial "art" and academic freedom.

Wish the article gave bullet points of problematic parts of the plot.

Maybe they can interview Trisden or Justice for ethnic studies perspective?



I can do it, but I would like our newer faculty to have the opportunity to do what they do.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED] [REDACTED] told me this morning that the paper would like to reach out to you. I told her I would connect with you to see what your thoughts were.

Wed, Oct 18 at 11:27 AM

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] asked:



Where is Pan African Alliance putting out their statement?

Sherri Bradford

He's on the phone with us now



So he is going to get a draft to [REDACTED] tomorrow morn

I'm just coming up for air so apologies for not being able to connect/respond sooner. [REDACTED] I just tried calling you. And will try u again



[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

He's on the phone with media

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]



History/ethnic studies about to talk with [REDACTED]

Wed, Oct 18 at 1:39 PM

I just learned that midterm motivation is happening at the quad on Tuesday and Wednesday from 11am-1pm. Power 106 will be playing music throughout the event on Tuesday. This maybe a bit challenging to have a teach in esp on Tuesday.

Wednesday is suppose to be much quieter and I think only yoga is planned

Marisol Moreno

We just wrapped up with the [REDACTED]

Our points

#1: stay focus on community social contract: it's not about academic freedom (they always had the freedom to decide



academic freedom (they always had the freedom to decide which play would be produced); our collective concern rests on why they would choose to move forward after Black community expressed harm and injury; and why produce this play when there are plenty of other plays on and by Black playwrights with expertise and better grasp of the complexity of race, intersectionality, and enslavement; our disappointment that the play and production as curriculum is not representative of culturally responsive and anti racist pedagogy and practice.



Point #2 rest on the historical and cultural inaccuracies riddled throughout the script. Justice and Trisden provided plenty. And Justice especially pointed out the fallacies and misunderstandings of his use of Yoruba religion since it's part of her personal identity and scholarly knowledge.



Point #3:  
How we as faculty of color with different positionalities are impacted the college's erasure and diminishing of Black pain and trauma from institutional violence and white supremacy past and present.  
It sends a message both to Black students and employees that our voices, experiences, and wellness are expendable and don't matter.



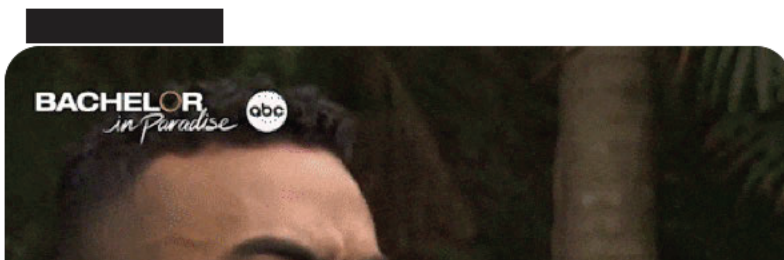
Please let me know if and when the statement to [REDACTED] can be shared with the affinity groups and programs listed as co-signers.



Wed, Oct 18 at 9:54 PM

[REDACTED]  
I'm on the phone 📞 with [REDACTED] She shared with me that the "dialogue couch" that what was hired for the play to teach Black students how to speak in West African "slave" dialect is a current employee who is a White woman!

JJ





SB

GIPHY via #images

[Redacted]

JJ

Chile... heaven help us!

[Redacted]



EJ

GIPHY via #images

[Redacted]



Colonialism and white supremacy at its best.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

smc.edu



[Redacted]

JJ

This is the dialect coach they hired 🙄



SB



"I also specialize in sambo voice"

SB

Seriously

Thu, Oct 19 at 5:33 AM

counter with actors of their own, mirroring the actors in the play and those actors could tell the audience entering the theater what they really think about their role and how the playwright portrays them. Talk about sabotage!

The protestors could do a performance upstaging his performance.

I would just hate for this guy to receive any notoriety from this

them. Theatergoers hovering about can at least have an opposing view and question the play. he run or

They could get a a huge photo of enslaved people in America showing the abomination, layer

in photos of WEALTHY Black Americans from the 1800's forward who were and are very much connected to their culture like Schomburg and lastly of course pictures of slave owning men and women and de words anyone



A friend sent a message of support from a local Black Playwright.



SB

That idea of a performance of our own is brilliant.

Thu, Oct 19 at 6:20 PM



is the young woman's name

■■■■■  
JJ I have been summoned to Pico Palace, to meet with Dr. ■■■■ at 4:30 PM today!

■■■■■  
OMG

I think this is a good sign!

■■■■■  
Ummm no

She's creating an opp to hear directly from PAA leadership.

■■■■■  
Yeah

I just got a call too but can respond to it for at least half hr from now

Can't

I'm in the car and don't want to have convo in the car

■■■■■  
SB Oooooop

■■■■■  
I'm concerned if Jermaine is there by himself. I worry about her comportment and retaliation.

Who else will be there?

■■■■■  
SB ■■■■ - do you want me to be there?

Let's be clear - I don't want to. But ■■■■ and ■■■■ just mentioned this about being concerned of you being there alone

I'm sure he can communicate with her that he'd like others to join him and he can tell her who.



■■■■■

I'm sorry I just wrapped up class... I saw during class that Lady had sent several meeting request while I was in class and so I took a moment and stepped in the hall and called her and she asked to set up a meeting ASAP. I asked her is this just with me and she said yes! I haven't really had time to process it cause I had to step right back in class. I'm out of class now, what are your thoughts?

JJ

■■■■■

Jesus...

So you asked her if it's just with you. But could you tell her that you may want an additional person?

SB

■■■■■

Want me to join you?  
I always need a witness for the gaslighting.

■■■■■

It would be perfect for ■■■■■ to join you. Her background and expertise would be amazing for this

SB

■■■■■

Let me know. Leaving campus soon. Just picking up dinner at ■■■■■ cafe.

■■■■■

Plan on coming. ■■■■■ is calling ■■■■■ right now and saying he wants to bring me and you

SB

■■■■■

Lawd help us

■■■■■

Are u on campus too?

■■■■■

Yes

■■■■■

Come over to my office

SB

Marisol Moreno

■■■■■

Ooh! I can visit the poohs.

SB

Yaaaassss



Just waiting for our order and will walk over.

JJ

Come over [REDACTED]  
We are leaving in 5

Wed, Oct 18 at 7:34 PM

[REDACTED]  
Thank you, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for allowing me to join you today.

I'm so sorry that you continuously have to plead for the humanity and dignity of Black students.

Please invest in your well-being and take a moment to feel and be moved by the love of community. Your courage and passion is deeply appreciated.



I'm gonna treat myself to a Cuba libre tonight and will enjoy preparing for tomorrow's Chicax history class. 🥰

[REDACTED]  
Girl - we are talking about you right now. I cannot put into words how valuable your words, your presence, your honesty, your expertise meant in this moment.

I owe you multiple Palomas and margaritas.

SB

I love you dearly