

AN EVENING WITH

PHILIP MORRIS

6:30 p.m., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7

This is Philip Morris' kick off for UA's Career Fair and the first step in the company's interviewing process. If you're graduating in May and looking for a job or internship, don't miss this event!

Business attire suggested.

Blum, Alan

From: Blum, Alan
To: cclark@ua.edu
Cc:
Subject: FW: Philip Morris and the College
Attachments:

From: Blum, Alan
Sent: Wed 2/15/2006 12:36 AM
To: cclark@ccom.ua.edu
Subject: Philip Morris and the College

E. Culpepper Clark, PhD
 Dean
 College of Communication and Information Sciences
 Rheese Phifer Hall

Dear Cully,

I have been hoping to hear from you since last year, when you indicated I might be recommended for an adjunct appointment in the College of Communications to utilize my expertise as an editor of medical journals and as a medical journalist and commentator in the print and broadcast media. You also thoughtfully reviewed and circulated the information I provided about the MacDonald television and film archive, and it's too bad that that could not come about. I've left a few messages, the most recent of which were last week in regard to the relationship between Philip Morris USA and the College of Communications.

As you know, for thirty years I have written and lectured extensively (including at universities in every state in the US) on tobacco problems. In addition to a book and several invited chapters in medical textbooks, I have written a cover story for The Quill in 1986 on the ethics of newspapers' acceptance of cigarette advertising, an endpaper in 1990 for The Chronicle of Higher Education on divestment of tobacco stocks by universities, and, in 1986, the first article ever published by The Washington Post on the targeting of African-Americans by cigarette marketers. The Lancet and Columbia Journalism Review editorially saluted the theme issues on the world tobacco pandemic that I edited at the New York State Journal of Medicine in 1983 and 1985, and The Washington Monthly gave me its Journalism Award for this work.

The dynamism of the tobacco industry has never ceased to amaze me, and I've tried to alert the public and the health professions alike to the industry's resilience in the face of legislation, litigation, and public condemnation. In 1998 many in the health community believed that the \$250 billion Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) between the state attorneys-general and the tobacco industry would mark a major turning point in the reduction of death, disease, and suffering wrought by cigarette smoking. Some even viewed the MSA as the beginning of the end of the cigarette companies' ability to stimulate, maintain, and reinforce the nicotine addiction of fifty million Americans.

That all too many of my colleagues were seeing the future through Rose-colored glasses was brought home to me last week when I was accosted and expelled from the Bryant Conference Center by a University of Alabama administrator for attempting to observe the process of recruitment by Philip Morris and RJ Reynolds tobacco companies at the UA Career Day. I subsequently learned that this expulsion was authorized as the result of a fallacious report emanating from the College of Communications and Information Sciences that I had disrupted the Philip Morris USA cigarette sales territory manager student recruitment reception in the rotunda of Rheese-Phifer Hall the previous evening.

The Vice-President of Student Affairs had been led to believe that I had arrived at the reception with a "camera crew" and "bright lights" while making an "unauthorized documentary". None of this was true: I went with one other individual who had a palm-sized home videorecorder with no external lighting. I have been conducting ethnographic research on the tobacco industry and the anti-smoking movement for three decades and have

openly photographed and otherwise recorded hundreds of tobacco-sponsored events. I also serve as a member of the University of Alabama's Tobacco Task Force, which was created in the past year to address tobacco-related issues at UA; at the inaugural meeting of the task force in November, I had proposed that the first problem to address was the presence on campus of job recruiters from the tobacco industry. I had also attended previous UA Career Days when I collected tobacco recruitment materials and other propaganda.

The four students whom I unobtrusively interviewed at the reception all agreed to talk with me, as did Philip Morris recruiter and UA College of Communications alumna Tiffany Elliott. I gave each of these individuals my card and contact address at the Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society..

In fact, I had learned (just before giving a seminar to UA premedical students on tobacco use and promotion in society) about the presence of the manufacturer of Marlboro in the College of Communications from a colleague who was dismayed by the proliferation of flyers for Philip Morris student recruitment reception throughout the Department of Journalism. I attempted unsuccessfully to contact you that day. I also talked with Assistant Dean Cooper, who verified that this was indeed a reception sponsored by the cigarette maker and that no ethical reservations had been raised about it.

In pursuing the story behind the presence and influence of Philip Morris USA at the University of Alabama, then, I am left with several questions that I hope you will address for me:

*How long has Philip Morris cultivated a recruiting relationship with the College of Communications?

*How much money has changed hands, and have individual faculty members accepted remuneration from the cigarette maker?

*Has anyone else raised a question about the ethics of a cigarette company being permitted to host a reception in the rotunda, a setting of special honor, of the College of Communications?

*Given the disproportionately higher rate of lung cancer among African-Americans who smoke (as reported in a national news story in The Tuscaloosa News on January 26) as well as a high rate of smoking in this population (and a state that is vying for highest lung cancer mortality rate in the US), is it appropriate for the College of Communications to facilitate a cigarette company's targeting of African-American students as potential cigarette sales territory managers and summer interns?

*Would the College draw a line at permitting any job recruiter from hosting a student reception?

*Should there be opportunities provided for presentations to public relations and journalism students about the health and economic toll taken by the product manufactured by Philip Morris, including films and images of Alabamians dying of cigarette-induced diseases?

*Presuming that it was Philip Morris that initiated the idea for a reception, would turning down the cigarette company's request to host an event in the College of Communications have been an abrogation of the company's freedom of speech or its freedom to congregate?

*Was my expulsion from the UA student career day, as the result of a report emanating from the College of Communications, an abrogation of my academic freedom and a violation of the state open meetings policy?

*Would it be hypocritical for the University's Tobacco Task Force to recommend policies aimed at reducing smoking on campus and to offer smoking cessation classes for students, faculty, and staff at the same time as the University has put out the welcome mat for Philip Morris (to recruit its students to circulate throughout Alabama in an effort to reinforce the addiction of the less well-educated, poorer, and less-privileged populations who represent the tobacco industry's major future market)?

*Is it contrary to the mission of the University, on the campus of which a medical school is charged with preventing disease, for the College of Communications to host a cigarette company recruitment reception?

*Is it ethical for College of Communications faculty members to urge their students to attend recruitment receptions by a tobacco company?

*How can a student in the College be assured that there will be no reprisals for writing a letter about what the student perceived as the deceptive nature of Philip Morris' recruitment reception, the endorsement by faculty and administrators of the recruitment session, pressure to attend the reception, and the very idea of cigarette recruiters hanging around the College?

I would greatly value your responses to these questions, and at any time I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this subject with you and the faculty of the College of Communications. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Alan

Alan Blum, MD
Professor and Gerald Leon Wallace Endowed Chair in Family Medicine
Director, The University of Alabama Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society

Blum, Alan

From: Dr. Culpepper Clark [cclark@ua.edu]
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2006 9:09 AM
To: Blum, Alan
Subject: Re: FW: Philip Morris and the College

Alan, I was in the office one day last week (Friday) and am in the office for the first day this week (today). If your email was intended to be insulting, it accomplished that objective. If your purpose for showing up among the students at the P-M function was intimidation, you accomplished that objective.

There is nothing in your strictures below with which I do not have longstanding familiarity. There is much lacking in your application of those strictures to our situation, which was far less than met your eye.

As a personal matter, I would ban military recruiters, oil companies, alcohol representatives, and tobacco, but I would not be sustained in the courts or in the counsels of my own university.

I commend you for the constructive career and accomplishments you have built in opposition to the tobacco industry.

Cully