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THE NORTH AMERICAN SCHOOL OF THE ARTSY AND SOMEWHAT MUSICALLY INCLINED

WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA, USA

"Ars Non Gratia Artis Sed Gratia Pecuniae"

Dear Graduate:

Every day in our offices, within the shade of the towering oak trees which can be found throughout our campus, we receive reports of your progress from every corner of the world where Americans are still welcome - Canada, Costa Rica, the United Kingdom, some Scandinavian countries, as well as Puerto Rico, and - perhaps - Guam.

Once in a while, we also get a response to our email and telemarketing efforts in terms of support for our Annual Fund, the Towering Oaks Endowment, the Faculty Emergency Vacation Fund, and our newest bequest giving program - "Give Ahead, Not When You're Dead." But this letter is not about money; it is about something much more important - our academic integrity.

State government here in Minnesota has written to say that our Master's Degree Program comes under their supervision and control. It seems that because of our focus on distance learning via the web, our very generous faculty leave policy, and our modest tuition, these bureaucrats have dared to accuse us of being nothing more than a "diploma mill," something we have always admitted with pride and without prevarication.

But you know how the government can be - I doubt they'll stop until they can force us to *raise* our standards in some significant way.

Al Factotum, our Board of Regent, and I have discussed this situation in detail, and we've come to the conclusion that our academic program matches up well with any "big-time" university's football and basketball programs, and we cannot understand why we are being singled out and discriminated against. In fact, there is just no good reason for the state to threaten the illegitimacy of our program.

Al and I have consulted with the Faculty, reviewed the situation with the Alumni/ Alumnae/ Alumna Council, and we have decided to meet this threat to your academic training and our livelihood "head-on." We know you wouldn't want it any other way, and if you could send along a little something by check, credit card, stock certificate, or even PayPal, to nourish both our work and our proud towering oaks, we would be most grateful.

Thank you, in advance, for your support.

Yours sincerely,

NICHOLAS NASH, PhD
President