

# Faux Tech Tattler

## News You Can Use

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### Exclusive Interview: Former President Verdigris

Juan Rodriguez

*The Tattler sat down with former Faux Tech President Gerald Verdigris for his first candid interview since his sudden retirement in 2018. Part two of the interview is presented below; part one appeared in Vol. 1, No. 4, September 27th.*

#### **Tattler: Why did you retire?**

Verdigris: I'd been at the college for a long time, and various things going on, both personally and professionally, made this the right time to go. There were legal issues, matters under seal, that helped the decision, but it was mainly about it being time. As I mentioned, we'd grown the enrollment to an unprecedented extent, and that was really rewarding for me, but the matter of the default rate for student loans was getting really sticky. I felt the college would be better off dealing with that issue without me complicating it by being the face of student loans, which I had pushed for so tenaciously. I still think they were right for the college, but I can see they had their downside too. I acted in the college's interests on that and other matters.

#### **Tattler: What are your future plans?**

Verdigris: Well, I'm retired, so I won't say I have any firm plans. I'm enjoying the time traveling and writing my memoir, *Twenty Years at the Helm*, that I expect to finish in the next few

months. I expect that will entail a book tour, so for the next year or so I'll be dealing with that. As you know, my wife and I have parted ways, so that's taking some getting used to also. It's limited my finances significantly. And there's the chance I'll do some lecturing for Aspen or consulting for the DoE in the coming years.

#### **Tattler: What advice would you like to give your successor?**

Verdigris: Speigel's a pro. She doesn't need my advice, but if I had to offer something, I think it would be to keep the faculty on its knees and the board under control. I found the faster I talked, the better they (I mean the board) liked what I was saying. I really got into the habit of talking non-stop while actually saying very little of substance until the audience was exhausted. If you can mesmerize them with the buzzwords of the day, you can get away with almost anything. I also found that alcohol made a big difference. She just needs to remember that the trustees are dilatants, political appointees, who have really no idea about how to run a college. That's one of the biggest jobs a president has, managing the board. As far as the faculty is concerned, the way to keep them on their knees is to keep them afraid you're going to cancel their contracts. That really keeps them in line. Any suggestion that we adopt a tenure policy has to be crushed immediately because with tenure, you lose that fear factor, and that's really, really valuable. I wouldn't have been able to do many,

many of the innovations I introduced if the faculty had not been cowed.

#### **Tattler: One last question. You're qualified to teach psychology, so will you come back to teach if asked?**

Verdigris: Abso-tively. I'd love to. Getting back into the classroom would be really, really rewarding for me both personally and professionally. It would be like coming full circle, ending my career where it began and giving back to a college that gave me so many rewards. I hope I'm asked, but I have no illusions about that. I was not well-loved by the faculty, so I doubt I'll be welcomed into the fold even as an adjunct instructor. Also, I don't think the college would be willing to pay my rate, and I can't work for the standard adjunct rate.

### **Four Charged in War Memorial Vandalism**

Pearlie Sands

Faux Tech police arrested four students on Thursday in the Verdigris Hall courtyard. The students were charged with vandalism after they allegedly defaced the college's war memorial.

Melissa Gerton, Alfredo Milano, Andrew Kinski, and Angela Delmonico each face two misdemeanor charges of defacing public property and one felony count of assaulting a police officer, according to the incident report on file in the campus police headquarters.

"The suspects were observed drawing sex organs on the memorial,"

said Corporal Denise Pritchard of Faux Tech campus police. "All four were holding [permanent marker]s when they were confronted by police," Pritchard said.

The memorial, which was donated to the college by the local VFW chapter in 1975, lists the names of all Faux Tech alumni killed in military action abroad.

"The students were charged with assault because they turned their markers on the arresting officers, one of whom suffered cornea damage requiring surgery," Pritchard said.

"I do not understand why students would find the memorial offensive," said Phil Mitchell, the VFW representative responsible for keeping the memorial up to date. "We just added the names of two soldiers killed in Afghanistan last year," Mitchell said.

"The four students in question have been suspended pending the outcome of their criminal cases," said Tracy McKinney, Faux Tech conduct officer. "If they are found guilty of either charge, they will be permanently expelled," McKinney said.

"I believe they got the idea that all memorials are bad from the constant press coverage of the Confederate monument debate," said retired history professor Jerome Furino. "As the political climate becomes more adversarial, critical thinking seems to decay at an exponential rate. If it goes on much longer, I fear we'll be a nation of morons," Furino said.

"I suppose they believe if bad things in the past are forgotten, they won't have happened," said Rene Benton, third-year cosmetology student. "Still, I don't see how drawing penises on the memorial will accomplish that, or anything," said Benton.

Grounds supervisor John Bradford said the memorial will be restored after his department is cleared to do so by court officials. "We hope to clean it before Veterans Day," Bradford said.

## Employee Claims Counseling Not Confidential; Discrimination

*Petunia Beeson*

A Faux Tech employee who sought personal counseling from the college's contracted service provider says the college received detailed reports of her counseling sessions in violation of privacy policies and HIPPA, according to court filing.

The lawsuit filed in superior court alleges that Senaco Employment Services, Inc. divulged confidential health information obtained in counseling sessions with the employee to the employee's supervisor, who subsequently used that information to block the employee's promotion.

"She called me into her office to discuss details about my life that could only have come from the counselling sessions because I had not discussed them with anyone else," said Jane Purefoy, a lab assistant at the college.

William Karanov, Faux Tech Associate Vice President of Human Resources, said the contract with the Senaco explicitly prevents details from employees' personal counseling session being communicated to the college unless those details present a clear and present danger to the college. Because of the pending legal action, Karanov would not discuss other specifics of the case.

"She told me I was not fit for the new position I had applied for because of those specific details," said Purefoy. "So I called my attorney."

## Parking Deck Find Raises Concerns for FT

*Marjorie Burquist*

Faculty activists held a demonstration on Tuesday in protest of the college's decision to delay completion of the south-end parking facility that was scheduled to open later this

month.

"We've waited for this parking deck for years, and now the president is delaying it mid-construction," said Paula Doria, history instructor. "The surrounding parking lots are knee-deep in mud from this project and we have nowhere to park."

According to project manager Dennis Needham, the construction was halted when the contractors unearthed what seemed to be a 16<sup>th</sup>-century Christian burial site.

"If the dating turns out to be correct, this could be a significant historical find since the early Spanish expeditions in this area were long believed to have been 50 - 100 miles west of here," Needham said.

"The college is cooperating with the Smithsonian and the National Parks Service to allow study of the site to determine its age and authenticity," said Janet Speigel, Faux Tech President. "We'll evaluate the situation and make the necessary decisions once the study is completed."

In the meantime, FT employees are encouraged to carpool and continue to park in student parking areas.

"The extra walking will be good for them," said Booreman Jones, Dean of Public Health and Safety. "We encourage all employees to park far from their offices and to use the stairs to promote cardiovascular fitness."

## Do you have news for the *Tattler*?

Send tips to the editor, Marjorie Burquist, c/o [tattler1@protonmail.com](mailto:tattler1@protonmail.com).

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