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May 15, 2024

**Via Electronic Delivery and U.S. Mail**

Dr. James T. Brewer  
President, Mitchell Community College  
500 W. Broad Street  
Statesville, NC 28677  
jbrewer@mitchellcc.edu

Dear Dr. Brewer:

My name is Sandy Senn. I have 34 years of experience as a defense trial lawyer in South Carolina. My largest book of business is defending first responders and am general counsel for the South Carolina Sheriff's Association. As you can imagine, my clients value truthfulness.

I am also a second term state senator who is running for a third term against Rep. Matthew Leber, ~~XXXXXX~~

I have enjoyed an unblemished professional reputation until now. I was called a liar in the Post and Courier newspaper for stating what I believed was the truth; Matthew Leber did not obtain a certificate or degree or an award of distinction from Mitchell Community College.

Information on Leber's status with your school requested by me as early as March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Your registrar responded, indicating that Mr. Leber had attended but did not obtain a degree and Ms. Molly Nicholson advised he was not a distinguished alumnus.

I then hired Todd Garrett, a licensed North Carolina investigator who was a Charlotte-Mecklenburg police officer of 30 years, retiring as a captain. He went to the school and interviewed both your registrar and Molly Nicholson regarding whether Mr. Leber held a degree and whether he received the distinguished/notable alumni award alongside Dale Earnhardt Jr. Both ladies denied those claims and placed them in writing via emails to Investigator Garrett.

When the investigator asked that the information be placed on school letterhead, Mitchell's Vice President of Student affairs, Dr. Daniel McEachern, then affirmed the information had already been given but no letters came to us on letterhead. Not satisfied, I contacted a lawyer with North Carolina credentials who sent a formal public records request to

the school. In response, and on May 2, 2024, he obtained a letter from the registrar on Mitchell Community College letterhead, which stated that Leber had not obtained a “degree, diploma or certificate” from the school and further that he did not obtain an award. I thus felt secure that the college officials were right and that Leber did not obtain a diploma or commendation. Why wouldn’t I? Your officials were also made aware that the inquiry was related to my senate race.

I participated in a local debate and the issue of his educational claims were raised on May 9, 2024. Imagine my surprise when Leber brought what looked like a diploma to the event, but I thought it was fake due to the many affirmations given by three of your employees that he did not graduate or obtain even a certificate much less an associate’s degree from your school. Imagine my further surprise when the day after the debate and on May 10<sup>th</sup>, you wrote to my lawyer and to a Post and Courier reporter indicating that the college subsequently reviewed Mr. Leber’s records and: “We can now confirm his *eligibility* for and receipt of the Associate of Arts degree from the college.” I must say I am confused by your wording of that sentence. As an academic, you stated that he is eligible for (present tense) the degree but also that he obtained it (past tense). So I ask, when did Leber become eligible for a degree and when did he obtain the degree and/or the diploma?

A newspaper article followed with a damning headline calling my character into question. It is attached. Therein, he threatens to sue me. Meanwhile, I blame you and the other college employees for providing me with false information which you all knew would be the subject of a political controversy because I told Ms. Patterson so in writing.

Citizens throughout my state now think I am a liar. That damage cannot be undone. However, it can be somewhat mitigated.

Pursuant to your state’s public records law, I now formally request to know when Rep. Leber became eligible for the degree, when he obtained both the degree and diploma and when it was enrolled. I also request the same thing my lawyer requested of Ms. Patterson on May 14<sup>th</sup> which was for her to explain how the college erred and to preserve all evidence/emails regarding Matthew Leber. I further ask that this information be produced to me, forthwith, and without requiring that we wait the requisite number of days for the production. A quick explanation as to how Leber didn’t have a degree since mid-March to how he became eligible for one and obtained it on May 10<sup>th</sup> would help.

It is unfathomable to me how the school could have erred so grievously causing my reputation to be sullied. But perhaps the school has a reasonable explanation.

Please include in your production all letters, emails, voice mails, phone messages or memos, notes **from and to any source in the possession of the school**. In short, I want everything you have in writing or recorded in any manner so that I can piece together what happened.

While I cannot demand a phone call from you, if you do wish to help me mitigate damages, then please contact me on my cell phone at ~~843-556-4048~~ or call my office at 843-556-4045. I will then try and get this new information to the press so that perhaps I can somewhat recover the damage to my reputation and so that your error might not cost me my senate seat.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely,

Sandra J. Senn

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CC:

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