Notice of Non-Compliance 55-013

Subject: Notification of Non-Compliance for Student Body President Jean Cocco

Date: November 18th, 2014

This shall serve as an official notification that you are in noncompliance with:

Statute 209.3: All members, representatives, and affiliates of Student Government shall conduct themselves with proper decorum at all official Student Government functions or any situations where he or she is acting as a representative of Student Government.
Statute 209.5.5: Participate in any malicious act.
Statute 209.5.5.1: A Malicious Act shall be defined as any act intended to cause physical or personal injury, done with malice, hatred or spite.

The following is noted to be in noncompliance: Student Body President Jean Cocco stated on his Facebook account “If caught skateboarding in this area again, you will be arrested and thrown in jail” in a post in regards to damage done on the Student Memorial. In addition “I will then make sure your face is known to the families and friends who lost their loved ones.”

While it is within the capacity of the Student Body President to enforce University Policy alongside University Officials, the malicious act I cite is the attempted personal injury brought by Student Body President Cocco to have the students reprimanded to the families of those listed on the Student Memorial. The Facebook post shows significant spite towards these individuals, which is how I conclude this act to be one of malicious intent.

Student Body President Cocco also signed the Facebook post with the signature “Your Student Body President”. By signing the post in this matter I conclude that the post was written in the capacity of Jean Cocco being the Student Body President, hence my citing of Statute 209.3.

By the power invested in me by Statute 102.6.3, I hereby do promulgate this Notification of Non-Compliance.

[Signature]
Alexander Johnson
Attorney General
CC:
Student Body President Jean Cocco
Student Body Vice President Rhondel Whyte
Senate President Andy Rodriguez
Senate President Pro-Tempore Abdool Aziz
Chief Justice Sammy Hamed
Senior Justice Daniel Shapiro
SGATO Director Gary Manka
Cocco rails against skating vandals

By Wesley Higgins, NEWS EDITOR  On November 17, 2014

It took all of one week for skateboarders to mark the new student memorial honoring deceased students, and student body president Jean Cocco had harsh words in response.

In a Facebook post Monday afternoon, Cocco said the skateboarders who left black streaks on the memorial bench were “terrible, vile human beings” who will be “arrested and thrown in jail,” if caught.

Cocco further said he would “make sure your face is known to the families and friends who lost their loved ones.”

Nevertheless, he said they should have “a beautiful day.”

The post was deleted less than two hours after dozens of students replied with comments critical of Cocco’s remarks.
Jean Cocco  USF Class of 2016
9 minutes ago

To my friends skateboarding in the Student Memorial space:

You are all terrible, vile human beings.

If caught skateboarding in this area again, you will be arrested and thrown in jail.

I will then make sure your face is known to the families and friends who lost their loved ones.

Therefore, I ask that you please refrain from these juvenile actions or else suffer the necessary ramifications.

Therefore, I ask that you please refrain from these juvenile actions or else suffer the necessary ramifications.

Have a beautiful day.

Sincerely,
Your Student Body President

In an interview with The Oracle, skateboarding club members also voiced concerns. The club's founder Chad Riese said it is ridiculous to give a person an arrest record for grinding on a bench.

"(Cocco) is obviously proud and deserves to be upset, but he's a student, too," Riese said. "When he should represent all students, he instead spoke out like a cranky professor."

Though Riese said skateboarders aren't always the most considerate of citizens, he knew of no one in his club that would vandalize the memorial.

"When skateboarders saw the memorial go up, I don't think they thought they should crash this graveyard," he said. "At the same time, I can see why it is a good place to practice tricks between classes."

Freshman Shaquille Khan said the skater community wouldn't have been offended if Cocco had respectfully asked skaters to not use the memorial as a trick spot.

"It's a very uncommon thing to call anyone a vile human being," Khan said. "It's very harsh and very subjective."

In an interview with The Oracle, Cocco said he made the post less than an hour after finding out

about the damage.

"It was a knee-jerk reaction," he said. "I vented as any angry person would do. It wasn’t to call out the entire skateboarding community, it was to single out the few skateboarders who skateboard in that location."

Though he stands by the sentiment, Cocco said he should act more professionally and that he regrets using the words "vile" and "terrible."

However, the reason Cocco said he deleted the post was because of the comments of other Facebook users.

"The comments were becoming too overwhelming and negative toward why the memorial was built," Cocco said. "I don’t want family members to see the disrespectful posts."

Some comments questioned why it mattered if people skated on public property, whether the bench is meaningful to the memorial and why no one foresaw skateboarders using it.

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**Eli Zucker**
With all due respect (I don’t even skateboard), but it’s a public area, and people will skate through it if they choose to. Maybe it should have been thought about before this was all put up.

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**James Keith**
This is disgraceful. People need to have some respect. Hopefully this can get fixed, and maybe some anti-grind stoppers can get installed so something like this won’t happen again.

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**Barron Dillman**
Put those little metal things that are on almost every other surface on campus

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**Jake Levine**
Kind of extreme to call people vile human beings, I feel like most of them weren’t aware there were skating on the memorial. Negligent? Maybe. Vile? I doubt it

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**Simrun Mirchandani**
Who says its a result of skateboarding (which most likely it is) however, it could be damage from other factors as well. Kind of negligent on your part to put the skating community on blast like that..

"Family members lost their loved ones and they kept commenting how beautiful the place was for their children to be remembered," Cocco said. "They loved how it wasn’t like the old location that was run down."

When Student Government (SG) proposed spending $349,800 on the new memorial last spring, proponents often pointed to the damage skateboarders caused to the old memorial as a reason it should be moved.

Though he regrets the wording of the post, Cocco said he still believes University Police (UP) should arrest anyone who vandalizes the memorial.

"I think the police should arrest you and prosecute you to fullest extent of the law," he said.

“That I still stand by.”

UP Assistant Chief Chris Daniel said putting a student in jail for skating on the memorial would be unlikely.

“They are (Cocco’s) words,” he said. “I’m not going to take the officer’s discretion away.”

UP policy dictates that a student living near Hillsborough County who commits a misdemeanor would be issued an summons.

“We have the option of not putting them in jail because we know where to find them if we need them,” Daniel said. “If they were to fail to show up for the charges, a warrant is put out.”

Daniel said UP is aware of the damage and has increased presence at the site.

“We hope the eyes and ears of the community will help in letting us know so we can respond appropriately,” he said. “We can’t be there all the time.”

Cocco said SG is requesting SAFE Team and campus security to patrol the area frequently.

For further prevention, Cocco said SG is considering posting a sign warning against skateboarding near the memorial.

“We rather not put up a sign near the student memorial because of the pristine-ness of the area,” he said.

Physical Plant is also being rushed to install anti-grinding metal fitting on the bench. Cocco said Physical Plant had been too busy with other projects to do so before the memorial was completed.

“I said let’s give it a week to see if anything happens,” he said. “By golly, it wasn’t even a week.”

Cocco said the repairs could cost the university a substantial amount of money.

Riese said the problem would not be an issue if the university accommodated skateboarding like it does any other sport.

“The culture of skateboarding is only growing and there’s going to be more skaters on campus,” he said. “It’s really sad that even on a diverse campus like USF where there’s fencing, lacrosse or fishing that you’re still treated like a vandal.”

Cocco said he doesn’t mind skateboarders skating on campus, but they should be more mindful of where they skate.

“Do I regret my words and should have been a bit nicer? Yes, but the sentiment is there,” he said. “We need to have the common sense, and the common courtesy, not to commit such acts that hurt loved ones who lost their sons and daughters.”