

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
Evans Hall Room 110
660 Parrington Oval - Norman, Oklahoma 73019-3073

Dear Dr Joseph Harroz Jr

June 16, 2019

I write this letter to you on behalf of the 2000+ members of the Organ Historical Society who have, over the past thirteen years, benefited greatly from the graduates of the American Organ Institute and its remarkable programs.

In my position as the Chief Executive Officer, I too am faced with a myriad of decisions about the ever-evolving future of the Society. The purpose of this letter is to request that you immediately rescind the decision to eliminate the AOI and allow it to continue its unique and treasurable service provided by the faculty and staff.

It is without question that public research universities play a vital role not only for their students, but the larger community and the nation. Their programs should at the very least

- Serve the national interest
- Contribute to the economy
- Provide quality educational opportunities efficiently

The AOI surpasses these goals with dignity, humility and passion.

You are by now completely aware of the statistics regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the programs delivered by the AOI. While the students and their mentors are not regularly featured on ESPN or other national networks, the contribution AOI makes to the local and national community of organists, church leaders, industry builders, scholars, performers, and citizens of the USA, cannot nor should not be underestimated, undervalued, and for certain, dismissed.

The AOI is one-of-a-kind. The University of Oklahoma has an institute that does not exist **anywhere else in the country**. If you have a Mona Lisa in your possession, would you set it on fire or share it with the world?

The AOI faculty, staff and students place innovation at the center of everything they do. Closing the doors tells the world research, training and service to the community is only partially valued across campus.

The AOI has a 100% job placement record. Can any other department or program make the same claim? Closing the doors would be like firing the OU head football coach the day after winning a national championship.

I understand that the AOI has the financial resources to operate for another two years without assistance from the University. This begs the question, why is the University hell-bent on destroying this unique, priceless, and valuable institution? What is the hidden agenda and who stands to gain?

Institutions of higher learning have a duty and responsibility to honor the past, enrich the present and curate the future. The members of the Organ Historical Society live this motto every day. We understand that our civilization's future rests on how and where we invest time, energy and dollars today.

No legitimate reason exists to shut the American Organ Institute. I ask you to make a clear statement to the OU community and the world by overturning the decision to close its doors. On behalf of the OHS board of Directors, our donors, staff and members, I anticipate a positive resolution and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



W. Edward McCall
Chief Executive Officer - Organ Historical Society
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