

The Learning Center for the Deaf's response to June 30th,

DEAF VEE ARTICLE: THE LEARNING CENTER FOR THE DEAF: AMORITA'S STORY

On behalf of TLC, I am writing to respond to The June 30th Deaf Vee article. <http://deafvee.org/2020/06/30/the-learning-center-for-the-deaf-amoritas-story/>

First, we at TLC stand with current and past students and parents who are courageously sharing their past experiences about racism at TLC. We are working, organization-wide, on confronting and dismantling racism now and for the future.

When I saw Amorita's public video I reached out to Eva to connect one-on-one. Similarly to author Piper Collins' [perspective](#), we, too, are committed to "seeing the conversation shift to one that involves and promotes direct, productive action towards solutions." We support Deaf Vee's commitment to serving as a forum to share Deaf BIPOC individuals' experiences.

We were disheartened, however, by the story that Deaf Vee chose to publish.

My comments related to our dedicated and active Alumni Association were quickly taken out of context. I stated, as quoted in the article, "The TLC Alumni Facebook page is run by alumni officers who are elected by the alumni directly, and not TLC, where they set up rules of conduct for the page so that videos are removed if they list specific names or profanity. We do not control the alumni Facebook page, nor do we remove videos from it." When they have removed videos from the page it has been only when a post violated a rule set by the alumni for governing their page. Generally, these rules state that use of profanity, or directly naming individuals is not permitted, and those that were removed were asked to repost their message without the use of either.

While the Alumni Association is self-governing, it is supported by, and works closely with, TLC and we stand by them. The officers are voted into their positions by an election held by the alumni directly, they are dedicated to managing the TLC Alumni Facebook page, and they are doing so as volunteers for their peers. Most recently, they have been working to set up a BIPOC Alumni committee and have offered to bring in a cultural mediator for the group, funded by TLC. All of their hard work in establishing ties with the BIPOC alumni and community was 100% unmentioned in the article.

To suggest that TLC alumni or administration aims to silence BIPOC Deaf stories is not only untrue, it is hurtful and unproductive.

To state that having two administrators as faculty and staff is "a clear conflict of interest" is simply inflammatory and is actually untrue. This is a professional page, using the support and logo of TLC for the purpose of promoting lasting connections, sharing

events and celebrating accomplishments of our talented alumni. Many schools have alumni who are also employees. The article created a conclusion based on assumptions and without discussions with the Alumni Association Officers administering the page.

We feel due diligence should be done toward objectivity in reporting, including gathering additional perspectives from our Alumni, BIPOC staff and Board members who have been active participants in the dialogue around TLC's work to move forward as an Anti-Racist organization.

In this spirit, I have continued to meet with members of our Alumni Association. Members of our Alumni Association have expressed deep concern about the students' experiences with racism shared in the videos.

The Learning Center for the Deaf is committed to the work that needs to be done. Our work is long-term, and steps have already been taken. Our senior leadership, including Board members, are engaging members of our BIPOC community to help shape a culture that dismantles racism across our organization.

When our Racial Equity Action Plan is ready, it will be shared publicly.

In solidarity,
Sarah