

Statement as of Friday, May 22, 2009
From the Catch-A-Dream Foundation
Via e-mail reply to inquiries

It is true that SFC Greg Stube was not allowed to speak....but it was not “by order of the President...” as has been postulated. Seems it does (or may,) however, relate to new “interpretations” or “perceptions” of policy since the new administration took office....following is the reply I have sent to many people....

This seems to be circulating broadly, and I can validate that the sender is a legitimately associated, and valued, volunteer with our Foundation with the best of intentions. Here is what we do know....

Sgt. Stube initially agreed and committed, but then was not allowed to speak at our function <http://catchadream.org/contribute/SPONSOR%20PACKAGE.pdf>. The verbatim, written response we received from the US Army Special Operations Command in late March (nearly 2 months after SFC Stube agreed to speak) is as follows:

“Sgt. 1st Class Stube forwarded your request to us for review. We regret that we cannot support the annual Catch-A-Dream Foundation Benefit Banquet with participation by SFC Stube. Army and Department of Defense regulations prohibit direct support to fund-raising activities. I’ve scrubbed the regs to determine if there were possibilities that we might apply to justify our support, but I found none.

The event is one we would truly like to support because of the wonderful work you do for children and their families. We extend our sincere best wishes for a phenomenal event.”

As you can see, the only issue addressed is “fund-raising.” The issue that the originator of the e-mail refers to has not been addressed in writing, but was alluded to only in conversation, where I was told that this is a result of “new interpretations of policy.” Thus, at this point, though I am alarmed and even shared this concern with our audience at our event last Saturday, we must consider it unsubstantiated until we can validate this particular interpretation of policy. I am compelled to note that the military personnel with whom I spoke on the telephone and pled regarding re-consideration of this decision regarding our particular event were courteous, supportive, empathetic and graciously re-evaluated the decision. Regrettably, they were not able to justify the request based upon “current policy.”

It is also significant to note that Catch-A-Dream is not a faith-based or religious organization by charter. Though our underlying and guiding principles are, indeed and unabashedly, Christian in premise and origin, we do not function organizationally as a religious or faith-based 501c3 corporation. Catch-A-Dream is a public, non-profit organization under the auspices of Sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) of the Internal Revenue Code. Thus, the issue addressed by DoD was solely related to the charitable nature of our program. There was no discussion relative to “faith-based” issues, as this was (is) a moot point in that discussion with DoD.

I have asked all our supporters who wish to rally in protest to be prudent and to allow this to be substantiated before raising the issue; we want to be sure of the facts and must give to our military the benefit of the doubt, since it is these same people who make it possible for us to enjoy the very freedoms that we cherish.

That said, I will share my opinion that the policy regarding involvement and support of charitable efforts should be alarming enough to warrant attention and action from our society. Part of the fabric of

American values and our way of life involves the concept of charity and benevolence. Nonetheless, we recognize the value of a policy protecting our troops and the military from potential compromise if they are perceived as “taking sides” or favoring one charitable cause over others, especially if these have any controversial implications or platforms. If, however, our federal leadership specifically targets this aspect of our American tapestry, we need to be awakened and take appropriate measures to communicate the public priority in this regard.

**Statement as of Wednesday, May 27, 2009
From the Catch-A-Dream Foundation**

Never underestimate the power of a simple e-mail message and its capacity to reach a broad audience in a short period of time. The circulation of one email message and its ancillary spin-offs has demonstrated the potential impact of a single stroke of the “send” key. It is our hope that this message is as broadly circulated and pondered.

There is an escalating swirl of misconstruction surrounding these issues. It is evident that the American public remains fervent and passionate regarding the liberties that we enjoy as citizens of this country. That fervor, as valuable as it may be, can also sometimes result in mis-directed passion; this appears to be the case in this situation. We as humans are inherently dubious of authority, and the current political climate in our country lends itself to doubt and propensity to presume the worst about our leadership. Clearly this has led to some negative commentary and discussions, and it seems prudent to encourage a re-direction of those energies in a productive direction. Here are a few pertinent points:

- It is vital that we all first fully understand that the decision reached by the Department of Defense regarding our request for SFC Stube to speak at our event was NOT a function of any influence or directive from the President, nor was it a change in policy. It is my understanding that the decision was based upon strict interpretation of an existing policy regarding involvement of military personnel in “fund-raising” activities. Though it has been suggested, it is not clear whether that strict interpretation represents any change in approach or application of policy. Thus, I strongly encourage us to give any benefit of doubt to our military leadership.
- The decision was in no way related to issues regarding “faith-based” organizations. The consideration included only the question regarding “fund-raising.” The faith-based aspect was not an issue, since Catch-A-Dream, by charter, is not a faith-based foundation. Though there are clearly disturbing undercurrents in existence that do not appear to bode positively regarding religious priorities and futures in this country, these, as best I can determine and discern, DID NOT play a role in this particular case.
- Although there was great disappointment when SFC Stube was unable to speak at the event, it is clearly recognized and understood that he was simply abiding by policy and orders, and in no way did SFC Stube abdicate any responsibility. We had, in fact, initially based our plans for the event upon personal verbal commitment and discussions, and the assumption that SFC Stube would ultimately be granted permission to honor the engagement. Regrettably, we were premature in assuming the commitment; that was our fault, not the fault of the military.
- The message that SFC Stube so eloquently delivers is one that America desperately needs to hear, receive and embrace. His concept of “Service Beyond Sacrifice” is a message of gut level patriotism that personifies the absolute fiber of our country, our values and our heritage; it is a message that leaves every person in every audience thankful that we live in a free republic called the United States of America; it is a message that changes the mindset of every hearer to that of gratitude for the sacrifices of the American soldier past and present; it is a message that

has inspired perhaps millions of Americans to BE and ACT like Americans, and to stand for what is right, honorable and profitable to our nation and its people; it is a message that reminds us what is still right with our country while at the same time helping us to understand the threats lurking in the shadows; it is a message that binds the hearts and priorities of our citizenry with those of our protectors in the US Military; above all it is a message that MUST be perpetuated and disseminated.

- Because of current running commentary I fear that the message and its outreach potential may be thwarted or otherwise compromised. The intent of the military's outreach effort, it appears to me, is not to breed disharmony, but rather to build bridges. If the objective is not being accomplished there may be no perceived need for the program! The very importance of the "Service Beyond Sacrifice" concept leads us to conclude that rather than perpetuating discontent and criticism, we should seek to channel those same energies, that American fervor that has clearly been stirred, toward a concerted and organized effort to communicate with our military leadership and to bring a new harmony in that relationship. The energies devoted to the e-mails, articles, phone calls, letters and other modes of communication must be somehow systematically re-directed toward an empathetic and supportive appeal to military command for appropriate latitude with respect to policy and regulations such that the concept of an outreach program such as SFC Stube's "Service Beyond Self," and the bridges it builds, can be maintained and even magnified, rather than fall victim to unwitting but potential fatal fallout from our (perhaps mis-directed) fervor. The American public, and our valiant military forces, deserve no less. I encourage you to pass this message along as rapidly and as rabidly as we have circulated other information in the previous week!

Thank you for your interest. I hope this provides clarity.