PRESS RELEASE

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Stanford Student Government Strips Funding from Pro-Traditional Marriage Event

STANFORD, CA: After an uproar among the campus LGBTQ community, on March 5 the Stanford Graduate Student Council (GSC) voted 10-2 with two abstentions to revoke funding from the Stanford Anscombe Society's Communicating Values conference, which includes advocates of traditional marriage among its speakers. The GSC’s decision came after allegations that the conference would promote “hate speech” that would deny civil rights to LGBT students and contribute to on-campus suicides. The Undergraduate Senate followed suit the next day and also denied funding for the conference. These decisions effectively exclude the Stanford Anscombe Society (SAS) from any access to student funds despite the promise of freedom of speech in the student constitution.

A week earlier, the GSC had voted 8-4 with one abstention to contribute $600 towards the conference. The GSC stipulated that the SAS open one of the conference talks to the entire graduate community. Following this decision, members of the LGBTQ community initiated a campaign to pressure the GSC to revoke funding.

The GSC was forced to move its regular meeting to a larger venue to accommodate the number of students who came to debate the earlier decision. During the first half hour of the meeting, the GSC approved a total of $27,540 in student and special fees to the other six groups requesting funding. In contrast, the debate on the SAS funding revocation of $600 lasted over two hours. LGBTQ activists passed out rainbow flags, asking attendees to “wave your flag if hate speech is used.”

An administration-sponsored mediation between SAS and LGBTQ groups failed to resolve the controversy before the second vote. GradQ—Stanford’s graduate queer community—offered a compromise which the SAS refused since it would require the SAS to either withdraw their funding application or effectively cancel the conference.

The two-day conference, entitled “Communicating Values: Marriage, Family, and the Media,” is set to start on April 4 and will be the SAS’s first in its three-year history. Featuring nationally-renowned speakers such as Ryan T. Anderson, Sherif Girgis, Professor Robert Oscar Lopez, and Professor J. Budziszewski, the conference will educate attendees on the public policy issues regarding marriage and family, and will explore how media, entertainment, and technology can be used to better articulate these values.
Founded in 2011 by two freshmen, the SAS is a university-approved student group that seeks to promote the value of marriage, family, and sexual integrity on campus. The SAS is neither religiously nor politically affiliated, instead relying on weekly secular discussions and guest lectures to foster intellectual diversity on relevant topics.

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