

From: Chuck Young
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2009 3:20 PM
To: 'gbaker@humnet.ucla.edu'

Dear Professor Baker,

My name is Charles Young. I was the Chancellor of UCLA for nearly three decades. For some reason, a number of people at the time of my retirement had the notion that what were then called Circle Drive and the Research Library should have "Circle" and "Research" replaced by Charles E. Young. I thought the naming of a street was interesting and fun, though certainly above and beyond my expectations. That action has continued to please and amuse me and has brought forth many comments by friends from around the world who look up and see that they are traveling on "my" street.

The library naming evoked a much different set of responses. One, concern that giving it my name took away the possibility of a naming that might bring a substantial gift in support of that great institution. At the same time, it evoked feelings of awe and pride and honor. What more important asset of a great university could there be than the Library-- the heart of its teaching and research program? I believe the decision to associate my name with the UCLA Library was in recognition of a continuing commitment, throughout my tenure, to the Library, in ways that enabled it over that period to become one of the great library systems of the world.

While the Arts buildings fortunately do not carry my name but the names of Eli and Edye Broad, who made a contribution which moved the arts facilities to an entirely new level, I was, and am, an equally strong supporter of the Arts in all their forms. As you may know, I now serve as the CEO of the LA Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA).

I say all of this to make clear how strongly I feel about Libraries, the Arts and,

therefore, the UCLA Art Library. I was disappointed that the Arts and the Arts Library at UCLA were separated and that the Art Library found its new home in the old Management School Library facility rather in the new Broad building where it belonged.

You can imagine how I must have felt when I heard talk of “eliminating” the Art Library. I called the Director of Libraries to find out if this were true. I found that the Art Library, along with a number of other departmental libraries with focused collections, was being carefully examined to see if of consolidation could occur with minimal impact on the mission they serve, thereby eliminating some of the excessive costs caused by operation in separate locations. I believe it may be possible that the Arts Library finds its way over the next several years in a newly renovated CEY Library. The reason for this examination is the **unconscionable** cut in the Library budget as a result of the **unconscionable** cut in the budget of the UCLA, in turn based on an **unconscionable** cut in the budget for the University of California as a whole.

I have seen the electronic petition you are circulating. At one level, I cannot object to the petition, insofar as it decries the reduction of support for art programs in general and the potential damage to a great institution which has for generations served artists, scholars, students and devotees of the arts. To say, however, that, *“UCLA Library Management, behind closed doors and without consultation with the UCLA community has decided to close its Arts Library, potentially as soon as January 2010”* is certainly not true.

My biggest concern, however, is that you and the thousands who have and will sign the petition, out of the best intentions and concern for the arts, are dealing with the effect, not the cause. Where were your petitions when the legislature and the governor dawdled for nearly two years without passing a budget? How hard did you work to help prevent the catastrophic budget decisions, dictated by the minority, which have led to the crises we now confront? What did you do to try to pass several referenda in the spring election which would enable a budget to be produced without gutting education in California, both K-12 and higher education, along with other essential governmental services?

The problem faced by all of us in this great state and around the nation is that no one is prepared to raise taxes or other fees which (together with prudent cuts in questionable programs) will make it unnecessary to gut essential programs such as those provided by the University of California, public education and a number of other essential services that can only be provided by the state, despite the current wave of government bashing flooding the nation.. Even if there were a majority of the Legislature prepared to do the right thing, (as there were doing this past silly season) they would not be able to do so in the face of the requirement that raising revenue for public purposes in California requires a 2/3 majority of both houses of the Legislature.

After you have sent this petition on to the Library Director and others who will be able to do little in response, I urge you to start circulating one to the Governor, members of the Senate and Assembly, the leaders of both political parties and others, asking them to stop the partisan nonsense and agree on those actions which are necessary to save the Arts, Education, Human Services and Health Care for all our citizens; and urging them to initiate a change to the Constitution that would allow a majority of the elected representatives of the people of California to take the action necessary to keep this state solvent while providing those necessary services.

Unless we and other citizens act forcibly and successfully on this difficult matter, California, which has been a leader in all of the areas in which you and I are concerned will slip farther and farther into mediocrity, and the arts will be among the first to go.

I will join you in that crusade as I will on this more limited one you have embarked upon, despite the reservations I have expressed, because it sends a message that art and libraries are important.

I need to close with the statement that this message is obviously not meant for you personally. For all I know, you have done all of those things I now urge upon you. I have used the petition, which I know you are shepherding out of real concern and an attempt to try to stem the tidal, to sermonize, which I am inclined from time to do. Thank you for the opportunity. Since the email you sent forwarding the petition went to thousands of interested people I wonder if you might consider circulating this to some of those in the expectation that it might stimulate a helpful and interesting discussion.

I look forward to hearing from you, and to the possibility of sitting down to break bread or bend an elbow over discussion of this and other matters which I know we would both care about.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Young