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## A Message from the Board of Trustees

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### A MESSAGE FROM PITZER COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



June 16, 2017

In April 2017, the Pitzer College Student Senate amended its Budget Committee Bylaws to include new Paragraph VI within Article III (Student Activities Funds), Section 2 (Restrictions). Paragraph VI, as last amended on April 30, 2017 through the passage of Bill 53-B-20, prohibits the use of Student Activities Funds for

*...payments on goods or services from the following corporations and organizations associated with the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories, as first delineated by the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement:*

- A. Caterpillar
- B. SodaStream
- C. Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories
- D. Hewlett-Packard
- E. Sabra

After careful consideration, the Board has determined to rescind Paragraph VI and declare it to be of no effect.

We note that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is among the most complex, emotional and divisive issues of our time, and is one on which the College has not taken a position. Students and other members of the Pitzer community, from all faiths and backgrounds, represent the full spectrum of viewpoints on this challenging issue.

The Board has based its decision on the following considerations.

Student Activities Funds are derived from mandatory fees the College levies upon **all** students. Consequently, the Board expects the Student Senate to remain neutral in determining the organizations it recognizes and funds, the amount of funding allocated to each organization, and any restrictions imposed on such funds.

Paragraph VI, however, applies a particular point of view on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in restricting the use of Student Activities Funds by all Student Senate-approved student groups. In so doing, Paragraph VI inappropriately curtails the funds usage rights of all such groups, including those that may have a different perspective.

In Pitzer's 54-year history, the Board has consistently supported Student Senate autonomy over the funds allocated to it by the College. However, the Board will not permit College assets to be restricted in order to endorse a point of view that is not the College's and that, in the Board's opinion, does not align with Pitzer's commitment to inclusion and respect for diverse viewpoints.

Shahan Soghikian '80  
 Chair of the Board of Trustees  
 Pitzer College

