



June 2, 2020

President John Thrasher  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, FL 32306

Dear President Thrasher;

I am writing this note with a heavy heart and to sincerely apologize for an action of mine from the past that may have unintentionally hurt or offended others.

More than five years ago, my daughter had an engagement party on Halloween. As someone who has always loved Bob Marley and his music, I dressed up for the party as Bob Marley in an effort to pay tribute to one of my music heroes and to celebrate my daughter. In no way did I intend to defame anyone of color. From the bottom of my heart, I can attest that this was not the product of ill intentions or prejudicial feelings.

Like others, my awareness has since been raised about how acts like this are viewed by many people of color, and others, taking into consideration and looking back to a practice that was offensive and dehumanizing.

I know now that this behavior could hurt or offend others – and I wouldn't ever engage in this behavior again. Unfortunately, I learned that this photo has been posted on Facebook for more than five years in an album of Halloween costumes posted from the party. Recently, someone has tried to use it against me by making it look like I was intentionally trying to offend and hurt others – and by sending the photo to people in our community. As a human, a father and a business owner, I do not support or tolerate racism or discrimination of any kind. My heart, my mission, and my purpose in life is to love one another equally, to help others, and to build up our community regardless of race, gender, religion or ethnicity.

I hope you will accept my whole-hearted apology and forgive my thoughtless act. I can't go back and change what I did – but I do sincerely apologize for my bad decision and for any offense it may have caused anyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Childers".

Sam Childers

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FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 11, 2020

Mr. Sam Childers  
3472 Weems Road  
Tallahassee, FL 32317

Dear Mr. Childers,

I received your letter dated June 2, 2020, expressing your deep regret and apology for a personal experience that occurred five years ago. Your willingness to take responsibility for this offending action is appreciated.

Florida State University has high standards and expectations on matters related to civility and respect. As president, I expect respectful conduct from both our campus family and from partners who do business with the university.

We have determined that your specific incident of objectionable behavior has violated FSU's core values and a number of our contractual requirements in article 12, miscellaneous provisions, in the Continuing Service Agreement for Minor Construction Projects between FSU and Childers Construction. To that end, Florida State will cancel this Continuing Service Agreement. Other existing company contracts that had previously been entered into before June 1 will be honored.

Now more than ever, it is important for each of us to embrace opportunities to become better informed about racial inequalities and dehumanizing behaviors. Your readiness to enroll in an ethnic sensitivity course is a positive reflection of your intentions to learn and grow. We also urge you to contact FSU's procurement services office to learn more about working with minority owned suppliers.

If you have further question, please contact Kyle Clark, Vice President for Finance and Administration.

Sincerely,

John Thrasher  
President