

Fundraiser Ended Over Bible Verses

A California high school has ended a brick paver fundraising campaign after two women submitted Bible verses for their tributes.

Lou Ann Hart and Sheryl Caronna had contributed several hundred dollars to purchase the memorial brick pavers at Palm Desert High School. They chose to have their bricks engraved with Bible verses to go alongside dozens of other inspirational and commemorative bricks.

But when administrators noticed the women had submitted religious content, they decided to end the fundraising campaign and refund everyone's money.

"Christians should be allowed to express themselves on public school campuses just like everyone else," said David Cortman of the Alliance Defense Fund, a Christian organization of attorneys who filed a lawsuit against the school district on the women's behalf.

"It is cowardly to shut down everyone's participation in this program simply out of animosity toward Christian speech. There is absolutely nothing unconstitutional about a Bible verse on a brick when a school opens up a program for anyone to express a personal message. The school could simply have allowed the Bible verses, but instead it chose to punish everyone."

Cortman said the district-approved fundraising campaign had not put any limitations on the content of the pavers other than length.

According to the ADF, the school accepted hundreds of other paver messages, including those quoting Mahatma Gandhi and other inspirational figures.