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July 25, 2008

Mr. Carl Monk

Executive Vice President and Executive Director
Association of American Law Schools
1201 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20036-2717

via electronic delivery to cmonk@aals.org and postal mail

Re: AALS annual meeting

Dear Mr. Monk:

The Legal Writing Institute has recently learned that Douglas Manchester, the owner of the Grand Hyatt Hotel in San Diego, California, has made a large contribution to support a ballot initiative seeking to deprive gay and lesbian citizens of the right to enter into marriages, as the California Supreme Court recently allowed. It is also our understanding that at least some of the proceedings of the upcoming annual meeting of the AALS are tentatively scheduled to take place at the Grand Hyatt.

Several years ago, LWI adopted the following non-discrimination policy:

“The Legal Writing Institute is committed to a policy against discrimination and in favor of equal opportunity for all of its members regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.”

As you are aware, since 1998 LWI has annually co-sponsored an award ceremony at the AALS annual meeting, in which we confer the Golden Pen Award, and we (along with the Association of Legal Writing Directors) confer the Thomas Blackwell Award. After due consideration of the recent revelations, the Board of Directors of LWI has decided that it cannot, in good conscience, sponsor any event which would be held at a hotel owned by Mr. Manchester, because to spend LWI funds on such an event would be a direct violation of LWI's non-discrimination policy.

We understand that AALS is aware of this issue and is currently working on a solution. LWI stands ready to assist in any way it can to help find alternative venues for the AALS annual meeting, and specifically the Blackwell/Golden Pen award ceremony.

Very truly yours,

/s/

Ruth Anne Robbins
President, The Legal Writing Institute

cc: Judith Stinson, President, Association of Legal Writing Directors (ALWD)