

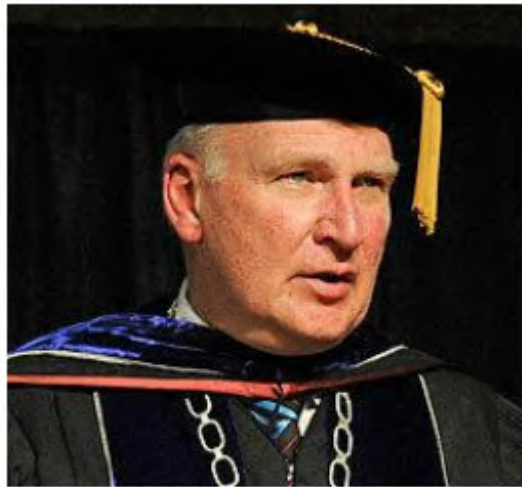
College Of DuPage Rejects 'Illegitimate Spending' Claims

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(not rated)

By Katie Finlon

College of DuPage officials said Wednesday that accusations the college concealed about \$95 million in spending since 2009 are unfounded. That claim was made by according to a watchdog group and online portal that aggregates about a billion lines of federal, state and local spending.



College of DuPage President Robert Breuder
Credit COD.edu

COD spokesman Joe Moore said the claims are "emphatically false."

American Transparency investigated the second-largest college in Illinois through OpenTheBooks.com. It revealed what it called "illegitimate spending" at COD in its 508-page report, including membership dues to a private shooting club for President Robert Breuder, liquor described on ledger lines as "instructional supplies" and millions of dollars to companies connected to the college foundation and board of directors.

COD Senior Vice President Tom Frased said the "shooting club" membership belongs to the office of the president and not to Breuder himself. It provides a venue for off-campus planning and other sessions.

Lynn Sapyta, COD controller, acknowledged Wednesday that listing the wine and liquor purchases as instructional supplies "may not have been the best choice," but said they are used in the COD culinary management program as well as in the on-campus restaurant where the program's students work.

President Breuder declined to comment when approached by The Washington Times last week. Moore said Times columnist Drew Johnson sent a "long list of questions" and demanded that Breuder respond within an hour.

Breuder said in a letter to the newspaper that there are no hidden transactions and the accusations by the newspaper and OpenTheBooks.com were false and misleading.

"The college uses accounting practices in line with national standards typical of large public organizations," he wrote. "Mr. Johnson makes an astonishing claim that we have altered vendor names to facilitate underhanded accounting practices. The document of payments supplied to Open the Books by the College clearly shows there are not varying names used for vendors."

The Daily Herald reported last month that the college, located in Glen Ellyn, spent \$26 million for more than a year without the board seeing a receipt. The college hiked tuition each year for the past 14 years - until it voted to lower tuition in August, according to the Naperville Sun - and raised local property taxes by 59 percent since 2008.

The Washington Times said the 82,000 total transactions were "hidden" through imprest funds. Fraser said that simply is a designation by the COD Board of Trustees for handling expenses of \$15,000 or less. Larger expenditures require individual approval by the board.

The founder of American Transparency urges residents to demand a property-tax freeze at COD's board of trustees meeting Oct. 16.