

# FAU money misspent on travel, letter claims

*The anonymous letter has the school under more scrutiny.*

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BOCA RATON — Bad blood continues in the aftermath of Frank Brogan's selection as Florida Atlantic University president and a criminal investigation into whether the FAU Foundation channeled \$42,000 to the wife of former school President Anthony Catanese so that he could buy a new Corvette.



**Temple**

The latest broadside is an anonymous letter faxed to the state Board of Governors and mailed to FAU Foundation directors that accuses board of trustees Chairman George Zoley and two others of misspending university money on junkets abroad.

As Brogan — who has vowed "to bring people together" — begins his first week on the job, wealthy Boca Raton developer and former FAU board Chairman John Temple confirms that he faxed the anonymous letter to colleagues on the Board of Governors, which oversees the state's public universities. It's not clear who mailed the same letter to the foundation's board members.

The letter, which purports to be written by faculty in the school's College of Business, accuses Zoley, FAU General Counsel Ondina Felipe and Bruce Mallen, dean of the business school, of taking their spouses on at least three trips to France, tapping a \$2 million donation to FAU by Rexall Sundown founder Carl DeSantis in 1997 to pay for the sojourns.

The total cost for these trips, which

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# Letter part of 'smear tactic,' chairman says

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included a visit to the Cannes Film Festival, is between \$60,000 and \$90,000, the letter asserts.

"It would appear that this anonymous letter is part of a smear tactic on the part of somebody," Zoley, the chief executive of Wackenhut Corrections, said from England in a phone interview.

Zoley said he and his wife attended the Cannes Film Festival once in 1999. They paid for their own airfare and lodging and some of their meals, with the FAU Foundation picking up the tab for some meals, he said.

Felipe and her husband attended in 2000. But Felipe said she already was visiting one of FAU's partner schools in Spain and that airfare was paid by Spanish officials. She and her husband paid their own way to France, she said, where she represented FAU because then-President Catanes could not make it. She said the foundation paid for her lodging but not her meals.

Mallen said he attended the Cannes festival in 1999 and 2000 and that the trips were bona fide university-related events.

When DeSantis donated \$2 million in 1997, it was to create the Carl DeSantis Business and Economics Center for the Study and Development of the Motion Picture and Entertainment Industry. Operating out of the College of Business, it is a think tank created to study business aspects of the film industry, such as marketing, distribution and exhibition.

Mallen is a former Hollywood film producer and is director of the DeSantis Center. Its board includes such industry heavyweights as Disney's Michael Eisner and director-producer Robert Wise, who has won four Academy Awards.

Mallen attended trade shows and seminars, and the DeSantis Center co-hosted a reception with the Fort Lauderdale Film Festival during his visits, he said.

"It would be a dereliction of my duty if we didn't go sometimes," Mallen said. "And the \$90,000 figure is so ludicrous."

pleasant experiences with Carla Coleman."

But the Corvette investigation was ordered by Zoley, and Felipe was one of two FAU employees who demanded documents from Coleman pertaining to the sports car. When they weren't produced, locks were changed on the doors of FAU's fund-raising offices and of rooms containing fund-raising records.

One of five finalists for the FAU president's job, Mallen had no apparent role in the lockout, but it is common knowledge that he and Coleman do not like each other.

Zoley stymied Temple last November when, as chairman of a search committee created to screen candidates for the vacant FAU president's job, Zoley abruptly ordered a one-month postponement, days before a recommendation was to be made. Temple was chairman of the board of trustees at the time.

Several members of the search committee feared that Temple was rushing the process so that he could steer the job to his preferred candidate.

Felipe crossed Temple last month when she sent him a letter advising him that as the leaseholder in FAU's research

and development park, he owes nearly \$400,000 for expanding roads on the Boca Raton campus.

The anonymous letter is only the latest such missive. Anonymous e-mails have been sent recently that make other unsupported allegations against Zoley and Felipe.

In mid-January there was more acrimony when Zoley defeated Fort Lauderdale lawyer Norman Tripp in a vote by the FAU board of trustees to pick Temple's successor as president. Tripp was bitter, made caustic comments about Zoley and was the only one of the 13 trustees not picked by Zoley to serve on the six committees he established.

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Zoley

Mallen said he was not contacted by Temple before Temple sent the anonymous letter to the Board of Governors last Friday. Nor were Zoley or Felipe.

"I was not contacted by Mr. Temple to verify the correctness of this," Felipe said.

Temple defended sending the letter to the Board of Governors without confirming who wrote it or the veracity of the charges it made. "It involves the university, and it (concerns) the Board of Governors, and I felt a responsibility to keep them informed," he said Wednesday.

The letter also was mailed to board members of the FAU Foundation. "It was sent to my office," said Herb Gimelstob, the foundation's vice chairman. "Whether it's true, I have no idea. Until somebody shows me it's true, I don't believe it."

Zoley said he will have FAU Inspector General Morley Barnett take statements from all three persons accused, and Mallen said he intends to retrieve records of the Cannes trips that show what expenses were incurred.

All three people accused of wrongdoing could be perceived as adversaries of Carla Coleman, a central figure in the Corvette investigation. And two of them have been pitted against Temple.

Coleman, the \$185,000-a-year FAU fund-raising chief, is on paid leave until the outcome of the Corvette probe.

"Carla Coleman had absolutely nothing to do with the letter," said her lawyer, Kenneth Lipman. "She has no knowledge of who circulated it. She does not want nor encourage any political division at all."

Zoley said, "Speaking for myself, I've never had any un-