

“A Time to Heal” A joint letter from your Class Officers – class of 1967, 1968 and 1969

Dear Oberlin Classmates;

Two icons of our experience living in Oberlin are Oberlin College and Gibson’s Bakery. Remember Gibson’s legendary “sticky buns?” They still make them! Who of us didn’t shop at Gibson’s for snacks and candy to get through a long night of studying for an exam?

It is heartbreaking to hear and to read about the history of “Gibson’s Bakery Against Oberlin College.” The fact is, as Steven Volk, Professor Emeritus of History at Oberlin has stated “it is an inescapable truth that the College and Gibson’s are co-dependent.”

It is time to heal. The jury’s decision in the “Gibson’s Suit” will not heal our differences. To the contrary, it makes it much harder for the College and the Gibsons to resolve the issue and to move forward.

As class officers we want to do our part to help us all reconcile our differences and to return to our common purposes. Each of us has been contacted by many of you seeking more information and wondering how you can help. We offer some options.

1. We have compiled a list of references and resources listed on the next page of this letter if you want to find out what happened and to learn more about the legal issues and actions.
2. This letter is being posted on the Class of 1968 and the Class of 1969’s websites. We encourage members of all three classes to join the Class of 1968 site by emailing Paul Safyan at safyone@gmail.com. He will set you up as a member, so that we may discuss ways of healing and ask questions of one another.
3. In her recent Phone cast re: Gibson v. Oberlin to alumni on June 27th President Ambar had the following advice when asked by an alumna– “*What can we as alumni do?*” President Ambar stated that college alumnae are the best “ambassadors” of public relations the college has. She encouraged us to talk about how much Oberlin College meant to us in our lives and to focus on its positive contributions as we go forward.

It is also a time to remember that any situation like this, though it is difficult to live through, it is an opportunity to learn and to grow. We continue to support and encourage efforts to resolve this situation and move forward.

Sincerely;

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For more Information - here are some resources re: Gibson's Bakery v. Oberlin College

FAQS AND BACKGROUND ABOUT THE LAWSUIT FILED BY GIBSON'S BAKERY AGAINST OBERLIN COLLEGE Questions and answers on the Oberlin College website <https://www.oberlin.edu/sites/default/files/content/office/general-counsel/current-issues/faqs.pdf>

Oberlin Helped Students Defame a Bakery, a Jury Says. The Punishment: \$33 Million

Article by Anemona Hartocollis in the New York Times June 14, 2019
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/14/us/oberlin-bakery-lawsuit.html>

Article by Gibson Bakery in USA Today 6/21/2019

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/voices/2019/06/21/oberlin-college-gibson-bakery-lawsuit-column/1523525001/>

Oberlin College had an admirable liberal past. Now, it's a disgrace.

Article by George Will, Columnist June 19, 2019

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/oberlin-college-had-an-admirable-liberal-past-now-its-a-disgrace/2019/06/19/bab8bf60-91ea-11e9-aadb-74e6b2b46f6a_story.html

Jury Finds Oberlin College Libeled a Bakery and Awards \$11 Million in Damages

A jury in Ohio determined that Oberlin College libeled Gibson's Bakery when students accused the business of being racist. CreditCreditDake Kang/Associated Press

By Mihir Zaveri and Emily S. Rueb New York Times June 10, 2019 <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/10/us/oberlin-bakery-lawsuit.html>

Wayne Alpern, former Class of 1969 President emailed several articles/videos. Here are some of them;

<https://academeblog.org/2019/06/13/the-dangerous-defamation-judgment-against-oberlin-college/>

<https://youtu.be/3F-88uuMx6I>

<http://www.chroniclet.com/Local-News/2019/06/28/Judge-reduces-Gibson-39-s-Bakery-award-to-25-million.html>

Oberlin Emeritus History Professor Steven Volk's two recent blogs:

https://steven-volk.blog/2019/07/12/after-the-gibsons-verdict-what-is-at-stake/?fbclid=IwAR0wOYU1ee4VV4T_PL1WbtKvPrOiPzP-Fk_uR1AFJv80Irox4RHd_mQIkHg

<https://steven-volk.blog/2019/06/20/oberlin-college-v-gibsons-bakery-local-issues-national-angers/>