



NEWS | ABORTION Wed Oct 3, 2018 - 4:34 pm EST

Catholic university hosts Planned Parenthood abortionist at ‘workplace inclusion’ forum



James Risdon

□ Abortion, Catholic University, University Of St. Thomas

ST. PAUL, Minnesota, October 3, 2018 ([LifeSiteNews](#)) – Two Planned Parenthood officials — an abortionist and a top executive — were invited to the University of Saint Thomas in Minnesota last spring to give a presentation in a forum on "workplace inclusion."

Pro-lifers have only recently learned about the invitation and are shocked.

"It's scandalous that a Catholic university would promote Planned Parenthood, an organization that is responsible for 60 per cent of the babies aborted in Minnesota ... and 100 per cent of those in South Dakota," said Brian Gibson, executive director of the Pro-life Action Ministries.

"They are openly promoting Planned Parenthood ... as if this is a credible organization in Catholic teaching," said Gibson. "There is nothing good about this. This is an intrinsic evil."

In mid-April this year, both Dr. Sarah Traxler, Planned Parenthood's medical director for Minnesota, South Dakota and North Dakota, and Tonya Hampton, the abortionist's vice-president for human resources and organizational effectiveness, were invited to the Roman Catholic university to speak at the Forum.

The university has since apologized - sort of. Through a public relations official, the university described the invite as "unbeknownst to the administration."

"As a Catholic University, we believe deeply in the sanctity of life," said Janet Swiecichowski, the University of Saint Thomas' associate vice-president of public relations, this week.

"We were extremely disappointed to learn that the speakers in question submitted a proposal and were allowed to speak at the conference unbeknownst to the administration," she said. "The break-out session should not have been included in the program. As a Catholic University, we do not provide a platform for Planned Parenthood."

The spokeswoman for the Catholic university did not explain who at the university allowed Planned Parenthood to be invited, what disciplinary action that person may have faced, or what measures may have been put in place since then to ensure it does not happen again.

The abortionists' invitation to speak at the University of Saint Thomas took pro-lifers by surprise.

"If we knew about it ahead of the event we would have been all over the front of the building," said Gibson.

As soon as Pro-life Action Ministries heard about the talk by the abortionists, Gibson contacted the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis to enlist its help in seeking redress. That took until two weeks ago.

When Archbishop Bernard Hebda contacted the university's president, Dr. Julie Sullivan, he said he could "understand how people could be dumbfounded," noting that the “information provided (in the program materials) about Dr. Traxler certainly makes abortion and contraceptive counselling sound respectable.”

According to the archdiocese's director of communications, Tom Halden, the University of Saint Thomas president claimed to be unaware of the invitation extended to Planned Parenthood.

"She said their involvement was 'a mistake and we are very sorry it happened,' that she would have the information taken down from the website, and that she would speak with the faculty member involved," said Halden.

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