

**Mike Thompson**

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**From:** WOSU [wosu@osu.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2008 1:16 PM  
**To:** news@wosu.org  
**Subject:** FW: [REDACTED] faces issues in Upper Arlington



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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 13, 2008 9:36 PM  
**To:** wosu@osu.edu  
**Subject:** [REDACTED] faces issues in Upper Arlington

To all concerned;

From; [REDACTED]....your reporting on this story would be greatly appreciated. Best wishes!

In April 2008, I was appointed as the project manager for the sanitation department for the city of Upper Arlington. While I was born and raised in New York, I earned my bachelor's and master's degrees at the proud institution known as The Ohio State University. During my shot introduction to this job, I have been on the streets of Upper Arlington, not only to survey the area, but to get a feel for the neighborhoods and the people of this city. For the most part, the people I have met have been the most cordial and personable people I have ever met. That is the good news. Now, we come to the issues which trouble me greatly.

While many of my employees are military veterans, or just plain old blue collar types who are trying to do their jobs, I have encountered a disgusting underbelly of Upper Arlington that I am sure most residents find highly distasteful. Last week, I was accosted by a gentleman who told me that my company was "taking jobs" from people who had been employed for 35 years. He also said the city council was a bunch of idiots and even threatened the lives of certain city officials. To add insult to injury, it was also brought to my attention that a website (ominously titled, "Takin' out the Trash", obviously injecting the sarcastic play on words, to identify my workers as "trash".) had been posted featuring minute by minute accounts of the first week of my employee's activities. While at first I thought this just to be a few folks playing a seriously deranged prank I then began to realize that they ugly element of race had been injected into a seemingly simply change in procedure for the collection of trash.

Ladies and gentlemen. My father was a World War 2 Veteran, and a New York City police officer. I was taught from a young age to respect all individuals regardless of color, religion, or social status. When I

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see people, I do not see color. I see individuals. Bad people come in all shapes and sizes. Indeed, although I am of African American heritage, my family encompasses the entire spectrum of races. The majority of my family members are either Scottish or Italian. I spent my youth amongst Polish and Italian families, and have spent my life maintaining a wide range of colleagues and acquaintances.

What I find disheartening is that this offensive web site is degrading, libelous, and in my view, covertly racist and divisive. Last week, I witnessed several vehicles with unidentified individuals following my crew around with cameras. This act alone constitutes harassment, and the production of a hostile work environment. My employees cannot do their job when they are being followed and coerced by unidentified individuals in unmarked vehicles. In fact, their uncontrolled dodging in and out of driveways, blocking my trucks, and diverting attention away from our work is inexcusable and could have caused serious injury to my workers, residential property, or bystanders. In their zeal to make fun of the people they see as "trash", they let lawful behavior and safety go right out of the window.

Are we living in the 1950's again? What kind of mature adults do this kind of thing? When one goes to their website, the images and commentary found there are sarcastic and demeaning. These owners of the site paint a picture of these hard working fathers, brothers, sons and military men as buffoons and imbeciles. I have often wondered what it is in the human psyche that always finds it so easy to tread upon the downtrodden. Many of the assertions made on this offensive web site are untrue, unethical, and according to civil law may be illegal and subject to civil action. Most of all, one must ponder the direct issue of race in this instance.

As I have been informed, the previous sanitation crew was predominantly Caucasian. My crew is predominantly African American. A sensible individual would then have to wonder if this fact would play a part in the vehement and vile diatribe the creators of this "Takin' out the Trash website" spew forth? How can moral, sane, sensible people make a public indictment of people they have never met, but obviously prejudged?

I can only guess that the creators of this hate page have the same opinion of the undocumented workers who often appear to be working on or near their homes and gardens throughout the course of the year? But alas! No such hate page for Hispanic workers has yet to be produced by the owners of "Takin' out the trash Upper Arlington". So, taken to its logical progression, I take it that these "upstanding individuals" prefer undocumented workers to hard working American citizens? The double standard is outrageous and disheartening. Is this the America I was born in? Can it actually be that we face more hatred here than I did in some of the most violent streets of Brooklyn, New York?

*Excuse me, I must be having a bad dream, right?*

**Okay, here are the facts:**

We did not come to this community to upset the establishment, make political statements, or play the race card. We have come to this community to provide better service than has ever been given to Upper Arlington. We ask, we request, we plead for a cessation to these bigoted attempts to demean or professional crew.

We hope that someone in the Upper Arlington Community will join us in our effort to eliminate political intrigue, rumor mongering, and pernicious demagoguery.

In short, we just ask that we be allowed to do our jobs and not be made out as animals, morons, or threats to the City and People of Upper Arlington.

Dr. King's dream did not die on April 4, 1968. We hope that the angry, divisive creators of the aforementioned web site would heed his words;

Judge people by the content of their character. We understand that concept. We would hope that they would do the same.

Respectfully,



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