

United States Department of State

Mr. Stanley Colvin

Ms. Elizabeth Dickerson

Ms. Karen Hawkins

Ms. Maha Ammar

Ms. Susan Geary

Dear Ladies and Gentleman:

Please be advised of the most recent email from EF Foundation participant Pedro Acevedo of Venezuela.

Will you help this young man?

Sincerely,

Danielle Grijalva, Director

Committee for Safety of Foreign Exchange Students

P.O. Box 6496 / Oceanside, CA 92052

www.csfes.org / 866-471-9203

cc

Mr. and Mrs. Dever (current host family)

Senator Sue Madison

Emeritus Professor Freda Briggs

Mississippi Department of Education

Mr. Robert Willner, Oregon International Council

Mrs. Sheryl Hill

Southaven High School, Principal Jeff Gilder

Superintendent Kuykendall, DeSoto County School District

Mr. John Hishmeh, CSIET

Subject: RE: [FWD: RE: [FWD: Urgent!-Exchange Student in Southaven, Mississippi needs assistance/help.] EF Foundation participant Pedro Acevedo]

From: Pedro Acevedo <vipere19@hotmail.com>

Date: Tue, May 12, 2009 9:20 pm

To: "Danielle Grijalva (CSFES)" <dgrijalva@csfes.org>, Pedro Luis <paceve2@gmail.com>, <belenbalda@hotmail.com>, Consulado Neworleans <consulado@neworleans.embavenez-us.org>

Good evening Ms.Grijalva, Pedro Luis Acevedo and Belen Balda, y Consulado de la Republica Bolivariana de Venezuela en New Orleans.

My name is Pedro Acevedo, and you should already know my history. Tonight I was approached by Emily Force, my area representative, from the EF company, and i was told that tomorrow, Wednesday may 13th, i was scheduled to leave at noon, and that she was to pick me up at 9 am. She said that the department of state had "said" that i had to go home no matter what, and that otherwise i was going to get in "big trouble". She put me on the phone with a woman named Susan, "a lady" from EF, and i was told by her

that my requests of staying longer were just going to be ignored, and that i shouldn't keep asking for it, and that they didnt needed "valid reasons" to send me home. I was told that if i don't get on a plane tomorrow morning, my j1 visa was going to be removed and i was gonna be forced to leave, no matter what. I was told that i could be "Taken" to the airport without my things if necessary, like some kind of criminal. My constant requests for reasons from them to want my early depart, are ignored. EF company have just constantly treated me horrible, using fear and intimidation to make me say anything they want me to say, and dismissing my concerns as unimportant.

This is coming to me as a shock since i wasn't informed of a time, i wasn't given a ticket, they kept me in the shadows until hours before the supposed leaving time. I'm not in any way ready to leave, for several reasons, including that, my natural parents, not only they don't want me to leave, but they don't even know if they could pick me up at any random time, given the short notice. My host family have approved my stay, and they want me to stay the remaining 2 weeks. My real family does as well. And my visa allows me to. I haven't done anything bad to deserve this, if anything, EF have been terrible as an organization to me, and the fact that they can't grant a single simple request, like staying the remaining of my year abroad, and leave with the other exchange students. I'm being told that if i refuse to leave at the time they want me to, i could even go to jail. I don't understand how this can be possible. Please, any assistance on this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Without more to say

Sincerely

Pedro Acevedo

From: dgrijalva@csfes.org

To: paceve2@gmail.com

CC: viperex19@hotmail.com

Subject: RE: [FWD: RE: [FWD: Urgent!-Exchange Student in Southaven, Mississippi needs assistance/help.] EF Foundation participant Pedro Acevedo]

Date: Mon, 11 May 2009 14:17:14 -0700

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Acevedo:

CSFES is pleased to help as much as we are able. You are most welcome.

CSFES sent you a copy of our most recent email regarding the matter. I am hopeful Pedro is given positive news. Thank you for keeping me informed.

I have not heard from Pedro today, however, he knows he can contact me at any time.

CSFES would also like to file a complaint with the Mississippi Attorney General's Office of Consumer Affairs against EF Foundation. We will discuss with you when the timing is appropriate.

Most sincerely,

Danielle Grijalva, Director

Committee for Safety of Foreign Exchange Students

P.O. Box 6496 / Oceanside, CA 92052

www.csfes.org / 866-471-9203

Kind people help each other even without noticing that they are doing so, and evil people act against each other on purpose." CHINESE PROVERB-----

Subject: Re: [FWD: RE: [FWD: Urgent!-Exchange Student in Southaven, Mississippi needs assistance/help.] EF Foundation participant Pedro Acevedo]

From: Pedro Luis <paceve2@gmail.com>

Date: Fri, May 08, 2009 2:40 pm

To: dgrijalva@csfes.org

Dear Mrs Danielle,

Once again, thank you very much for everything you are doing for Pedro. We think something is in progress too and we are hopeful on Pedro's desire. We'll call Pedro tonight to talk and hear he's opinion. We'll keeping you always informed.

Very sincerely,

Pedro and Belen Acevedo

2009/5/8 <dgrijalva@csfes.org>

Subject: RE: [FWD: Urgent!-Exchange Student in Southaven, Mississippi needs assistance/help.] EF Foundation participant Pedro Acevedo

From: Kate Garrett <Kate.Garrett@EF.com>

Date: Fri, May 08, 2009 8:48 am

To: dgrijalva@csfes.org

Ms. Grijalva,

EF Foundation is in receipt of the below email. Our program is working with involved parties to address questions and concerns.

While we are always open to hearing feedback regarding our program, we restrict our communication regarding each student to the natural parents, our affiliate, the host family, school and local coordinator. This policy is in place to protect the safety and privacy of our students. I welcome you to contact us with any concerns and assure you we are in communication with all parties involved in this case.

Best,

Kate

Kate Garrett
Director of Compliance
EF Foundation for Foreign Study
Tel: 617-619-1330 or 800-447-4273

This email and its attachments may contain confidential or proprietary information belonging to EF. If you are not the intended recipient, please destroy this message and contact the sender. Thank you.

From: dgrijalva@csfes.org
Sent: Tuesday, May 05, 2009 3:18 PM
To: Ana Fanelli; Megan Allen; Darcy Babcock; Adrienne Eaton; Elisabeth Gahrton; Kate Garrett; Jeffrey Haddad; Lena Hansen; Kelly Hunter; Ms. Ellen Manz; Matt Smith; Foundation; info@neworleans.embavenez-us.org

Cc: Senator Sue Madison -- Arkansas; Freda Briggs; Bob Willner; Maha Ammar; Stanley Colvin; Elizabeth Dickerson; Karen Hawkins; Lawrence Sally; Mr. Acevedo Pedro's father; Mrs. Acevedo Pedro's mother; John Hishmeh; Katherine Donnelly; Tyler's mom ; Milton.kuykendall@desotocountyschools.org; JGilder@southavenhighschool.net; besafe@csfes.org; Tyler's mom

Subject: [FWD: Urgent!-Exchange Student in Southaven, Mississippi needs assistance/help.] EF Foundation participant Pedro Acevedo

EF Foundation for Foreign Study (EF)

Ms. Asa Fanelli, President
EF Center Boston
One Education Street
Cambridge, MA 02141

Re: Pedro Acevedo

Dear Ms. Fanelli:

This is a complaint against EF Foundation area representative Ms. Emily Force.

Attached you will find EF participant Pedro Acevedo's appalling stay in Southaven, Mississippi.

It is the request of Pedro Acevedo and his natural parents that Pedro not be repatriated on May 13.

Please be advised Pedro's parents spent approximately \$10,000 for this experience; a formal complaint to the Mississippi Attorney General Office Consumer Protection Division will be filed under separate cover.

CSFES trusts this complaint will not result in retaliation by Ms. Emily Force against Pedro Acevedo.

Sincerely,

Danielle Grijalva, Director

Committee for Safety of Foreign Exchange Students

P.O. Box 6496 / Oceanside, CA 92052

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"Kind people help each other even without noticing that they are doing so, and evil people act against each other on purpose." CHINESE PROVERB

cc

Mr. Pedro Acevedo and Mrs. Belen Balda (parents of Pedro Acevedo)

Consulate General of Venezuela

United States Department of State

Ms. Maha Ammar

Mr. Stanley Colvin

Ms. Elizabeth Dickerson

Ms. Karen Hawkins

Ms. Sally Lawrence

United States Senator Sue Madison

Emeritus Professor Freda Briggs

Mr. Robert Willner, Oregon International Council

Ms. Sheryl Hill

Southaven High School, Principal Jeff Gilder

Superintendent Kuykendall, DeSoto County School District

Mr. John Hishmeh, CSIET

Subject: Urgent!-Exchange Student in Southaven, Mississippi needs assistance/help.

From: Pedro Acevedo <viperex19@hotmail.com>

Date: Wed, April 29, 2009 8:21 pm

To: <besafe@csfes.org>

Cc: <complaint@csfes.org>

Hello CSFES.

My name is Pedro Acevedo, I'm from Caracas, Venezuela, and I'm currently an exchange student in Southaven, Mississippi, with the company EF, also known as the Education First. During this year, I have been target of several irregularities and injustices from EF part, making this year extremely hard to endure. At the moment, i find myself in a hurry, and i dire need of help. I made a letter explaining everything, which I'm annexing to this email. Is 12 pages long, but everything in it is important, at least i think so.

Time is against me at the moment, and i really need some help right now. Thank you for at least considering reading my concerns, and i apologize for them being so long. I urge you to at least let me know if this gets to you, it will bring a lot of peace to me.

Sincerely

Pedro A