- 1		
1	Kamala D. Harris	
2	Attorney General of California THOMAS L. RINALDI	
3	Supervising Deputy Attorney General CRISTINA FELIX	
4	Deputy Attorney General State Bar No. 195663	
5	300 So. Spring Street, Suite 1702 Los Angeles, CA 90013	
6	Telephone: (213) 897-2455 Facsimile: (213) 897-2804	
7	E-mail: Cristina.Felix@doj.ca.gov  Attorneys for Complainant	
8	BEFORE THE	
9	DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS FOR THE BUREAU FOR PRIVATE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION	
10		CALIFORNIA
11		1
12	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Case No. 996999
13	AMERICAN SPORTS UNIVERSITY American Sports University, Owner, Non-	
14	Profit Public Benefit 399 North D. Street	FIRST AMENDED ACCUSATION
15	San Bernardino, CA 92401	
16	Institution Code 14960906	
17	Respondent.	
18	Complainant alleges:	
19	<u>PARTIES</u>	
20	1. Joanne Wenzel (Complainant) brings this Accusation solely in her official capacity as	
21	the Chief of the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, Department of Consumer Affairs	
22	(the Bureau).	
23	2. On or about, May 23, 2007, the former Bureau for Private Postsecondary and	
24	Vocational Education <sup>1</sup> issued Full Approval to Operate Institution Code Number 14960906 to	
25		
26	The former BPPVE sunsetted on July 1, 2007. On October 11, 2009, the Bureau for	
27	Private Postsecondary Education Act of 2009 ("Act") (AB 48) was signed into law. The Act, became operative on January 1, 2010, and established the Bureau for Private Postsecondary	
28	Education ("Bureau").	•

American Sports University, American Sports University, Owner, Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation. Said Full Approval to Operate expired on June 30, 2014.

3. On July 30, 2014, the Bureau received an Application for Renewal of Approval to Operate an Institution Non-Accredited from American Sports University, Jane Hwang, 50% owner, and Harry Hwang, 50% Owner. On August 11, 2014, the Bureau advised Respondent that the application was incomplete. On or about September 12, 2014, the Bureau received another Application for Renewal of Approval to Operate an Institution Non-Accredited from American Sports University. The application listed Jane Hwang as 100 % owner, and Harry Hwang as Chief Executive Officer. The application was dated July 29, 2014 and Jane Hwang and Harry Hwang certified under penalty of perjury to the truthfulness of all statements, answers, and representations in the application. The Bureau denied the September 12, 2014 application on February 9, 2015. Respondent appealed the denial on April 1, 2015<sup>2</sup>.

#### **JURISDICTION**

- 4. This Accusation is brought before the Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs (Director) for the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, under the authority of the following laws. All section references are to the Education Code<sup>3</sup> unless otherwise indicated.
  - 5. Section 94932 of the Education Code states:

The bureau shall determine an institution's compliance with the requirements of this chapter. The bureau shall have the power to require reports that institutions shall file with the bureau in addition to the annual report, to send staff to an institution's sites, and to require documents and responses from an institution to monitor compliance. When the bureau has reason to believe that an institution may be out of compliance, it shall conduct an investigation of the institution. If the bureau determines, after completing an investigation, that an institution has violated any applicable law or regulation, the bureau shall take appropriate action pursuant to this article.

- 6. Section 94937 of the Education Code states, in pertinent part:
- (a) As a consequence of an investigation, and upon a finding that an institution has committed a violation, the bureau may place an institution on probation or may suspend or revoke an institution's approval to operate for:

California Private Postsecondary Education Act of 2009, Ed. Code §§ 94800 et seq.

The appeal is pending in the matter entitled Statement of Issues Against American Sports University, Case No. 1000414.

**REGULATORY PROVISIONS** California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 71130, states: (a)(1) The institution shall identify the name, address, email address, and telephone number of each person, as defined in section 94855 of the Code, who owns or controls 25% or more of the stock or an interest in the institution and, to the extent applicable, each general partner, officer, corporate director, member of the board of directors and any other person who exercises substantial control over the institution's management or policies. For the purpose of this paragraph, a person exercises "substantial control over the institution's management or policies" if the person has the authority to cause the institution to expend money or incur debt in the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) or more in any year. (c) The institution shall provide a statement from any person identified in subdivision (a) of this section who -(5) Was convicted of any misdemeanor or felony as provided in Section 480(a)(1) of the Business and Professions Code; (d) The institution shall furnish an explanation of any legal action pending against the institution or ownership or any of the institution's owners, officers, corporate directors, administrators, or instructors by any federal, state, or local law enforcement agency involving alleged acts of fraud, dishonesty, financial mismanagement, unpaid liabilities to any governmental agency or claims for pecuniary loss suffered by any student. 12. California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 71735, subdivision (b), states: An institution's facilities, including heating and cooling, ventilation, lighting, classrooms, laboratories, and campus environs, shall be well-maintained. The institution shall maintain all valid permits required by any public agencies relating to the health and safety of the institution's facilities and equipment on file, and such permits shall be available to the Bureau upon request. 13. California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 71745 states: (a) The institution shall document that it has at all times sufficient assets and financial resources to do all of the following: (1) Provide all of the educational programs that the institution represented it would provide.

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

(3) Maintain the minimum standards required by the Act and this chapter.

(4) Pay timely refunds as required by Article 13 of the Act.

(5) Pay all operating expenses due within 30 days.

license to not being renewed or reinstated. If a case settles, recovery of investigation and enforcement costs may be included in a stipulated settlement.

16. Section 94937, subdivision (c), allows the Bureau to seek reimbursement pursuant to Section 125.3 of the Business and Professions Code.

## **FACTUAL BACKGROUND**

### Harry Hwang's Conviction

17. On February 4, 2002, Harry Hwang plead guilty to two felony counts of violating 18 United States Code section 666, subdivision (a)(2), Bribery Concerning Programs Receiving Federal Funds in the case entitled *USA v. Harry Hwang, United States* District Court, Central District, Case No. 2:01-MJ-01990. He was sentenced to three years probation, with terms and conditions, including payment of fines. The circumstances of the conviction are that Harry Hwang, who was doing business as JD Trust Escrow, failed to disclose and actively concealed information related to a loan.

# **Initial Approval Application and Change in Educational Objectives Applications**

18. On or about November 10, 2004, the Bureau received Respondent's Application for Approval to Operate a Degree Granting Institution, Application No. 17860. The application was signed under penalty of perjury, on October 1, 2004 by Harry Hwang, on December 3, 2003 by Chun Y. Lee and on December 6, 2003 by Charles T. Moffitt, Members of the Board of Directors. Harry Hwang's title was listed as the "Chair of the Board" and he was also listed as a "Member, Board of Directors." Respondent failed to disclose Mr. Hwang's felony convictions. "No" was indicated in the application in response to the following question: "1.8A Has the institution, an owner, person in control, President, or officer of the institution been found in any criminal, civil

... proceeding to have violated any law regarding the obtaining, maintenance, or disbursement of state or federal loan or grant of funds, or any other law substantially related to the operation of the institution?" "No" was also indicated in the application in response to the following question: "1.8B Does the institution, or an owner, person in control, President, officer, or

institution have unpaid financial liabilities involving the improper acquisition, use, expenditure, or refund of state or federal financial aid funds?

19. Respondent filed two applications for Change of Educational Objective. Application No. 22723, filed on August 2, 2010, noted the following change: "will now offer 4 degree concentrations for the B.S. degree in sports instead of a Master degree in Business Admin. Sports Management as well as a Doctorate in Sports Management." The application was signed by Harry Hwang (51% owner), Jane Hwang (49% owner), and by Charles Lin (Member of the Board of Directors), under penalty of perjury, on July 31, 2010. Application No. 22724, also filed on August 2, 2010, requested the addition of a school of theology. The application was signed by Harry Hwang (51% owner), Jane Hwang (49% owner), and by Charles Lin (Member of the Board of Directors), under penalty of perjury, on July 31, 2010. The Bureau did not receive an application for Change of Educational Objective to add any other programs. These applications were denied by the Bureau.

# Lawsuits, Liabilities, and Failure to Pay Refunds and Operating Expenses

- 20. On April 14, 2010 an amended default judgment was entered against American Sports University in the amount of \$265,028.01 in the case entitled *HKP*<sup>4</sup> v. American Sports University, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS 903403. The circumstances are the on March 16, 2009, a former student HKP sued Respondent and Harry Hwang for breach of contract and fraud. HKP alleged that he withdrew from Respondent to enroll in another school reasonably believing he would be refunded for an entire second semester within 30 days of his last day of class as stated in Respondent's refund policy and as promised by Respondent's Financial Director. HKP sought a total loss of tuition in the amount of \$12,491.96 and punitive damages in the amount of \$250,000.00 for Negligent Misrepresentation of Material Fact and Promise Without Intent to Perform.
- 21. On October 31, 2011, a judgment was entered against American Sports University in the amount of \$695.00 in the case entitled SC v. American Sports University, Jane Hwang, agent,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Initials are being used to protect the individual's identity. Individuals will be identified during the course of discovery.

San Bernardino Superior Court, Victorville District, Case No. SMCVS1102438. The circumstances are that on August 26, 2011, a former student, SC, sued Respondent and alleged that she paid \$695 for class fees and the class was cancelled before the course was completed due to lack of instructor. She further alleged that she requested a refund but Respondent refused to refund her the money. On June 27, 2012, SC filed a declaration in Superior Court stating that Respondent had failed to pay the judgment.

- 22. On September 25, 2009, an order was issued by the Labor Commissioner of the State of California, in Case No. 09-36611SM, requiring payment of wages, plus interest and waiting time penalties, against Respondent and in favor of BSH, a former employee. On November 20, 2009, final judgment was entered based on the Labor Commissioner's order totaling \$13,989.47 in the case entitled *BSH v. American Sports University*, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS916819.
- 23. Respondent also failed to pay the staff wages of EB, a former employee. On September 29, 2009, an order was issued against Respondent by the Labor Commissioner of the State of California, in Case No. 09-3667SM, requiring payment of wages, plus interest and waiting time penalties, in favor of EB, a former employee. The order stated that Respondent acknowledged the wages were due but Respondent did not have the finances to pay the wages. On December 9, 2009, judgment was entered based on the Labor Commissioner's order totaling \$10,060.53 in the case entitled *EB v. American Sports University*, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS917505.
- 24. Respondent also failed to pay the staff wages of JC, a former employee. On August 23, 2011, an order was issued against Respondent<sup>5</sup> by the Labor Commissioner of the State of California, in Case No. 09-40171CC, requiring payment of 8 months of wages, plus interest and waiting time penalties, in favor of JC. On October 25, 2011, final judgment was entered based on the Labor Commissioner's order totaling \$33,539.48 in the case entitled *JC v. Pacific Property Investment & Management, Inc. dba American Sports University*, San Bernardino Superior Court

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The order was against Pacific Property Investment & Management, Inc. which was doing business as American Sports University.

5

10 11

12 13

14

15 16

17

18 19

20

21 22

23

24

25 26

27

28

Case No. CIVDS1112595. Respondent's owners did not notify the Bureau of this lawsuit and judgment.

- On July 13, 2012, an order was issued by the Labor Commissioner of the State of 25. California, in Case No. 09-43893CC, requiring payment of wages, plus interest, fees and waiting time penalties, against Respondent and in favor of TW, a former employee. On July 19, 2012, final judgment was entered based on the Labor Commissioner's order totaling \$16,212.04 in the case entitled TW v. Pacific Property Investment & Management, Inc. dba American Sports University, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS1208505.
- 26. On November 7, 2012, an order was issued by the Labor Commissioner of the State of California, in Case No. 09-45724CC, requiring payment of wages, plus interest, fees and waiting time penalties, against Respondent and in favor of NMF, a former employee. On January 15, 2013, final judgment was entered based on the Labor Commissioner's order totaling \$3,005.83 in the case entitled NMF v. Pacific Property Investment & Management, Inc. dba American Sports University, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS1300536.
- 27. On August 13, 2013, an order was issued by the Labor Commissioner of the State of California, in Case No. 09-49584CC, requiring payment of wages, plus interest, fees and waiting time penalties, against Respondent and in favor of DC, a former employee. On October 4, 2013, final judgment was entered based on the Labor Commissioner's order totaling \$3,765.95 in the case entitled DC v. Pacific Property Investment & Management, Inc. dba American Sports University, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS1312175.
- On October 14, 2013, an order was issued by the Labor Commissioner of the State of California, in Case No. 09-47856CC, requiring payment of wages, plus interest, fees and waiting time penalties, against Respondent and in favor of RC, a former employee. On December 5, 2013, final judgment was entered based on the Labor Commissioner's order totaling \$56,958.59 in the case entitled RC v. Pacific Property Investment & Management, Inc. dba American Sports *University*, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS1315003.
- A judgment was entered against Respondent, and Harry Hwang and Jung Hee Hwang (Harry Hwang's wife), for a fraudulent transfer. On November 17, 2011, a First Amended

30. On August 29, 2013, a complaint was filed in the case entitled *Henry Aguila v*. *American Sports University, Harry Hwang and Pacific Property Investment*, San Bernardino Superior Case No. CIVDS1310429. On September 22, 2014, a second amended complaint was filed alleging that American Sports University and Harry Hwang breached a lease agreement they had with a third party to lease out the school's property located at 399 North D. Street, San Bernardino, CA 92401 for events. The case is still pending.

#### **Renewal Application**

31. On or about July 30, 2014, the Bureau received Respondent's Application for Renewal of Approval to Operate and Offer Educational Programs for Non-Accredited Institutions, Application No. 27573. The application was signed by Harry Hwang (as 50% owner) and Jane Hwang (as 50% owner), under penalty of perjury, on June 26, 2014. Mr. Hwang was listed as President and Ms. Hwang was listed as Chief Financial Officer. The application also contained the following information:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Harry Hwang and Casey Jaesum Hwang filed for bankruptcy in March of 2013 in the United States Bankruptcy Court, Central District, Case No. 1:13 bk-12109.

- (a) Question 4.2 requested a statement from any of the owners that have been convicted of any misdemeanors or felonies. No statements were provided. Respondent failed to disclose Mr. Hwang's felony convictions;
- (b) Question 4.2 requested a statement from any of the owners that has stipulated to a judgment or administrative order or consent degree. No statements were provided;
- (c) Question 4.3 requested an explanation of "any legal action pending against the institution or ownership or any of the institution's owners, officers, corporate directors, administrators or instructors by any federal state, or local law enforcement agency involving alleged acts of fraud, dishonesty, financial management, unpaid liabilities to any governmental agency or claims for pecuniary loss suffered by any student." No statements were provided;
- (d) The application indicated that the institution "has and can maintain the financial resources required pursuant to [Code of Regulations, title 5, section 71745];"
- (e) The application also indicated that there were no substantial changes to the school, including to organization and management, to instruction and degrees offered, to educational programs, to facilities and equipment and to the libraries and other learning resources.

#### Site Visit

32. On August 19, 2014, Bureau investigators conducted an unannounced site visit to Respondent's campus. The President, Donald L. Singer, Ph.D., was not present at the time of the visit. The school is housed in a two-story building, which has a separate theatre that is rented out for events and a sports center that is rented out for classes and sporting events. The visit revealed that the school has not been properly maintained. There is visible damage to the school's buildings including water damage to the ceilings, walls and wooden floors. Plaster and paint are peeling from walls. Panels are missing from the ceiling. The floors were warped and uneven, and the dorms smelled of mold. Mr. Hwang confirmed that the dormitory area had been flooded. The Bureau investigators also confirmed that the school had no library/or resources on the premises.

33. Mr. Hwang also stated that he was the president of Respondent, founder, and oversaw everything. He denied having any legal issues, past or present with state or federal agencies. He admitted to having "bank" problems three to four years prior wherein he lost a lot of money.

# Complaint

34. On December 16, 2014, the Bureau received a complaint alleging that Respondent was advertising and offering the American Council on Exercise (ACE) program and that the American Cambridge Academy is advertising Respondent's facilities as its own. An Enforcement Inspection Analyst's investigation reveals that Respondent was advertising and offering an unapproved ACE program. Further, a review of Respondent's website revealed that American Cambridge Academy is advertising ASU's facilities as its own. The Bureau, however, did not receive an application for Change of Educational Objective to add any other programs, including an ACE Program.

### FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

#### (Substantive Change Without Authorization)

35. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under sections 94893 and 94894, subdivision (a) of the Code, and California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 71650, in that it made the substantive change of adding an ACE program without Bureau authorization, and it advertised and offered an unapproved ACE program without Bureau authorization. Complainant refers to and by this reference incorporates the allegations set forth above in paragraphs 18-19, and 35 inclusive, as though set forth fully.

### SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

#### (Failure To Disclose Conviction)

36. Respondent is subject to discipline under sections 94932 and 71130, subdivision (c)(5), and Business and Professions Code 490, subdivision (a), in that it failed to provide a statement that Harry Hwang was convicted in 2002 of bribery in any of the applications it submitted to the Bureau. Complainant refers to and by this reference incorporates the allegations set forth above in paragraphs 17-19, 31 and 32 inclusive, as though set forth fully.

#### THIRD CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

#### (Failure to Pay Timely Refunds)

37. Respondent is subject to discipline under sections 94932 and 94937, subdivision (a)(2), and CCR, title 5, section 71745, subdivisions (a)(4), in that the institution failed to pay a timely refund to two students, HKP and SC. Complainant refers to and by this reference incorporates the allegations set forth above in paragraph 20 and 21 inclusive, as though set forth fully.

#### FOURTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

#### (Violated Facilities and Equipment Requirements)

38. Respondent is subject to discipline under sections 94932 and CCR, title 5, section 71735, subdivision (b), in that the school has not been properly maintained and, on August 19, 2014, there was visible damage to the school's buildings including water damage to the ceilings, walls and wooden floors. Plaster and paint are peeling from walls. Panels were missing from ceiling. The floors were warped and uneven, and the dorms smelled of mold. Complainant refers to and by this reference incorporates the allegations set forth above in paragraph 32 inclusive, as though set forth fully.

#### FIFTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

# (Failure to Have Sufficient Assets and Financial Resources to Pay Operating Expenses)

- 39. Respondent is subject to discipline under sections 94932 and CCR, title 5, section 71745, subdivisions (a)(5) and (a)(6), in that the institution failed to, and cannot, document that it has sufficient assets and financial resources to pay all operating expenses within 30 days, including as follows:
- a. Respondent failed to have sufficient financial resources to pay all of its operating expenses because it failed to pay wages to several employees, including BSH, EB, JC, TW, NWF, DC, and RC. Further, Respondent failed to disclose the lawsuits filed by the employees and its inability to pay the wages, including in its July 30, 2014 application. Complainant refers to and by this reference incorporates the allegations set forth above in paragraphs 22 though 29 and 31 inclusive, as though set forth fully;