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Federal Court Rules in Favor of Blind Students

Finds that Los Angeles Community College District Violated Disability Laws

Los Angeles (August 21, 2019): The National Federation of the Blind, its California affiliate, and two blind students, Roy Payan and Portia Mason, have won their disability discrimination lawsuit against the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD). The Federal District Court for the Central District of California Found that LACCD violated the students' rights under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 by, among other things, failing to provide them with accessible documents and course materials, failing to provide equal access to library resources, procuring and using inaccessible educational technology, and maintaining an inaccessible website. The court specifically criticized the use of the Pearson MyMathLab product, finding that Los Angeles Community College failed "to provide [Roy] Payan with meaningful access to his course materials in the math classes in which Payan enrolled, either through the MyMathLab software program or via equivalent accessible assignments from a math textbook in a timely manner." The court's final order requires, among other things, that LACCD appoint or designate a dean of educational technology for Los Angeles Community College, with responsibility for enforcing accessibility policies; remediate its website to make it accessible; and evaluate educational technology for accessibility prior to procuring it.

"The court in this case has forcefully affirmed the longstanding legal obligations that institutions of higher education have to their blind students," said Mark Riccobono, President of the National Federation of the Blind. "This judgment is a victory not only for the students who brought this case, but for current and future blind students in the Los Angeles Community College system."

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About the National Federation of the Blind

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB), headquartered in Baltimore, is the oldest and largest nationwide organization of blind Americans. Founded in 1940, the NFB consists of affiliates, chapters, and divisions in the fifty states, Washington DC, and Puerto Rico. The NFB defends the rights of blind people of all ages, and provides information and support to families with blind children, older Americans who are losing vision, and more. We believe in the hopes and dreams of blind people and work together to transform them into reality. Learn more about our many programs and initiatives at nfb.org.

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