



By Robert Osborne

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A disturbing incident happened to Alliance Executive Vice President John Tintera and public affairs consultant Katie Carmichael recently on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin.

John and Katie were invited to speak to a group of about 30 petroleum engineering students about pipelines on February 23. The group is called FracPAC and is led by our new intern Leo Huang.

John began his talk discussing the event in North Dakota regarding the Dakota Access Pipeline. About 10 minutes into his talk a group of about a half dozen people entered the room, some wearing masks, and sat on the front row. Because they entered after the beginning of the presentation, John introduced himself and asked they introduce themselves. They would give their names, and started shouting and calling John a fascist and racist. It became apparent that they wanted to agitate and cause a scene. That's when John and Katie decided to discontinue and leave.

I wrote a letter the next day to UT Austin Chancellor Bill McRaven, denouncing the conduct of the agitators, and warning him of the incident and their conduct in light of the recent riot on the campus of University of California, Berkley.

I have since heard from the faculty member in charge of FracPac and petroleum engineering students who were present. All were very concerned about the incident and apologetic.

The Texas Alliance of Energy Producers is strongly committed to supporting students across Texas as they pursue a career in the oil and gas industry. We have a free student membership program that has more than 100 members from universities across the state, including University of Houston, Texas Southern, UT San Antonio, Texas A & M, Midwestern State, SMU, TCU, and Texas Tech.

Additionally, the family of Joe McMahon, a former President of this organization, has funded a scholarship for a petroleum engineering student for years. We also have a scholarship for a deserving high school student in honor of former Chairman Tommy Taylor.

The work of John Tintera, Katie Carmichael, and the remainder of the Alliance staff has been exceptional with very limited resources. They have conducted themselves in a very professional manner at all times. Even though the actions of protestors have put a new light on what we have been doing across the state, we will continue our education programs to encourage and help students.