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Speaker comes back to Cal Poly after free-speech lawsuit

Posted: Nov 8, 2011 11:29 PM by Liza Sullivan

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Outspoken Conservative, Mason Weaver, spoke at Cal Poly Tuesday night.

Nine years ago his invitation to lecture on campus sparked an argument among students, and a free-speech lawsuit against the university.

In 2002, Weaver was invited to talk about his book called "It's okay to leave the plantation."

Student Steve Hinkle posted fliers on campus advertising the talk, which allegedly offended a group of black students.

A Cal Poly investigation found Hinkle in violation of a state regulation because he disrupted the group's bible study.

Hinkle sued, and the university paid a \$40 thousand settlement.

Now, nearly a decade later, Weaver is back.

"It's time for us to realize that freedom does not protect you," said Weaver. "But you better protect it."

He spoke about freedom of speech, and Americanism to dozens of students and community members.

"We were glad to see he's on campus," said Chip Visci, Associate VP of Advancement at Cal Poly. "The administration supports free speech."

But some members of the Cal Poly College Republicans, who invited Weaver to campus, believe the university's freedom of speech Code isn't strong enough, even after the Hinkle lawsuit.

"We really hope they listen to the speech and reflect on the free speech codes and make

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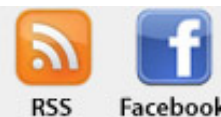
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appropriate changes necessary to make them compliant with the first amendment," said Brendan Pringle, a senior and President of the club.

The club is hosting several more events on campus for Freedom Week, including a mock Berlin Wall on Dexter Lawn Wednesday, and a Support-the-Troops barbecue on Thursday.

Topics: Mason Weaver, Cal Poly, Freedom of Speech, Lawsuit, Steve Hinkle

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nice coverage of Mason Weaver last night!

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