



DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

7-24-19

To whom it may concern:

I am writing as a scholar (who has a long history of interest in community psychology and social psychology) to support the GILEE program at Georgia State University. I am currently involved with the Serve and Connect non-profit in developing a national model for connecting police and community stakeholders in ways that benefit minority youth empowerment and thriving. Serve and Connect is using social science and community engagement to develop a win-win model. Serve and Connect has been able to understand the police (law enforcement) side and the community concerns about police in order to forge ways to bring them together. The work of GILEE, and its adherence to community policing principles, adds to our understanding.

I am deeply concerned with attempts to ban the program at Georgia State University and I do so for the following reasons:

1. The polarization in our country is appalling and seems to be getting worse. Developing better relationships between police and communities is a major priority in our country—particularly with minority communities. Understanding that there is a win-win for police and for minority communities by having safe neighborhoods for minorities to live in is simply good common sense. That this has been difficult to achieve has posed one of the major challenges in our society. This is a place for the humanities and social sciences to contribute to helping to solve society's problems. Having the GILEE program at GSU renders it as being part of the solution.
2. The BDS is a biased hateful ideological movement. It certainly fosters anti-Semitism. As a son of Holocaust survivors, I find this ideology that promotes directed hatred against Israel and Jews a threat. When BDS then attempts to squash social science work that attempts to improve communities, it simply stands against science and justice.
3. Charges against what GILEE is, what it stands for, and what it delivers, are not only unfounded but also are flatly wrong. Knowingly concocting these blatantly false accusations using the Big Lie Technique is offensive. GILEE's 27-year record, the accolades it received, the recognition from many corners, and the well-deserved awards, speak volumes of the value it brings to law enforcement and the community served by it.

GILEE deserves continued support and I, for one, am glad to offer it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Abraham Wandersman".

Abraham Wandersman PhD
Distinguished Emeritus Professor