

## Sid Williams Sues Life

\$1.2 MILLION B.J PALMER HOME AT CENTER OF CONTROVERSY

Editorial Staff

On Dec. 30, 2002, Drs. Sid Williams, Nell Williams and The B.J. Palmer Historic Home Foundation, Inc. (a Georgia nonprofit corporation) filed a lawsuit against Life University. With this lawsuit, the Drs. Williams join a long list of students and faculty suing Life for issues most believe are related directly or indirectly to the actions of Dr. Sid Williams during the time he ran the college.

Included in the list of suits against Life are:

- a discrimination lawsuit by four former Life faculty;<sup>1</sup>
- multiple lawsuits filed by over 200 former Life students, one of which could become a class-action lawsuit;<sup>2-5</sup> and
- numerous wrongful-discharge lawsuits by Life faculty and staff.

At issue in this lawsuit are the Separation Agreements between Life University and the Drs. Williams. In addition to final payments of salaries, retirement benefits, health benefits, housing allowance and life insurance payments (through Feb. 28, 2003), the agreements call for the transfer of ownership of the famed B.J. Palmer House in Sarasota, Fla., to the Drs. Williams. According to the original agreements, signed on July 8, 2002, the \$1.2 million property was to be given to the Drs. Williams "as may be lawfully directed by grantees to minimize their tax liability."

The separation agreements were amended for both Drs. Sid and Nell on Sept. 23, 2002, to direct the transfer of ownership of the B.J. Palmer House to "The B.J. Palmer Historic Home Foundation, Inc.," a nonprofit corporation in which Dr. Sid Williams is the CEO and Dr. Kim Williams, his daughter, is the secretary and CFO.

While the other items on the separation agreements have apparently been paid, there was a problem with the transfer of the B.J. Palmer House. According to a Nov. 27, 2002, letter from Life's attorney, Frank Strickland:

"As the board continues its investigation into the improvements to the Williams residence and removal of personal property from the University's facilities, we invite your clients (Drs. Williams) to provide the University with a list of the personal property which was removed by them and documentation concerning the renovations and additions made to the Williams residence."

As we go to press, the parties are reportedly negotiating an out-of-court settlement that would clear the way for the transfer of the property. Even so, many still associated with Life University must be wondering why the \$1.2 million property wasn't sold to the benefit of the college, along with six other properties that were approved for sale in late 2002.

### References

1. Discrimination suit OK'd against Life ex-president. *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Dec. 19, 2002.
2. Pupils file suit vs. Life. *Marietta Daily Journal*, Oct. 10, 2002.
3. 75 join suit against Life. *Marietta Daily Journal*, Nov. 1, 2002.

4. Life University students file suit against school's leaders. *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Nov. 2, 2002.
5. Life may face class-action suit. *Dynamic Chiropractic*, Dec. 16, 2002:  
[www.chiroweb.com/archives/20/26/11.html](http://www.chiroweb.com/archives/20/26/11.html).

MARCH 2003