Bill to Allocate Discretionary Funds to Stanford Green Store to Maintain Its Website and Engage in Advertising Projects

Graduate Student Council Bill
GSC-2013-8

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Action Requested: Majority Approval by the Graduate Student Council

WHEREAS one of the primary functions of our student government is to fund student initiatives that serve the Stanford community,

WHEREAS Green Store is a store that operates entirely online, sells eco-friendly products (e.g., recyclable cups and compostable food serviceware) to the campus community, and delivers purchases to students’ residences to make sustainable products more accessible to the student body,

WHEREAS Green Store is a service that has been in existence since December 2008 and has grown out of and remains a service of the ASSU,

WHEREAS Green Store has funds in its ASSU account but sells products at break-even cost and relies on its current, existing funds to stock up in inventory, bring more eco-friendly products to the store, and expand its product line,

WHEREAS Green Store is changing its website to use an online checkout platform that is also in use by Stanford Student Store (a service of Stanford Student Enterprises), and this platform, called Shopify, requires a monthly fee for operations,

WHEREAS Green Store operates solely online (as of now) and its web presence is essential to its business model and its focus on making sustainable purchasing as simple and easy as possible for the student body,

WHEREAS the Shopify fee would create a monthly cut into Green Store’s existing funds and would eventually deplete the store’s source of money for inventory purchases and product line expansion if Green Store were not to receive additional funding to cover this expense,

WHEREAS the cost of operating a Shopify-powered website is:
  • Currently listed as $79 per month for a “Professional Plan” that provides professional accounting reports, which are necessary because Green Store must provide the ASSU Accounting Team sales and tax reports each month, AND
  • There is a discount of 10% for an annual plan paid upfront,

WHEREAS Green Store also hopes to advertise its service to the graduate community and plans to engage in vigorous marketing efforts because of its several months of inoperation (which have diminished the store’s visibility and brand recognition on campus) due to transitional and institutional issues that have just now been resolved,
WHEREAS some of the advertising efforts that Green Store hopes to engage in include Facebook advertisements, sustainable fliering (e.g., printing and paper costs for fliers on post-consumer recycled or once-used paper), giveaways advertising the store (e.g., reusable bags sporting the Green Store logo, Green Store stickers, Green Store tumblers, etc.), and a kick-off event for the store,

WHEREAS funds for advertising would help the store inform both the graduate student body and the campus community at large about the store’s availability as a resource and discourage students from purchasing products such as nonrecyclable red Solo cups,

THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED BY THE GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL OF STANFORD UNIVERSITY

THAT Green Store receive funding from the Graduate Student Council (“GSC”) to support a yearly Shopify Professional Plan (currently $853.20 including the discount and before tax, but the price for this plan is subject to change in the future by Shopify),

THAT Green Store continue to receive funding from the GSC each year for the Plan described above (i.e., that this be a yearly funding obligation of the GSC) so that Green Store may continue its web operations each year seamlessly,

THAT Green Store be subject at any time, however, to removal of GSC funding for web operations if the GSC votes to unfund the store upon a determination that the store’s service is ineffective and no longer of benefit to the Stanford community,

THAT Green Store receive a budget of $1,500 for advertising projects for the remainder of the 2013-14 academic year and that any money not used by the end of the school year be returned to the GSC,

AND THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED BY THE GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL OF STANFORD UNIVERSITY

THAT sufficient funding be allocated to Green Store to enable its web operations here on out (i.e., currently $853.20 plus tax per year) and to effect its 2013-14 advertising plans (a budget of $1500) as described above.