

LANEY, J.T.



THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

1230 YORK AVENUE

NEW YORK, NY 10021

August 17, 1979

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

PRESIDENT

Dr. James T. Laney  
President  
Emory University  
Atlanta, Georgia 30322

Dear Dr. Laney:

I will recall the telephone discussion we had some while ago about your search for a Vice President for Medical Affairs at Emory University. I assume that your search is still continuing: and in fact will not conceal my satisfaction that Dr. Kappas has elected to stay here. I have the highest regard for him and in fact believe that the role which he occupies here is a better match to his considerable talents than what I believe you have in mind for him at Emory.

On the other hand, I want to bring your attention to a candidate who I believe would serve you superbly and that is Dr. Clayton Rich. I was on the search committee that recruited Dr. Rich from Seattle to take the position of Dean and Vice President at Stanford University and knew him intimately, both professionally and personally, throughout his service there. I am sure you are well aware of some controversy that has beclouded that school, but it is my profound and informed belief that he was a victim of circumstances beyond his or any reasonable control. In fact I believe that the university has only compounded its self injury by, in some sense, using Dr. Rich as a scapegoat for much deeper problems within the school.

From my close experience with him, I believe that he is one of the finest people in medical administration in the United States. I found him deeply dedicated to academic excellence and to follow a style of responsiveness and evenhandedness that was extraordinary. He managed the affairs of a complex institution with great modesty and dignity. If I have to fault him at all it is for being too responsive to the consensus of the department heads on occasions when he was right and a great majority was wrong.

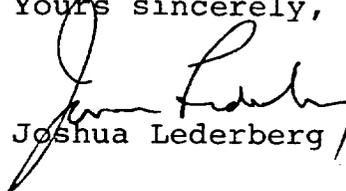
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He did make one lapse of judgement in relying on the confidence and integrity of one or two subordinates and then took full responsibility for their failings. At a time when lesser personalities might be evoking substantial bitterness, his public posture about the situation at Stanford has been absolutely impeccable and reflects his unabated loyalty to the underlying academic aims of the institution.

I know that you will want other local testimony particularly in a situation of this kind and I would urge you in particular to consult Dr. Kenneth Melman, Chairman of the Department of Medicine at Stanford.

Yours sincerely,

  
Joshua Lederberg

Encl. - C.V. on C. Ried