

Dear Ed,

I hope that this message finds you in good health.

I recently learned that U of T Law has rescinded an offer of employment to Dr. Valentina Azarova. I am sure that I don't need to repeat the circumstances surrounding this decision.

I am writing today to tell you that I am deeply disappointed in U of T as an institution. You may not have known this when we were classmates, but I was the first person of Palestinian background to attend U of T. I grew up in poverty and it was a tremendous honour to join the ranks of U of T graduates.

When we were in law school, I repeatedly heard that we had been accepted by U of T because we had demonstrated merit and shown ourselves to be the best candidates. We were also reminded that a process had been established to ensure that our selection was based on merit.

It appears that U of T is willing to compromise on its commitment to merit and to jettison its processes when it comes to Palestinian rights.

What exactly is so objectionable about Dr. Azarova? The committee that deemed her the best candidate found nothing to disqualify her. Instead, it seems that the decision to disqualify her was made solely because of her support for the human rights of Palestinians. It therefore appears that you are willing to participate in demonizing and disenfranchising those who believe that Palestinians are entitled to recognition of their equal dignity and worth.

This is truly disturbing.

Your decision not only raises questions about your decision-making but brings the faculty's commitments to merit and fair processes into question.

Rest assured that I will be sharing my concerns with any Arab applicant who is considering U of T Law. I will tell them that they can never be sure that they will be treated as equal citizens of U of T Law. I will also share my concerns with U of T alum and with Palestinian professors in various disciplines across Canada.

I understand that you still have an opportunity to make this situation right and urge you to do so.

Sincerely,

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