

Trinity sues online school over trademark

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Trinity University is suing an entity that offers online degrees, accusing it of trademark infringement.

The San Antonio liberal arts and sciences university seeks a federal court order barring Trinity Learning Foundation from using "Trinity University" on its website or using that name to promote its programs.

The suit was filed Thursday in San Antonio

Trinity Learning Foundation, headquartered in Delaware, did not respond to requests for comment.

"Because they are using our name, we feel it's an infringement of our registered trademark and can lead to trademark dilution," said Mary Denny, associate director of communications for Trinity University. "We're very proud of our reputation."

Trinity Learning Foundation's website says it offers graduate information technology degrees, a mas-

ter's in business administration and bachelor's degrees in nursing and health management, among others.

But some of those degrees are offered under "Trinity University" on the foundation's website, including degrees the San Antonio institution doesn't offer. It's "a complete infringement and could be damaging to our reputation," Denny said.

This isn't the first time Trinity University has battled over its name. In 2007,

it settled a trademark lawsuit with Trinity College in Washington over that entity's attempt to change its name to Trinity University.

Additionally, Trinity

University reached a settlement in 2004 with a diploma mill then known as Trinity College & University.

That deal ended a lawsuit in which the universi-

ty said Trinity College & University — registered in the British Virgin Islands but with purported offices in Louisiana — infringed on the Trinity University trademark.



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Khaled Hosseini, author of "The Kite Runner," applauds participants at the International Baccalaureate Conference of the Americas, held at the San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter.

Conference draws 1,300 to discuss magnet program

BY PIERRE BERTRAND
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Aruna Kharod and Alexis De La Garza sit in plush hotel seats typing away on laptops.

The soon-to-be Clemens High juniors are blogging and tweeting about events at the International Baccalaureate Conference of the Americas.

The conference, which ends Sunday, is the third annual gathering of IB school teachers, district administrators and program staff. It is meant to celebrate and share ideas to improve the program.

IB is a magnet program that stresses critical thinking and international perspectives, which makes it unique, said IB Director for the Americas Drew Deutsch.

And that is exactly what prompted Aruna and Alexis to join the program at their school in the Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City Independent School District. In the fall they will enter the IB program full time; previously they took preparatory classes.

Two other local schools, Burbank High School in the San Antonio ISD and Judson High School in Judson ISD, offer the magnet program.

"It seemed like a perfect fit," Aruna, 16, said. "Our teachers are focused on making us better people."

Alexis, 16, who will join the high school newspaper, said she was looking for tight-knit classes and saw that in the IB program.

Aruna said she thinks students her age lose themselves in doing their best only in their course work, and that narrows their outlook on life. The IB program helped change that in her and made her less selfish, she said.

"People get so caught up in doing homework that they forget we are part of a greater community."

It was exactly that sense of expanded interconnectedness that keynote speaker Khaled Hosseini wanted to stress to the conference's more than 1,300 participants Friday. Hosseini, author of the best-selling novel "The Kite Runner," said he believes education is a privilege that needs to be paid back.

He used his speech to champion the idea that children in the United States today live in a world full of abundance, despite general ideals that suggest everything valuable in life is scarce.

"The greatest thing is

the opportunity to demonstrate to kids that they already have enough to make a difference in this world and give them an opportunity to demonstrate that power," Hosseini said.

But maintaining the magnet program can sometimes prove hard to manage, and one of the sessions focused on lessons learned by Burbank High School in its experience with first-generation students, those likely to be the first college-goers in their families.

Of 1,400 students at Burbank, 240 are in the IB program and most are first-generation students.

Candace Michael, Burbank's IB diploma coordinator, said her school faced severe attrition rates in 2005, which prompted the school to overhaul IB.

What resulted was a program in which parents, teachers and students are in continuous dialogue with one another.

Michael said IB courses were essential in helping first-generation students reach and graduate from college.

The program is taught to upper-class students, who have to take six college-level courses in certain required areas. Some of the classes take more than a year to complete and focus on critical thinking, which means tests are not multiple choice, Deutsch said.

Students also take theory of knowledge, designed to bridge the classes. At the end of the program, students are required to write a 20-page research paper and receive an IB diploma, he said.



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