

*Special Report*

**Did Sheila Marler feel the Impact of Typhoon Farhang?  
An Investigative Series on the Treatment of CoB Staff by CoB Administrators**

This Special Report comments on a recently uncovered handwritten memo. The memo was penned by former CoB Administrative Assistant Sheila Marler. It was addressed to Rayonne Ellis in Financial Affairs, and it concerns a delay in travel reimbursements for CoB Associate Dean Farhang Niroomand. That memo is presented below:



The University of Southern Mississippi  
College of Business and Economic Development  
118 College Drive #5021  
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001  
Phone: (601) 266-4659 Fax: (601) 266-5814

Rayonne -  
Please process these  
travel vouchers asap  
as Dr Niroomand  
is expecting his check -  
Please do not hold  
up due to my error  
of not providing the  
BREF - I thought the  
memo for 7/28/05 would  
be adequate - Thanks,  
Mississippi's Business School Sheila

In the note above, Marler is practically begging Ellis to get the travel reimbursement to Niroomand post-haste. Marler writes of multiple vouchers in the note, which supports the notion that the reimbursements total that Niroomand is seeking from Ellis could easily exceed \$10,000 or more (see “Niroomand on the Move” at usmpride.com).

Notice also that Marler writes about her own mistake in causing the delay of Niroomand’s reimbursement – an error she describes as “not providing the BREF. .” and thinking that the “memo for 7/28/05 would be adequate.” Looking back at the “Niroomand on the Move” report, Marler could be seeking reimbursement on Niroomand’s behalf for any combination of the trips below:

April 2005	San Francisco	AACSB meeting	\$1,339.70	\$1,276.80
April 2005	Gulfport/Jack.	BAC/ITC	\$ 414.71	\$ 414.71
May 2005	Iran	Central Bank of Iran “Invite”	\$3,615.07	\$2,300.00
June 2005	Gulfport/LB	ITC/Ethics Forum	\$ 317.70	\$ 317.70
June 2005	Atlanta, GA	“Academic Visit”	\$ 697.29	\$ 600.00
July 2005	Quebec, CAN	BIE Dirs./AIB Ann Meeting	\$2,957.01	\$2,957.01
July 2005	Wash DC	USDE Workshop Meeting	\$1,004.45	\$1,004.45

Given the amounts involved, one can easily imagine Niroomand becoming impatient at any delay in the processing of his paperwork.

Then there’s the issue of Niroomand’s *infamous* temper, which female CoB staff have experienced as often as, if not more than, the CoB’s junior professors. One can almost see the fear in Marler’s eyes, and the tremble of her hand, as she penned the note to Ellis. “Please, Rayonne, spare me the humiliation of what’s coming if I fail to secure Dr. Niroomand’s money” must have been the dominant thought of Marler at this point (see note above) in the Summer of 2005 (or thereabouts). Maybe one day, Marler, whose departure from the CoB will be described in detail at some future date, will provide a window into the daily life of a CoB staffer by speaking of her experiences, perhaps even describing the events surrounding her note above.