

**UH Students for Fair Trade
c/o Tim O'Brien
1303 Ruthven Street
Houston, TX 77019-5139
713.739.0011**

Jay Gogue
President, University of Houston
212 E. Cullen Building
Houston, TX 77024-2018
VIA: FIRST CLASS MAIL, FAX 713.743.8837

June 2, 2006

Re: your letter of April 26, 2006

Dear Mr. Gogue:

I am in receipt of your letter dated April 26, (enclosed) concerning my organization's goal to make all the coffee served on campus Fair Trade certified.

Your letter brings up several points that I'd like to address. First off you wrote that "Java City is one of Aramark's brands." According to Aramark's own website, that is incorrect. In fact in 2003 at the University of Loyola Aramark was forced to replace their Java City franchise with a company called Pura Vida because Java City would not offer the Fair Trade coffee the student body desired. Pura Vida is a charitable organization, as you may know, that only sells Fair Trade coffee and plows a lot of its profits into improving the lives of third world residents.

Secondly you mentioned Starbucks in your letter. You said "they are the only company licensed to sell fair trade coffee in more than 20 nations." You may not be aware that no license is needed to sell fair trade coffee. Did you know that more than 96% of the coffee Starbucks sells is **NOT** Fair Trade certified? Starbucks grossed over \$6 billion dollars in 2005. The amount of money they made exploiting coffee farmers in Asian, Latino and African nations is staggering. They have been a flashpoint for activists for years.

We understand that the contract with Aramark gives the University the power to determine the acceptability of products and services. As the ranking signatory of the contract and a representative of the UH campus, UH Students for Fair Trade thinks it is important to express the concerns the University students may have on this issue that may very well affect you and other University signatories to the contract. Being that more than 60% of the UH student body is Asian, Latino and African American, it would be disappointing to find that the authoritative figures to this upstanding school would be indirectly harming the reputation of the university and insulting its students.

UH Students for Fair Trade has no doubt that we share the same goals and hopes for the University of Houston as you do and in cooperation, we would like to educate you and other pertinent University representatives on the harm of selling non-fair trade coffee on our campus. In which case, everyone will be given the opportunity to see that we are all working together to sustain the integrity of this campus and the community, rather than against.

Finally, you suggest that the student organization should continue this dialogue with Alisdair McLean, Aramark's district manager. Perhaps your office could help in facilitating this to happen, since Mr. McLean does not find the University's relationship with Aramark important enough to answer emails or phone calls from its students.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. O'Brien
Founder, UH Students for Fair Trade

cc: Alisdair McLean, United Students for Fair Trade