



SECTIONS	TODAY'S PAPER	 MY SAVED	
NEWS			METRO
ARTS			BUSINESS
SPORTS			OPINION
LIFESTYLE			MAGAZINE
INSIDERS			TODAY'S PAPER
LOTTERY			OBITUARIES
GLOBE NORTH			GLOBE SOUTH
GLOBE WEST			TERROR AT THE MARATHON
68 BLOCKS			

Metro

Humanist group leader fired after resume lie

By **[Matt Rocheleau](#)** | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT SEPTEMBER 28, 2013

 ARTICLE

 COMMENTS (2)

 PRINT  REPRINTS  E-MAIL SHARE 

A humanist group based at Harvard University fired one of its leaders, a former Methodist minister, this week after discovering she had lied on her resume.

Teresa MacBain took on a leading role as a project director with the Humanist Community at Harvard this summer, several months after resigning as pastor of a Methodist church in Florida. MacBain left the church because she determined that, after 20 years of ministry, she no longer believed in God, according to The New York Times and online biographies of her.

“I am sad to report that Teresa MacBain left employment with the Humanist Community at Harvard today, and is no longer the director of our Humanist Community Project,” said an online statement

from Greg Epstein, chaplain and executive director of the humanist organization, an independent nonprofit.

“We at HCH have approached this situation as best we can, striving to apply our reason in the service of both fairness and compassion,” Epstein added. “Many of us at HCH have come to care very much about Teresa as a person. We wish her the very best in the future. We will also learn a great deal from this experience as we move forward with energy and renewed determination.”

He said a search for a new director will begin soon.

MacBain’s transition from ministry to humanism was detailed in a New York Times religion column last Saturday. MacBain, 45, told the Times she had earned a master of divinity degree from Duke University, a claim she also made in prior public statements and in the resume she submitted to the Humanist Community when she applied to become a project director there.

A Duke Divinity School spokeswoman contacted the Times after the story ran and said that the school had no record of MacBain earning a master’s degree there, or that she even took graduate school classes.

The Times reached MacBain by phone this week. She acknowledged that she had falsified her credentials but offered no further explanation, the newspaper reported.

On Friday, the newspaper published a story about MacBain being fired and added an editor’s note to the online version of the column from Saturday to note the correction regarding MacBain’s educational background.

Epstein wrote in an e-mail to the Times that: “Clearly we should have verified Teresa’s M.Div. degree rather than relying upon her resume and the frequent, public references to it as she worked for and with several Freethought organizations.”

The daughter of a Baptist minister, MacBain left her ministry shortly before Easter 2012. Later that year, the American Atheists organization named her “Atheist of the Year,” according to a press release.

In late August, the Harvard-based group announced that it had hired MacBain to lead a new initiative, the Humanist Community Project, which aims to create a nationwide network of humanist communities. Using her “experience with Evangelical megachurch pastor Rick Warren’s ‘church planting’ method” MacBain was to be “put to use building a movement of atheists and agnostics,”



according to a Humanist Community at Harvard press release announcing her arrival in August. She would have led a staff of 11 inside a new community and office space in Harvard Square scheduled to open in October, the release said.

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at mjrochele@gmail.com.

 PRINT  REPRINTS  E-MAIL  SHARE ▾

 ARTICLE  COMMENTS (2)

Learn more

[SUBSCRIBE](#) [BOSTON GLOBE INSIDERS](#) [REFER A FRIEND](#) [EPAPER EDITION](#)
[NEWS IN EDUCATION](#)

MY ACCOUNT

[LOGOUT](#)

 [MY SAVED LIST](#)

[MANAGE HOME DELIVERY](#)

CONTACT

[HELP](#)

[FAQS](#)

[GLOBE NEWSROOM](#)

[ADVERTISE](#)

SOCIAL

[FACEBOOK](#)

[TWITTER](#)

[GOOGLE+](#)

MORE

[ARCHIVES](#)

[PRIVACY POLICY](#)

[TERMS OF SERVICE](#)

[TERMS OF PURCHASE](#)

[WORK HERE](#)

© 2014 BOSTON GLOBE MEDIA PARTNERS, LLC
