

Diploma mill dupes

Not all who bought a degree from an unaccredited diploma mill are unhappy about their experience.

The number of disenchanted and angry will grow over time - including those who purchased degrees from *your* Kennedy-Western University, Warren National University, Newport International University, or Preston University. All operations that were allowed to set up their "depositories" - bogus enterprises - in Wyoming.

As the former students' lawsuit against K-WU/WNU slogs along in Laramie County District Court, many former students have contacted the Cheyenne Herald (as the publication of record on this matter) and have posted anonymously to various forums set up for that purpose.

Incredibly, but predictably, some who own degrees bought from *your* unaccredited degree seller(s), continue to defend both the operation and champion their degree.

The most common supportive argument is that they learned a great deal and, thus, the degree has value. If that is the way a former student chooses to view the costly mistake, that is their prerogative.

An ambitious person can learn a lot from library volumes that they can check out for free. They can learn a lot by subscribing to technical magazines and borrowing manuals on the subject they want to learn about. There are numerous ways a willing and energetic person can learn.

Learning is not the issue. For those who learned and acquired a degree with limited usefulness, value and worth, they are to be commended. Good for them.

The argument here is that those degrees purchased from unaccredited degree selling for-profit businesses will become more and more worthless with time. As more and more businesses and employers learn employee have bought degrees from unaccredited diploma mills, they will reject them on resumes and for job advancement and higher pay. That's is already happening and countless "alum" of these nefarious operations are walking on pins and needles, terrified that the other shoe will fall. On them.

And, for those wanting or planning to use the unaccredited degree to advance their education, they will find out that not even the unaccredited degree sellers themselves accept their degrees toward a master's or doctoral degree. Their own!

There was some hope that Grand Canyon University (a credible and accredited university in Arizona) would accept credits and/or degrees bought from K-WU/WNU. When WNU sought an extension from the State of Wyoming to "teach out" enrolled students, they stated as much in their plea. However, Grand Canyon told the Herald that such was not the case and would not be the case. They "considered" credits earned during the time period WNU was actively seeking accreditation but accepted very few. More likely, GCU was trolling for new students from among those who had been jilted and betrayed by Warren National.

It cannot be easy to admit, and accept, that you've been snookered. One who is seeking advanced education, and believe they're earning it, might consider themselves smarter than the average bear. To eventually learn they had been deceived and had paid (often with borrowed money) \$8,000 - \$12,000 to purchase a degree having little more value than the gag degrees available from other businesses. Those gag degrees are so stated, though. If you want to pay \$50 to buy a piece of paper that may look to the unaware like a degree from Yale or Harvard and hang it in your john, go for it.

But to pay up to \$12,000 for a degree from Kennedy-Western, Warren National, Newport International or Preston when states are banning them from being used on public job applications and employers are no longer considering them as "education" must be very hurtful. No one likes to feel like they've been taken.

Hence, some who still live in a basement bedroom of their parent's home and post anonymously to websites, may try to convince their peers that they're not as stupid as they feel. But nothing they can post or write to the Cheyenne Herald will change the reality of the situation. They may have "learned" something but the degree they thought they earned but really just purchased, will be of diminishing value as more and more in the country come to learn the terms "unaccredited" and "diploma mill."

There are great auto mechanics and even better auto body repair technicians who have never attended a school for that purpose. Bookkeepers and accountants can learn on the job. But they won't become CPAs. "Students" who bought a degree from an unaccredited diploma mill may possess much more knowledge now than before. And they may be able to claim that "degree" on resumes and job applications that they submit to certain unknowing and uncaring employers. Personnel managers (human resource managers today) may not know the difference. But their replacement may. And, some companies may take the position that using such a degree when they required a real degree for consideration for that job was dishonest and deceptive and grounds for termination.

So, learning is only part of the equation if the employer requires a degree from an accredited college or university. And that promotion one feels deserving of and capable of handling may have to be "passed on" for fear the employer will now learn that the degree claimed is invalid.

Defend away, oh basement bedroom dwellers, this writer is proud to have played a role in ridding the State of Wyoming and my town, Cheyenne, of these parasites. They played our state and officials for fools. And we were.

Now, all are gone. Every stinkin' one of 'em. Every solitary one. Four years ago, they were welcome here, providing jackets and football game tickets to legislators and department of education employees. Now, all are gone from our midst. My final words: Good riddance.

Hiring a police chief

For the inexperienced in hiring, when you want to "pirate" a key person from another company or another governmental entity, you move quickly. The longer you take to drop the hammer, the less chance you'll have of getting the person you want.

Perhaps Rick wanted to be certain that his hire for police chief would not also have an advanced degree from an unaccredited diploma mill so is making sure each candidate that supposedly made "the cut" is properly vetted. That would be a new experience here.

When Dave Freudenthal hired the latest head of the Department of Transportation, he chose a guy with a bachelor's degree from an unaccredited diploma mill in Missouri - American International. When that was pointed out to Dave, he explained that possessing a "degree" of any type, legit or not, was not part of the job description so the guy didn't violate anything. He was just uneducated and the governor didn't care if his choice for head of WYDOT was educated or not. And, he got his man. An uneducated one.

Bob Fecht, of course, was already police chief before he bought a master's degree from a for-profit unaccredited degree selling business that had been run out of Louisiana and was operating from a strip shopping center storefront in Mississippi when Bob got the City to approve using public funds to purchase a less than worthless degree. Bob's is the worst possible because Lacrosse University never had authority from the State of Mississippi to sell any type of degree. After a few years of trolling for gullible targets like Fecht, Spiker and Abernathy, the State of Mississippi put the run on Lacrosse also. What degrees do the two candidates now employed at CPD have?

Many things can happen with indecisiveness on hiring a new employee to a key position, most of them bad.

First, the candidate's current employer, if the candidate is highly valued and they do not want to lose him/her, will find a way to hold onto the person. In a public position like law enforcement, it might take longer to figure out a way to retain a good person. A state, city, town or county may want the person to leave. It takes no time to allow a poor employee to leave. Passing time - delay - will not matter. They're not going to try to talk that person into staying or find a way to offer them more money or perks to stay. Adios.

Stalling, then, culls out the good ones. The bad ones stay in the mix if it took a year to make a decision on something as basic as a police chief. Remember, the police chief is an untested position. It used to be that a fire chief had to pass a battery of very difficult tests and that eliminated some very good candidates. In Cheyenne, the director of human resources, with no experience in that area, was allowed to design a test with a Des Moines company and he could skew the test in favor or against his choice in the fire department. Not police chief. We have no idea how intelligent they are.

Another problem with indecisiveness is that good candidates will see it for what it is. Indecisiveness. As a chief, they don't want to work for a mayor who cannot make a decision. When they need to hire undercover officers, they can't wait months for approval. The City knew well before Fecht's last day that he was leaving. To take six months to decide on a replacement will cost us the best candidates. Make a decision, for crying out loud.

Happy New Year



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