

# Soon there will be no degree sellers in Wyo

Reminiscent of the adult entertainment surrounding the New York City Port Authority a couple decades back, Wyoming had become home to an industry almost as disgusting - diploma mills. And there was a flypaper appeal. More and more and more found the State of Wyoming a willing paramour and they flocked to our cities as fast as they could rent U-Hauls.

Several states have produced a listing of unaccredited diploma mills and a quick scan of the list brings Wyoming more disrepute than almost any other issue has in the past couple of decades.

One of the most reliable and complete lists is maintained by the State of Oregon Office of Degree Authorization. It is called a "list of unaccredited degree suppliers." The list is lengthy and one of the column headings is "Location(s)."

Wyoming shows up there all too often. And, in spite of chasing all of the nefarious degree sellers from our state, our name will forever "grace" these lists. It is a bell that cannot be unrung. We invited the scoundrels, we welcomed them, we fought for their retention and now we have a permanent stain for that mistake.

And as accurate as the Oregon list is, it is not perfect. We had an "American Capital University" in the basement of the Telesonic Building. They are shown as being from Liberia. We dodged one bullet, at least. I was to the ACU office in Cheyenne and had a catalog from the place. That recruiting tool had the picture of a Wyoming Department of Education employee who was supposed to monitor them, not embrace them.

The list does show Wyoming with Academy of Natural Therapies (??), Allen Maxwell University (??), American Central University, American City University, American Global University, Columbia Commonwealth University, Glamshier University (??), Halifax University, Hamilton University, Kennedy-Western University, Paramount University of Technology, Preston University, Richardson University, Trinity International University College (??), and Warren National University.

Texas has "Institutions Whose Degrees are Illegal to Use in Texas," and those named above plus these with links to Wyoming are on that list: Kingdom College of Natural Health, Rutherford University, Fairmont University, Stratford University and University of NorthWest.

While Wyoming was recruiting and mollycoddling these bums, other states were accumulating lists that warned against them or made their degrees illegal for use in their state. How did our people miss that? Granted, parents of Wyoming students never had to contend with the bogus degrees because locals did not bite for the most part. But didn't any of the WDOE employees or elected representatives have cable when Sen. Susan Collins conducted her hearings? How could anyone in Wyoming not know Kennedy-Western University was among the worst of the degree sellers. Why did Wyoming legislators make a 2006 toothless law to accommodate KWU?

Forums on this subject have postings asking whether the State of Wyoming should be sued for allowing - no, make that "encouraging" - these bums. Those defrauded could try to bring legal action but governmental immunity allows elected officials and hired employees to screw up without financial risk. Certainly, their reputations should be shot but they don't have to worry about reputations. Just ask the current Wyoming State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

There are no bogus unaccredited "registered private post-secondary degree granting institutions" on the Wyoming Department of Education website.

Hawaii maintains a list of all their "Civil Enforcement Lawsuits," many going back to 1999 - 2002. Wyoming did not do any background checks before allowing licensing here. Shame on us. Had WDOE done even a minimal amount of work, many of those that ended up here would not have been approved by Wyoming. Or should not have been approved.

In one case, the State of Hawaii rid itself of an operator in 1998 and the owner fled to Wyoming. In Hawaii, he paid a sizable civil fine for operating in a manner tolerated in Wyoming until 2006. He established the infamous Hamilton University that operated out of a former motel room in Evanston. In 2008, ten years after being run out of Hawaii, the founder pled guilty to tax evasion and is serving two years in prison and was to pay \$620,000 in restitution. Had Wyoming done any "investigation," they would have known it would be unwise to grant this guy a license to sell degrees from a former Motel 6 room in Evanston.

Michigan has a "listing of colleges and universities from which degrees will not

be accepted by the Michigan Civil Service Commission to satisfy educational requirements indicated on job specifications." Michigan's list is very similar to Oregon's but does have American Capital University as from Wyoming and also has Bonavista University and Rushmore University with links to Wyoming.

All states with any oversight consider Kennedy-Western University, Lacrosse University and Warren National University degrees as unacceptable.

Some national readers have mistaken the Cheyenne Herald as a crusader against degree sellers (diploma mills, if you prefer). That is slightly inaccurate. Our objective has always been to rid Wyoming of this dastardly enterprise. Lacrosse University, never operating in Wyoming, has been a part of our public disclosures because Cheyenne's police chief, Bob Fecht, bought a master's degree from the unaccredited and ever-on-the-move fraud with public money. Your money.

But the focus has been on unaccredited degree sellers who called Wyoming "home." We have followed them as they relocated - Preston University first to Montgomery, Alabama and then to Los Angeles, California. And we have pointed out to the WDOE that Preston University continues to claim an ongoing operation in Wyoming even though they have no license or registration to do anything "educational" from our state. Perhaps that is what led to Preston's cancelling of their planned graduation in Fort Collins on May 27th. This message is now posted on their website.

*Preston University's International Graduation Ceremony, originally scheduled for 27 May 2009, is cancelled due to the danger posed by the emerging flu epidemic. The event will be delayed until Fall 2009. The cancellation is made due to safety concerns for Preston's many graduates who would travel to the USA for the event. The growing threat of Swine Flu in the region may or may not become serious, however, our concern for our graduates makes it prudent to delay the ceremony until a later date.*

Dr. Jerry Haenisch, Chancellor

A show of hands, please. Who believes Preston University gives a tinker's damn about flu to their students? No, me neither. Either they had no takers or no money. It is interesting how these outfits can just pull up stakes after violating state laws and rent a room in another city and keep scamming "students" from around the world. Preston is but one.

And there is no denying that the State of Wyoming was a longtime, willing co-conspirator. Our elected officials and state employees aided and abetted.

Soon Wyoming will be rid of the last of those who knowingly sold "degrees" with little value. To continue to defend these scraps of paper as the City of Cheyenne has done is unconscionable.

Because many in Cheyenne are familiar with Preston University, they can understand the irony and ignominy in how Preston continues to present itself. As we disclosed recently, the address they claim as their new "campus" in California (after having been ordered to cease and desist in Alabama) is an empty office with no signage and no grassy knoll as pictured. It is a fifth floor office with another's name on the door.

On their new website home page, PU has Q. and A.'s that better define them than anything I could originate. It tells just what this nefarious operator really is.

**Q. When was Preston University established?**

*A. Preston University was established in 1984. The first USA campus was established in 1994, and the world-wide headquarters in Los Angeles, CA USA was opened in 2009.*

There is no mention of why they fled from Wyoming or being ordered out of Alabama.

**Q. Is the term "distance education" used in either the student's transcripts or student's diploma?**

*A. No, the term "distance education" is not used in either the student's transcripts or on the diploma.*

Not much pride in their product, huh?

MAY  
12

Nine hundred thirty-three (933) days since Jim McBride threatened to take legal action against the Cheyenne Herald for disclosing his Bennett, Colorado, Superintendent Evaluations.

The Evaluations can be read at:  
www.cheyenneherald.com  
"Articles" page, October 30, 2006

Oroweat Bakery Outlet

Travel A Little,  
Save A Lot!

308 Southwest Dr. • 635-8400

Open Monday - Saturday 10-4

South across from Tyrrell-Doyle Chevrolet - west at PTA Self-Storage

5007 Sunny Ridge Lane  
**\$182,900**

Outstanding move-in ready town home that has been upgraded! Built by Bruso Homes in 2006. 3 bedrooms, 3 baths. Walk-in closet, pantry, designer colors, master bath and central air.

Outside there is mature landscaping, covered patio and 2 car garage. Walking distance to Greenway Walking Path. Perfect for the discerning taste. Possible owner financing.

wesellcheyennehomes.com

802 E. Lincolnway -- 634-2997