

# Degrees Us

by Dave FEATHERLY

Wyoming should be ashamed.

The Wyoming Department of Education should be ashamed.

The Wyoming Legislature should be ashamed.

Wyoming taxpayers and residents should be ashamed.

Cheyenne Police Chief Bob Fecht, Cheyenne Mayor Jack Spiker and the Cheyenne City Council should be ashamed.

Everyone having anything to do with education should be ashamed.

Collectively, this state has allowed its borders to be infiltrated by one of the world's most disreputable businesses - diploma mills. Degree sellers.

Even after the national coverage of 60 Minutes exposed a homeland security official had degrees from an online degree seller who had set up shop in Evanston, those responsible to rid the state of the blight conveniently turned their heads.

Their only answer to the ridicule heaped on the state by real educators was to require the scoundrels who sell degrees and diplomas to the gullible purchase a license from the Department of Education.

State statutes "require" the profiteers to have a base of operation and "require" that educrats inspect those facilities. Yet time and again, the Casper Star and Cheyenne Herald have revealed that those "campuses" were nothing more than basement or second story offices - with no faculty.

The master's degree purchased by Cheyenne's police chief and paid for with Cheyenne taxpayer money was from one of the nation's most notorious degree seller. When they were run out of Louisiana, they settled in another state infamous for their lack of concern or control of that unscrupulous type of enterprise.

Perhaps it is because of high turnover in the Wyoming Department of Education. Perhaps it is because of an indifference on the part of those remaining in the department. Perhaps it is because the trips now required of these cat burglars calling themselves "private schools." Perhaps it is because one of the degree sellers home-based in Cheyenne is well-connected. But something has convinced these educrats to ignore the national disgrace those businesses has foisted upon Wyoming.

These operations do not inadvertently operate just beyond the arm of the law. They deliberately and with malice toward all operate as they do. It is no coincidence that several of the Wyoming-based degree peddlers have "American" in their names. They peddle their nearly worthless degrees to foreign students and want

the unsuspecting in Pakistan, Guatemala, England, United Arab Emirates, etc., to believe they are "earning" an American degree. Like from Princeton, Harvard or MIT.

American Capital University operated from the basement of the former Mossholder's Building and has recently folded their tent. The "chancellor" or whatever title they bestow on themselves is an attorney from St. Paul, Minnesota. Why do you suppose he didn't set up shop in Minnesota? Give up? Because Minnesota wouldn't let him sell the first computer generated Ph.D. before they would not only shut him down but have him in front of a judge.

Few states allow a business known to be illegitimate (to virtually every educrat in the world) operate within its borders.

American Global University has had office space on the second floor of the Majestic Building and that operator displays a picture of the four living former presidents of the United States on his website. Between the picture and the signature of Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush, and Bill Clinton (at former president Richard Nixon's funeral) is what appears to be a doctored inscription to him.

Real or doctored, it is offensive to see this picture hijacked for the goal AGU intended. It is supposed to afford credibility to this degree selling operation.

American City University operates from above the former Chamber of Commerce location in the Tivoli Building. The Tivoli, for God's sake. One of Cheyenne's most identifiable and venerable landmarks is home to this degree seller.

Legislation is now being proposed which would require these degree sellers to gain legitimate accreditation within a certain period of time or cease to operate from their Wyoming base. Go to Mississippi.

The only reason to give these outfits that extended period of time (five years has been proposed) is to validate our inaction for the past many years. When electronic bingo games were placed in Wyoming locations to benefit charitable causes and when poker games were being played in bars and money changed hands, they were shut down immediately when the AG opined the activities were illegal.

So why allow this despicable activity to continue? To save face.

At least as disgusting as their presence in Wyoming is the way they mock us.

Brochures are sent all over the world which show these cellar operations as having a campus just like the University of Wyoming, Colorado State or the University of Colorado. About the only thing they don't claim in their bogus material is a football team with a stadium full of fans on a fall Saturday afternoon.

With a Department of Education complicit in improper and illegal behavior (such as they were with McKinley College, through its legitimate parent, At Home Professions), it is hard to imagine that the problem will be solved without new legislation.

Wyoming statutes require non-accredited degree sellers to purchase a license to ply their "trade" from our confines. A legitimate, accredited on-line university does not have to buy such a license. We acknowledge the difference between them.

The licenses sold by the State of Wyoming do not legitimize these operations.

But the degree sellers claim they do.

Kennedy-Western is one of the best known of the unaccredited degree sellers.

On their website, they reproduce W.S. 21-2-404. Among the words:

*"No post secondary educational institution under this article shall award a degree, earned or honorary, solely on basis of payment of tuition or a fee, nor shall the school award a degree solely on the basis of: ... b) Credit for life experience or other equivalency. ... d) Research or writing, ..."*

American Central University, on the other hand, states: *"Life experience is any experience you have relevant to your major and is separate from work experience and classroom education."*


Based SOLELY on life experience? Apparently, a Doctorate can be earned within 16 weeks of payment of fees.

**Among TOP 50 universities**

American Central University has an international reputation for academic excellence and innovation and ranks among the top 50 online universities in the US! Apply Now

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### ACU Headquarters Cheyenne, Wyoming



American System of Education.

**Mission:**

American City University is a truly international American institution of higher learning, attracting students from many different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. ACU reflects the needs of the global economy and world for well-trained professionals, able to speak English and one or more other languages with a solid American education combined with an international cultural background.

ACU seeks to make a significant contribution towards better international understanding by educating students in an international environment and preparing them for international careers.

ACU will not only train and prepare students thoroughly for their future professional tasks, and give them a sound educational background but will consciously prepare them for their future