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HILTON

OLDER STUDENTS,
BE AWARE OF
UNDERHANDED
DIPLOMA MILLS!



KEITH O. HILTON

For many students, this fall will have a special meaning. Especially if they are older students, returning to college, after many years. First of all, we wish you the very best with your studies. Please be sure to read our two upcoming annual fall columns; 1. new student orientations and 2. state of the campus address.

We also wish to remind all students, and particularly non-traditional students, to do your homework when it comes to choosing a college. For example, is your college accredited? And be aware of underhanded diploma mills.

Accreditation is a validation, a statement by a group of persons who are impartial in higher education, that a given school, or department within a school, has been thoroughly investigated and found worthy of approval.

There are six regional associations, each with responsibility for schools in each region of the United States and its territories. Each one has the authority to accredit an entire college or university.

In the United States, accreditation is an entirely voluntary process, done by private, non governmental agencies. A school wishing to be accredited will make application to the appropriate accrediting agency.

Not to be confused with the aforementioned categories, is the group of "colleges" that are clearly fraudulent and most commonly referred to as degree mills. These institutions have often given the area of non-traditional study an image beyond repair.

The FBI looked into hundreds of unaccredited schools, and according to "Bear's Guide to earning Non-Traditional College degrees" some were found to be harmless, innocuous, even good, and no actions were taken.

When there was evidence of chicanery, a search warrant was issued, and FBI vans hauled off tons of papers and records. In many, but not all cases, a federal grand jury handed down indictments. And when they did, in many but not all cases, the indicted pleaded guilty to mail or wire (telephone) fraud, and received fines and sentences in federal prison.

These "colleges" or degree mills have been around for hundreds of years, and they are still flourishing all over the world. The number of currently operating phony schools has significantly diminished over the last few years, largely as a result of the "DipScam" diploma mill task force of the FBI.

Bear states that "surely any school that will send you a Ph.D. by return mail on payment of \$100, no question asked, is a fraud." Be aware of these types of arrangements.

We suggest that you get a copy of "Bear's Guide", check with your college's admission's office and/or go to your local bookstore or library and view one of the recognized college guides to see if your college is listed.

We also encourage you to let us know if you experience any

problems related to what we are writing in this particular column. Good luck with your planned studies and be aware of those diploma mills.

HILTON HIGHER EDUCATION is designed to dialogue with college and world readers. Education is ongoing and certainly not limited to classroom study. Let's talk. (909) 899-0650.

EDUCATION

NEVADA SCHOOLS TO BE FUNDED FROM PROFITS

Budget cuts throughout the county have inspired a new Littleton, Colorado company to launch a nationwide franchise concept that promises to return a portion of its profits to schools.

So far, the concept appears to be working and working well. Franchises from all walks of life are investing thousands of dollars for the rights to operate local territories, comprising from one to ten to an entire school district or more. In the past few months, eleven states have already begun operations.

In the State of Washington, the program has been enthusiastically endorsed by the State's PTA organization, comprising over 130,000 members.

Now, the program, "Educate America First", is coming to Nevada. The Cambria Group, an affinity, benefit marketing organization, based in Sacramento, CA, is about to unveil the program in the Silver State.

Cambria Group President, George Pavlick, announced that the Educate America First Foundation will now begin to seek out interested Nevada residents who have a concern for education and in solving the dilemma of the current school budgetary crisis.

"Together, we can make a tremendous difference in determining whether specific programs get the funding they need," Pavlick said. He emphasized that the Educate America First programs are "site based" and that profits are returned directly to the school designated by the parent or consumer and may even be specified for a particular program, such as an athletic team, library or a specified education project.

"We cut through the bureauc-

racy. Our programs operate locally, our representatives and franchises are your neighbors and the profits are returned directly to your local school for specific programs.

"One fourth of our population is our youth. Yet, they are 100% of our future," Pavlick added. "Now, by encouraging local residents to use Educate America First-endorsed products and services, we are able to provide direct funding to the schools."

Pavlick said that both public and private schools are eligible to participate and benefit, as are child care centers and even colleges and universities.

In Washington, State PTA President Linda Carlson said in a letter to parents, that the service is, "a truly remarkable and unique program which will provide additional funds for your child's school or school district." She also pointed out that this was the first time in its 88-year history that the Washington State PTA has endorsed a statewide fund raising program. "We believe this is the best program of its type in the U.S. today," said President Carlson to her PTA members.

The Cambria Group intends to open Educate America First offices in both Reno and Las Vegas. It is expected that both the state organization's management staff and the local franchises will come from Nevada. Pavlick said that, "this will be a local, grass-roots effort of citizens, bonding together to help fund the states educational program."

The educate America First Foundation makes available two initial programs: a discounted residential and business long

distance telephone and advertising specialty catalogs with numerous offerings.

New Benefits, such as customized credit cards, insurance plans through a unique "financial fitness" program, youth summer camps featuring pro-sport athletes and many more programs are being developed as additional major corporations become aware of corporate sponsorship opportunities.

Pavlick said, "Our products and services are of the highest quality and are made available at competitive prices, which are often at or below what the consumer is now paying. Our concept is to offer products and services which people are now already using.

By switching over and using an Educate America First-endorsed program, the consumer benefits and so does the school of their choice, at no additional cost to the consumer."

Pavlick describes Educate America First as a "philanthropic, for-profit company that provides a fixed percentage of its gross revenues to education." The percentage varies from product

to product and service to service, depending on profit margin.

Typically, a \$20,000 investment will give a territorial franchise the right to sell the Educate America First programs in a specific ten-school local area, such as a school district. Both smaller and larger territories are available in Nevada and Territories may be custom-created to handle specific situations.

The idea for Educate America First was born out of a need for business to link up with education, said Kim Gollehon, a Littleton mother of two who founded the organization. An elementary school volunteer, she returned home from a PTA meeting several years ago, frustrated that there was no money budgeted for something as simple as window blinds.

After two years of study and market research, the Company was incorporated last year and began franchising in January, 1993.

Already, Educate America First regional franchises are operating in eleven states, with many more, including Nevada, (See Nevada School, Page 12)

CLARK COUNTY YOUTH ENCOURAGED TO REGISTER EARLY FOR SCHOOL

Students who have not yet registered for school may do so beginning August 9 at schools throughout the Las Vegas valley.

Students who are new to Clark County or families who have moved during the summer may call the school district's Demographics and Zoning Department at 799-7573 to determine which school their child should attend. Then parents should call the school to determine the best time to register their child because registration hours may vary slightly among schools.

Parents who are registering students new to the Clark County School District are required to bring two proofs of residence, the child's birth certificate and immunization records.

Parents are reminded that Nevada requires children to be five years old by September 30 to attend kindergarten and six years old by September 30 to attend first grade. Kindergarten attendance in Nevada is not mandatory.

A back-to-school publication, The Reporter, is available for families new to the Clark County School District. Copies may be obtained by calling the district's Public Information Office at 799-5304, or copies are available at all Clark County library branches.

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