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**Macias, Wendy**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 22, 2009 10:42 PM  
**To:** neareq09  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Testimony re: Hearing for Issues under Negotiated Rulemaking.  
**Attachments:** [REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam:

Attached, please find my written testimony for the negotiated rulemaking hearings.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]



### Statement

I found out about the Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) program at Everest College's Alhambra campus through their website. I was looking for a LVN program that would allow me to later attend a Registered Nurse (RN) program. When I talked to the admissions representative (AR), I was told that Everest's program was fully accredited and that the credits for the LVN classes I took would count toward any subsequent RN program I would enroll in at other colleges. The admissions representative (hereafter AR) also said that Everest College (formerly known as Bryman College) had billions of dollars to make their program the most cutting edge vocational nursing program in the United States. I was told that many of the LVN program graduates would be making approximately \$30-\$35/hour and that the minimum LVN program graduates would make was \$28/hour. In order to become a LVN after completing the program, graduates would have to pass the licensure exam given by the Board of Vocational Nurses and Psychiatric Technicians (BVNPT). The AR told me that the previous year's passage rate for the program was not yet out, but that everybody who had taken the exam had passed it.

The LVN program at Everest was more expensive than the programs at other schools, including other for-profit vocational schools. When I mentioned this, the AR explained that Everest had state of the art labs and better instructors than other schools. I was really excited by the lab, which supposedly had modern equipment, such as a mannequin that allegedly cost \$30,000 and could give birth. I was told that I would get to spend a lot of time in the lab as part of each module, getting hands on practice doing injections, putting IV's in, and performing other skills that I would need to know to be an LVN. The AR's description of the instructors and program staff sounded really good too. I was told that [REDACTED], the head of the LVN program, was a medical doctor who graduated from U.C.L.A and affiliated with U.C.L.A hospital, so the students would get excellent hospital rotations. According to the AR and the syllabus, all the instructors were to be RNs with recent practical experience. I would later find that most of these representations were not true. We did not rotations at U.C.L.A. or at any other hospital. Our instructors were not RNs, but LVNs without current licenses.

Also, I was told that I would get a certificate to perform IVs as part of the program and that clinical rotation would be a regular part of the program so that we could get hands on experience. Another thing that attracted me to the program was the fact that classes would run from Monday-Thursday, instead of lasting all week. The AR also said that Everest would help me prepare a resume and obtain a job after graduation. And, I was promised that the licensing exam fee would be covered by the school as part of the program. The program sounded very promising, even though it was expensive. I thought

that it would be worth it to stop working and enroll in this program so that I could have a better career while taking steps towards my goal of becoming a RN.

Before enrolling in the program, I was given an entrance test. It was a standard test for all LVN candidates. I also had to fill out enrollment and loan paperwork, but I was rushed by the AR to simply sign everything. I asked if I could bring the documentation home to review, but I was not allowed to. When I asked a question about the loans I was taking out, the AR just told me to contact Sallie Mae for an answer. When I meet [REDACTED] he was introduced to me as a doctor from U.C.L.A. He affirmed the same things that the AR stated, in particular the probable starting salary and that I was very likely to get a good job after completing the course. He told me how all the instructors were experienced RNs and that the school had a 100% passage rate on the LVN exam the previous year, though he did say that official results were not yet out. I later found this was not true.

I started the LVN program in April 2007 at the Alhambra campus at 2215 W. Mission Rd., Alhambra, 91803. The program was a 12 month program and I would graduate in April 2008. When the classes first started, I had an instructor named [REDACTED], who was an RN and a good instructor. However, for some reason she disappeared after a month. My other instructors, who remained with me through the program, were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I was very disappointed with these two instructors, as were most of my classmates. Neither of them were RNs as promised, nor did they have any recent LVN experience. [REDACTED] worked as an LVN in the mid-1970's and since then held an administrative job. She was not licensed as a LVN while she taught our course. [REDACTED] was not licensed while she taught the course either. Neither of these two teachers ever discussed their personal experiences practicing as a licensed vocational nurse because they did have any relevant, recent experience to speak of.

I was surprised at how badly the classes were taught. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] did not do much lecturing or hands on teaching. Instead, they would usually read out of the book or just have us learn off handouts. The classes were supposed to run from 8:00am until 4:30pm and should have included periods of lecture and lab, but instead we were dismissed as early as 2pm everyday. The instructors would often fill what class time we had by leaving the classroom to run long errands, such as copying materials. They would often leave to copy materials and then return only to pass out the stacks of handouts slowly, page by page, wasting a lot of class time. Both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would be unable to answer most of our questions in class and during clinical hours.

[REDACTED] was particularly unprofessional in class. She would often cry in class and once said telling her problems to the students was good therapy for her. She would use vulgar and foul language in class. She would refer to female genitalia as [REDACTED] and do it with an insulting Latino accent. Both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would make disparaging comments towards the Asian and Latino students in the class who had accents, belittling them about how they spoke English. One time, a student was called "dumb" and "stupid" in class. [REDACTED] once described a group of students as

“stereotypical Mexicans, stupid and lazy” because she felt they were taking too long on a test.

The students were very unhappy because there turned out to be little to no lab work for most of the modules, even though the syllabus specified a certain number of lab hours per module. We probably didn't have more than 20 hours of lab time over the whole course of the program, even though the course catalogue specified at least 250 hours over the course of the program. The allegedly \$30,000 mannequin we had all heard about was never even used because the instructors didn't know how to use it. I remember once we were supposed to practice injections in the lab, but the injection fluids we were supplied with had expired. The few other times we got to go in the lab, the equipment was not working.

We were learning very little in the classes. For exams, the teacher would often just email us the tests and answers ahead of time to study. Sometimes they would just tell us what portions of the text book to highlight because those sections were going to be on the exam.

The only clinical experience provided was in nursing homes, although we were promised hospital rotations and certain types of LVN skills could only be practiced in a hospital. In the nursing homes, we didn't get to practice relevant LVN skills either. We were not even shadowing LVNs. Instead, we would just shadow Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), following them around while they did their work. The only other hands on experience we got in the nursing home was some students got to do a g-tube dressing or give a patient their pills. We got no experience doing injections or installing IVs, both extremely important LVN skills. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were supposed to supervise us during these clinical hours, but they would often not show up until very late. Sometimes they would stay in the car sleeping or reading books.

Some of us complained about the poor instruction to [REDACTED]. He was hostile and told us to stop “bitching.” I was told only 2 weeks into the program that if I dropped out, I would lose the entire cost of the program, around \$28,000. But I later learned this also was not true. In fact, [REDACTED] would often threaten students who complained, saying that he could dismiss students from the program if he wanted to and that those students would then lose all their money they had paid for tuition. We did complain in teacher evaluations, but the school did nothing. One time I heard [REDACTED] say to a student, “you have already been screwed out of your 30K.” Halfway through the program, I stopped approaching [REDACTED] because he implied to me that that he could find an excuse to kick out a student, such as for missing a clinical session or a day of school. He warned me not to keep talking about my dissatisfaction with the program to him or the other students.

[REDACTED] is no longer with the program now, but most of us doubt that he was even a medical doctor. We found out that he was not actually affiliated with UCLA's hospital. Although he talked about his connections and the hospital rotations he was going to secure for the students, we never got any hospital rotations. We also now know that the

passage rate for the licensure exam the previous year was actually the second lowest in the state, around 50% and not at all near the 100% that [REDACTED] and the admissions representative had claimed. Also, we were not provided with the opportunity to get our IV certifications, even though I was told this would be included with the program.

When I finished the program, I expected to take the licensure exam right away. However, the school kept delaying the certification process that would allow us to take the exam. Many of us simply paid the exam fee on our own hoping that the school would not continue to delay certifying us to take the exam. I finally got to take the exam in November of 2008. This was 7 months after graduating from the program and I had no job the entire time I was waiting. I was relieved to pass because most of my friends in the program did not. However, I found that I could not get a job because I did not have the necessary clinical practice and hospital rotations. I was asked what tasks I could do unsupervised, but in truth, I could do none because I never got to practice any of them. I was asked if I was proficient with a g-tube, but I had to be honest and say that I wasn't because I didn't get training on it. I had no experience with telemetry beds or medical/surgical beds, which is necessary to get a job in a hospital. Although I passed the licensing exam, I could not find a job for a long time. I have only been able to find odd jobs with agencies, working a few hours here and there. I also now know now that starting salaries for LVN graduates are much lower than the \$30-35/ hour I was told by the AR and school staff. It is often around \$15-19/hour. Today, I am getting many phone calls from creditors and I face the reality of not being able to pay back the loans I took for my education.