



STATE OF WASHINGTON

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

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September 21, 2006

CRI Career Training  
Alen Janisch, President  
929 North 130<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 2  
Seattle WA 98133

RE: Complaint by [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Janisch:

In accordance with Chapter 28C.10.120 RCW, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (the Workforce Board) reviewed a complaint filed against CRI Career Training (CRI) by the student identified above. The Board's Findings, Conclusions and Order are described below:

**I. Student Complaint – Inadequate Instruction, Equipment and Support**

[REDACTED] complained that the school misrepresented its lab equipment to be "state of the art." In reality, most machines were in poor condition and students far out numbered machines.

[REDACTED] further stated that her Theory instructor was ineffective and her Speedbuilding instructor, Crystal Rector, was a fellow student.

**School's Response**

The school stated that it has an up to date computer lab and that students are expected to do assignments using the computerized equipment. The school further stated that all computerized machines are regularly maintained.

With regard to instructor qualifications, the school stated that all of its instructors are qualified to teach the program. The instructors all have a working knowledge transcript production and machine shorthand theory. The school further stated that Crystal Rector has never been "classified as an instructor" and has always been under the supervision of Sandra Metz.



### **Workforce Board's Findings**

A minimum standard for licensure requires schools to design and implement programs that will adequately achieve the stated objectives for which they are offered [WAC 490-105-150(1)]. Instructor qualifications, adequate equipment, and an effective instructional delivery system are all components of program implementation that contribute to student success.

██████████'s complaints about instructors, equipment, and the StenoWave system are not new, they have been brought to the Workforce Board's attention repeatedly by CRI students. The school's responses are, likewise, not new. As it has in the past, the school maintains that its methods of instruction, faculty qualifications, and equipment are effective. To determine the accuracy of that claim, the Workforce Board examined student outcomes derived from data submitted to the Board annually by CRI. That data revealed that CRI's completion rate was 6 percent for the period July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2003; only 10 of the 179 students who left the program during that period actually completed the program. Of those 10 completers, three (3) were working in the field six to nine months after graduation.

### **Conclusion**

██████████'s complaint is one of eighteen filed since Spring 2005 by former court reporting students. Throughout the course of these complaint investigations, CRI has maintained that its programs and instructors are effective, that any failure to progress is due to some inadequacy on the students' part. The Workforce Board respectfully disagrees and is troubled by CRI's unwillingness to accept any responsibility for so many students failing to "meet the objective for which the court reporting program was designed."

The Workforce Board concludes that if CRI's instructors, equipment, and method of instruction were adequate, more students would complete the program, pass the state exam, and become court reporters. Failure to deliver a program that meets minimum standards is a failure to comply with the terms of the student's contract and is an unfair business practice under RCW28C.10.110(1).

## **II. Student Complaint – Advertising/Claims Made by the School**

Ms. ██████████ stated that the court reporting program was expressed to her as a "three-year program for evening students." She further stated that Mike Girgus (Stiles), Admissions

Representative, told her she would probably complete the program faster than three years if she really applied herself. ~~Michelle Hoffman~~ left CRI after two years because at that point, over halfway through the three year program, she did not have the skills to write computer shorthand at 40wpm.

### **School's Response**

The school stated that ~~Michelle Hoffman~~ initialed in her contract that she knew the average time for a night student to complete the program was 63 months and that she knew the completion rates of the program.

### **Workforce Board's Findings**

The Workforce Board investigated CRI in 2001. The major purpose of the investigation was to determine how long it took an average student to complete the court reporting program, and what students were being told about program length. At that time CRI was advertising a 2 ½ year program. The Workforce Board found that the few students who actually completed the program took an average of four years to get through the day program and more than five years to get through the evening program. Based on that finding, the Workforce Board determined that CRI was misleading students and required CRI give prospective students a realistic estimate of the amount of time it would take to complete the court reporting program.

The school changed its catalog and enrollment agreement to include statements informing students that it could take them longer than 2 ½ years to complete the program, however, the Workforce Board consistently receives information from CRI students that the statement is downplayed by admissions representatives. Students report that the school's recruiters continue to sell a 2 ½ to 3 year program; the school's current website describes the program length as 10 quarters (2 ½ years) for day students and 15 quarters (3 ½ years) for evening students.

### **Conclusion**

It is not possible for the Board to know precisely what CRI's recruiter told ~~Michelle Hoffman~~ relative to program length. It is also not possible to know how long it would have taken ~~Michelle Hoffman~~ to graduate since she withdrew from school after two years. CRI has a history though, of misleading students about the length of its court reporting program. Based on that history, the Board concludes it is extremely likely ~~Michelle Hoffman~~ was misled as well. Misleading students about the length of a program of study is an unfair business practice under RCW28C.10.110(10).

### Determination

Had ~~M. [redacted]~~ been given accurate information during the application process it is quite possible she would have chosen a different school or a different course of instruction. It is, therefore, the Workforce Board's determination that ~~M. [redacted]~~ suffered a financial loss as a result of the school's unfair business practices. The amount of the loss is the total tuition, equipment rent, and lab fees she paid with federal loans - \$12,854.

### Order

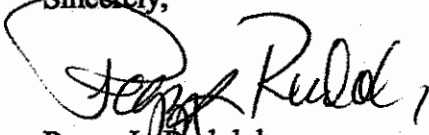
The school is ordered to provide a refund to the complainant as outlined above. The refund must be paid within thirty days of the school's receipt of this Order. The school is further ordered to cease and desist from engaging in the unfair business practices listed in the Conclusion section of this Order.

### Appeal

You may appeal this decision by filing notice of appeal with the Workforce Board, postmarked within twenty (20) calendar days of receipt of this letter. If no appeal is filed within the 20 calendar days, you have waived your right to appeal and no further remedy is available under RCW 28C.10.

The appeal will be filed under the Administrative Procedure Act, chapter 34.05 RCW. Timely filing stays the Workforce Board's order during the appeal process. If the Workforce Board adjudication is affirmed in part or in its entirety in an administrative hearing, the school shall pay the costs of the hearing (RCW 28C.10.120(4)).

Sincerely,

  
Peggy L. Rudolph  
Program Specialist  
(360) 586-8682

cc: ~~M. [redacted]~~