

Nicole Wilson

Testimony

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Good morning. My name is Nicole Wilson and I'm from Akron, Ohio. I have served off and on from 2002 through 2020, serving on active duty in the Navy, in the Navy reserves, and in the Ohio Army National Guard. I have wanted to be a nurse for 12 years to help families not go through what I did during the time before my mother passed away, and I have been going to school to try to achieve this dream for 11 years. Unfortunately, two terrible experiences with for-profit colleges have delayed my dream, drained my GI Bill benefits, and left me with massive student loan debt.

I first attended Brown Mackie College to earn my LPN. Brown Mackie promised a quick and flexible program, but in reality, their program offered no flexibility for working adults. My graduation date was delayed because I had to retake courses after missing just one day of class. In addition, I was told on my first campus visit that the GI Bill would cover all expenses, but after I had enrolled, the financial aid office informed me that the first advisor was incorrect, and I would need to take out loans to cover my balance. When I had finished at Brown Mackie, the nursing board informed me that I would likely need to take additional remedial courses before I could take the NCLEX because Brown Mackie had not adequately prepared me for the exam. Most of the students in my graduating class could not pass the exam, and few are working in the field, despite Brown Mackie's promises of 95% placement in the field of study.

After my experience at Brown Mackie, I decided to pursue my RN. Many schools had long wait lists for their programs, so I ended up attending Bryant & Stratton College. Bryant & Stratton promised that students could become a nurse in two years, that the school had no wait list, and that schedules were flexible for working students. In reality, the school had no flexibility, the programs took longer than two years, and the quality of the program was extremely poor. We had to participate in clinicals that were two hours away from the school because no local hospitals believed that Bryant & Stratton students were adequately instructed. The best instructors at Bryant & Stratton left to teach elsewhere because they were being asked to teach classes for which they were not qualified. Like at Brown Mackie, few students from my class are working in the field despite promises of job placement and career help.

In addition, my credits earned at both schools have turned out to be useless. Bryant & Stratton would not accept any of my credits from Brown Mackie, and I had to retake courses I had already taken and for which I had already paid. After my poor experience with Bryant & Stratton, I attended Lakeland Community College, which accepted only one class from Bryant & Stratton and none from Brown Mackie. Lakeland told me that Bryant & Stratton courses did not meet the standards of the nursing board.

Like many other students, I have wasted my time, my own money, and government benefits attending schools that provided a poor education and made many false promises. I appreciate your time in listening to my story, and I ask that you scrutinize the practices of for-profit colleges and implement policies to protect students. Thank you.