

Hello, my name is Sally Olsen. I am speaking today to tell you about how I made the biggest mistake ever going back to school. I am a Marine Corps veteran. In 2004, at age 45, I was laid off from my job and decided to go back to college and get a bachelor's degree. I signed up to attend an online school named American InterContinental University. I studied Business Management. The recruiters promised that my degree would help me get a great job and earn a high salary. And I was told more than once that I could make my own hours and attend class anytime I wanted.

To say the least, the courses were not what I expected. They were extremely rushed. I was given my associate's degree in a year and my bachelor's degree the next year. The information was crammed in and it was really difficult keeping up with online chats from the professors. I did not learn anything. I was put on the Dean's list and I don't even know how that was possible based on what I was learning. I thought about leaving but felt like I had made a commitment and was trying my best.

The recruiters' promises about how my degree would help me get a job and make more money were not true. That never happened. When I first enrolled at AIU, I also took a temp job at a company. I worked that job all while going to school. I still have that same job. It does not require a degree, and after I got my bachelor's degree, I was not able to get a promotion or a different job. I have never gotten any benefit from my AIU degree.

I took out federal student loans to attend AIU, and I did not understand what I was doing. I think I ended up with \$70,000 or more in debt, and I have never had the high salary that AIU promised.

Going to school at AIU was such a huge mistake. Looking back, though, I don't know how I would have known to make a different decision. The school was approved. I trusted it when the recruiters told me what the school could do for me and about the kind of education I would receive.

I hope you will do something to make sure accreditors do a better job approving schools.

Thank you for your time.