



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Matt Woodcheke
(916) 574-8170

THREE COSMETOLOGY SCHOOLS ORDERED TO STOP ENROLLING NEW STUDENTS IN CALIFORNIA *“Diploma Mill” Activity Alleged*

SACRAMENTO – The California Department of Consumer Affairs’ (DCA) Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE), following a joint enforcement effort with DCA’s Board of Barbering and Cosmetology (BBC), has issued three emergency decisions ordering three cosmetology schools to cease enrolling new students.

The affected schools are Queenston College of America in Los Angeles, John Ridgel’s Academy of Beauty in Temple City, and Orange Valley College in Westminster.

The orders, effective on July 16, July 18, and July 19 at 5:00 p.m., respectively, also require the schools to cease the collection of tuition and fees for programs.

Investigators from BPPE, accompanied by representatives from BBC, conducted a series of physical inspections at the campuses, interviewed students and faculty, and extensively reviewed school records and files. They determined that each school submitted inaccurate and false documents to BBC, claiming that students had completed BBC’s required training hours when they had not completed such training or curriculum. The practice is known by BPPE and BBC as “selling hours” or “diploma mill” activity.

“BPPE’s mission is to protect consumers from the unscrupulous business practice of selling hours,” said Dr. Michael Marion, Chief of BPPE. “We take a hard stance against diploma mills, and we hope this sends a message to schools that not providing the required training hours and education to students will not be tolerated.”

BBC also notified BPPE that it is not currently processing exam applications from students at these schools due to BBC’s identical belief that the schools are not providing the required training and curriculum to students.

“BBC is committed to ensuring the health and safety of California consumers,” said Kristy Underwood, Executive Officer for BBC. “Consumers deserve to be serviced by well trained and highly qualified professionals, and we will actively police against those who would misrepresent their training.”

In addition to regulating private postsecondary educational institutions, BPPE assists students through its Student Tuition Recovery Fund, provides guidance to students in

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discharging their federal student loans, and helps them obtain transcripts. Students who have questions or need additional information can call BPPE toll-free at (888) 370-7589 or visit the bureau's website at www.bppe.ca.gov.

The Board of Barbering and Cosmetology regulates individuals (i.e. cosmetologists, barbers, manicurists, estheticians, electrologists, and apprentices) who provide services as well as the establishments where these services are performed. The board also provides education to consumers and licensees on the potential dangers that face consumers while receiving these services. Learn more at www.barbercosmo.ca.gov/.

The Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education promotes and protects the interests of students and consumers through the effective and efficient oversight of California's private postsecondary educational institutions. Learn more at www.bppe.ca.gov

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) promotes and protects the interests of California consumers while ensuring a competent and fair marketplace. The department also protects professionals (licensees) from unfair competition by unlicensed practitioners. Consumers can file complaints against licensees by contacting DCA at (800) 952-5210. Consumers can also file a complaint online at www.dca.ca.gov

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