

To whom it may concern:

I have recently been made aware of efforts to severely limit or eliminate "for profit" college opportunities for veterans. As a veteran and non-profit degree holder, please let me share my experience at a "for profit" institution.

First, let me share my background. I graduated with a BA in journalism and an Army commission as an officer from the University of Hawaii in 2001. I served two tours in Iraq, during which I was awarded the Bronze Star for Valor as a platoon leader. I left the service in 2007, and started a career in food manufacturing. I spent over seven years as a production supervisor at the Nabisco bakery in NE Portland, OR. During that time I became the production manager for our Oreo Cookie production line. In 2019, I decided that my passion for food was leading me towards attending a culinary school.

In my research, I found Oregon Culinary Institute, which is a part of Pioneer Pacific College. To be honest, I was very wary of "for profit" schools and their reputations. However, right from the beginning, I have received nothing but the best support and culinary education that I could have imagined.

My education started with an extraordinary chef from the best culinary school in France. My second instructor was an incredible chef from India. My last chef instructor accepted only the highest standards of execution before graduation. Following my course study, OCI placed me in an externship at one of the most highly regarded Portland restaurants, Jake's Grill.

OCI and Pioneer Pacific College could not have done anything better, thus far, to give me the best culinary education and experience. I say thus far, because after completing the baking and pastry diploma program, I have chosen to return and complete the culinary and hospitality management program.

Without "for profit" colleges, myself many other veterans would have little or no opportunities for a culinary education. There are NO other culinary schools in Portland, and if there were, they would not match the quality of OCI. Thank you for your time and consideration, and please feel to contact me with any questions you may have.

Nathan Mayo

nathanmayo@ymail.com