

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU



Serving Northwest North Carolina since 1960

Media Alert! For Immediate Release

June 4, 2007

Subject:

The Grant Institute

Contact:

BBB of NWNC
David W. Dalrymple, President
336-777-3726

Davie, Forsyth, Wilkes and surrounding counties, June 7, 2007 —

The BBB of NWNC has received inquiries from Davie, Forsyth and Wilkes county residents, including non-profit organizations and Davie Community College. These inquiries concern emails and direct mailed marketing they received from *The Grant Institute* announcing a grant writing workshop to be held June 25-27, 2007. The company's marketing states the course, entitled "Grants 101: Professional Grant Proposal Writing Workshop" will take place from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the "North Carolina State University" in Raleigh, NC. The company charges a registration fee of \$597.00 for the course.

According to the BBB Serving Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, *The Grant Institute*, located in Los Angeles, California, has an unsatisfactory report of an "F" which is the BBB's lowest rating. This rating is the result of 19 complaints that the company has not answered. Some complainants allege the seminar they attended was of poor quality, and did not provide sufficient training. Students claim that text materials were mostly taken from internet information which they could have obtained for free. Other customers complain they pre-paid for the seminar, then cancelled, but failed to receive a refund. Those who attended the seminar complain that the teacher was unprofessional, there were too many students for only one teacher, the facilities lacked proper lighting and sound systems, and that much of the time was spent talking about personal unrelated matters. The company responded to one complainant by issuing a refund.

The Better Business Bureau advises consumers to make careful consider before paying for a grant workshop. BBB experience has been that companies holding these seminars do not have any direct ties with the government, but rather, are third parties attempting to capitalize on information that can be obtained for free from government agencies or websites. Information about available grants can be obtained, free of charge, by contacting The United States Department of Health and Human Resources at 877-696-6775 or <http://www.hhs.gov/grants/>.

Those interested in applying for a grant should understand that government grants are not designed to provide a means to pay bills or have extra spending money. Generally, obtaining a grant is a complicated process requiring documentation and research, and is primarily for education, research, and business purposes. Although foundations may exist whose requirements are based on personal preference, the vast majority require applicants to meet very specific guidelines to even qualify.

Before paying fees to cover grant-writing workshops or other grant-writing services, contact your Better Business Bureau.

An e-mail example is available