

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT DIANE AUER JONES, TRUMP'S PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION

Diane Auer Jones served as Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education at the Education Department in the George W. Bush administration, before leaving to become a lobbyist for for-profit colleges. Now she's back at the Department of Education, in yet another example of **revolving door corruption**.

AUER JONES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR:

Auer Jones joined Career Education Corporation (CEC) in 2010 as the company's Senior Vice President and Chief External Affairs Officer. CEC was more concerned with recruiting students than with educating or retaining them,¹ even inflating job placement rates and making all students sign binding arbitration agreements.² The median student withdrew after four months. And taxpayers bore the cost. In 2010, the same year that Auer Jones became the Senior Vice President and Chief External Affairs Officer, 84% of its revenue was derived from federal student aid or military and veteran educational benefits, at a total amount of \$1.9 billion.³

CEC faced legal action, including a five-year investigation by Attorneys General in 48 states and the District of Columbia. CEC eventually settled by forgiving \$493 million for 179,952 former students.⁴

Next, as President of AJSquared Consulting, Auer Jones lobbied for some of the industry's worst actors, including Corinthian Colleges, ITT Tech, DeVry, and others.⁵ Jones testified on behalf of CollegeAmerica in a suit brought by Colorado's Attorney General alleging that they engaged in misleading and fraudulent behavior.⁶ The Colorado Attorney General even questioned Jones' suitability as an "expert" witness.⁷

AUER JONES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:

Now Diane Auer Jones is back at the Department of Education. As the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Postsecondary Education, she has been delegated the powers of both the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education and the powers of the Under Secretary (the third highest-ranking official at the Department, who oversees all higher education work). Thus, **she effectively is holding the job of 3 of the most important posts in higher education policy at once**. The consolidation has allowed Jones to move rapidly on deregulating the school accreditation process, including recommending the re-accreditation of ACICS, which accredited ITT Tech and Corinthian, and eliminating a rule that once banned federal aid to programs where students don't interact with an instructor.⁸ Her proposed rules amount to "a sweeping deregulation of higher education."⁹

REFERENCES

¹ Career Education Corporation Summary, date unknown. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/556718b2e4b02e470eb1b186/t/5600765de4b0b3ef2f01fa2b/1442870877865/CareedED+2.pdf>

² Ibid.

³ Summary, Ibid.

⁴ Melissa Korn, "Career Education Corp. Forgives \$493.7 Million in Student Debt," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 3, 2019. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/career-education-corp-forgives-493-7-million-in-student-debt-11546551668>; Career Education Corporation Summary.

⁵ David Halperin, "DeVos Aide Tailors Decisions to the Predatory Colleges Who Employed Her," *Republic Report*, August 2, 2018. <https://www.republicreport.org/2018/devos-aide-tailors-decisions-to-the-predatory-colleges-who-employed-her/>

⁶ "Rebuttal Report, Diane Auer Jones," *Republic Report*, March 2018. <https://www.republicreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CEHE-Rebuttal-Report-Diane-Auer-Jones.pdf>

⁷ David Halperin, "Troubles Compound for Predatory CollegeAmerica Chain," *The Huffington Post*, October 2, 2017. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/troubles-compound-for-predatory-collegeamerica-chain_b_59ce85c7e4b0f3c468060e4a

⁸ Kevin Carey, "The Creeping Capitalist Takeover of Higher Education," *The Huffington Post*, April 1, 2019. <https://www.huffpost.com/highline/article/capitalist-takeover-college/>

⁹ Ibid.

