

<i>The Empire State</i>						
<b>New York State</b>			<b>Governor Pataki</b>	<b>map-NY</b>	<b>e-bizNYS</b>	<b>Citizen Guide</b>
<b>CPB Home</b>	<b>Consumer Law Help Manual</b>	<b>Press Releases</b>	<b>Strategic Programs</b>	<b>Consumer Links</b>	<b>About the CPB</b>	

[Go Back To Press Releases](#)

Contact: Jon Sorensen (518) 473-9472

For Immediate Release: October 25, 2005

## **Pre-law students caught in web of confusion**

### **Texas firm has the Internet name, but not the reputation, of a law school preparatory course sought by students**

The New York State Consumer Protection Board today issued a warning that a Texas company is using the same name as a California test-preparation course for students seeking admission to law school.

"Students are complaining that a Texas company, using the name 'Test Masters,' does not adequately disclose that a different company provides the original 'TestMasters' program for pre-law students," said Consumer Protection Board Chairperson and Executive Director Teresa A. Santiago.

The Consumer Protection Board (CPB) is seeking refunds for these students, as well as new contract language that will help students distinguish between the 'Test Masters' course offered by Test Masters Educational Services in Houston, Texas and the original 'TestMasters' course taught by a firm in Santa Monica, Ca.

"These two companies should keep the best interests of these students in mind as they wait for the courts to resolve the question of who owns the 'Test Masters' name," said CPB Chairperson Teresa A. Santiago.

Seventeen students have filed complaints with the CPB after they enrolled in what they thought was the original "TestMasters" offered by Robin Singh's California company.

The students paid nearly \$1,100 for the month-long course that ran between August and September in a classroom rented on the campus of Hunter College in Manhattan. At least 17 students dropped out of the course once they learned that this class was not the "TestMasters" course offered by Singh's firm in California.

Singh created his TestMasters course in 1991 to help pre-law students prepare for the Law School Admission Test ("LSAT"), the national exam used by law schools in selecting students. The Texas firm began in 1992 but it did not offer LSAT courses until 2003 after it won a trademark lawsuit. Prior to 2003, the Texas firm only offered preparatory classes for the SAT and other exams, but not the Law School Admissions Test.

Several students found the Hunter College course through the Internet website, [www.testmasters.com](http://www.testmasters.com), which belongs to the Texas company. The California company has the domain names [www.testmasters180.com](http://www.testmasters180.com) and [www.testmasters.net](http://www.testmasters.net).

Students said they were also confused by a refund-waiver agreement that they had to sign at least twice prior to the start of the classes at Hunter College.

The agreement states, "I am aware that there are other companies that have a name similar to Test Masters and that these other companies have no affiliation with us."

That's inaccurate, according to Reeha Sinha, a 2005 graduate of Rutgers who enrolled in the "Test Masters" class at Hunter College. The course names are not "similar," they are identical, she said.

"All of the names they list are anything but similar to 'Testmasters,'" she wrote in her complaint to the CPB. The refund-waiver agreement, she said, refers to "Robin Singh Educational Services" and other test-prep companies. But it does not reveal that another company also has a course called "TestMasters."

"I believe that the reason they put all of that language in the agreement is that they are fully aware that they are defrauding customers," Ms. Sinha said. "In order to make us waive our rights to a refund, they ask us to sign an agreement saying that we have done our research and that we understand that other companies are doing business under similar names."

Another student, Martine LaCroix, said the Texas firm offered a \$200 discount to students who immediately signed the refund-waiver agreement.

"I thought it was odd that they would make us sign this agreement and (it) made me very uncomfortable," said Ms. LaCroix. "This was the second time that they had me sign this agreement (and) the teachers said we had to sign the agreement right then and there if we wanted to get a \$200 discount. "

Lorenzo Bologna, a student at Pace University, said, "I saved all summer to pay for this. Basically I gave everything I had and then I found out I wasn't in the right class. I was kind of upset about that." Mr. Bologna said he is now saving to pay for another LSAT preparation course.

Consumers needing the CPB's assistance may file a complaint by calling 1-800-697-1220 or online at [www.nysconsumer.gov](http://www.nysconsumer.gov).

[\[Home Page\]](#) [\[Consumer Law Help Manual\]](#) [\[Press Releases\]](#)

[\[Strategic Programs\]](#) [\[Consumer Links\]](#) [\[About the CPB\]](#)

New York State Consumer Protection Board

5 Empire State Plaza, Suite 2101, Albany, New York 12223-1556

[privacy statement](#) [\[E-Mail the CPB\]](#)