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## Story takes a twist

*MU grad tells of whirlwind week, says drink had alcohol*

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Intelligencer Journal

Published: May 05, 2007 2:00 AM EST

### LANCASTER COUNTY, PA -

The woman who filed a federal lawsuit against Millersville University after the institution refused to award her a teaching certificate said Friday photos used against her show her drinking alcohol.

Meanwhile, Stacy Snyder answered more questions about the lawsuit, which she filed 10 days ago. She also contemplated how much her life has changed in a little more than a week.

"It's been a difficult ride," she said Friday afternoon. "I've lost weight because I can't eat or sleep much because of the stress and anxiety."

Snyder, 27, a former student teacher at Conestoga Valley High School, filed the lawsuit April 25, nearly a year after the university declined to award her a teaching certificate and bachelor of science degree in education. Instead, it gave her a bachelor of arts degree in English.

Snyder and her attorney, Mark W. Voigt, contend in the lawsuit Millersville refused to issue the degree and the certificate after the controversial photographs of Snyder — which were posted on her MySpace Web site — came to light.

The pictures show Snyder wearing a pirate hat and drinking from a plastic cup. Snyder said Friday she was drinking a "mixed drink" in the photo but wasn't intoxicated.

Snyder and Voigt are seeking \$75,000, the bachelor of science degree and the teaching certificate. Neither Conestoga Valley School District nor any of its teachers are named in the suit.

Snyder said Friday's interview with WLAN FM 97 "Morning Rush" hosts Liz and Dennis was one of about 10 she has conducted with reporters from newspapers, radio stations and television networks.

The single mother of two boys who works as a nanny for a Lititz family said she declined numerous other requests from networks including NBC, CNN and MTV.

She said a producer from NBC's "The Today Show" weekend edition called her four times seeking an interview.

She said reporters and producers also have showed up at her Strasburg home and called her parents and neighbors.

Snyder has accommodated the majority of interview requests with local media to defend herself after the university and Conestoga Valley earlier this week disputed some reasons Voigt cites in the lawsuit for why the degree and the certificate were denied.

Snyder said she regrets posting the pictures of her drinking alcohol on the Web site, but she said she doesn't deserve to be punished for them. She was 26 at the time of the party, she said.



"The pictures were taken during a party with less than 20 people at a private residence in April 2006," Snyder said. "We were college students having a party, and people were taking digital pictures.

"Nothing illegal or lewd happened."

Snyder said she's dreamed of being a teacher since she was in elementary school. She reflected this week on the years of sacrifices it took to graduate from college.

While a Millersville student from summer 2002 until May 2006, Snyder worked part time at Duncan Alumni House and for university food services. She commuted daily to campus from Strasburg.

She said she paid tuition with grants and student loans. Now she is paying off about \$20,000 in student-loan debt.

Snyder said she graduated with a 3.15 GPA as an English education major. She earned a 3.49 GPA in English core courses and 3.90 in education core courses.

Despite the controversy created by the lawsuit, Snyder said she doesn't regret filing it.

"You can't teach at a public school with just an English degree," Snyder said. "The lawsuit is my last option to force Millersville University to grant the degree and credentials I earned."

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