



Asheville Woman Pivots to Double Her Income Within a Year

Asheville, North Carolina, is home to the legendary Biltmore Estate, Pisgah National Forest, part of the Appalachian Trail, and more. An estimated eleven million travelers visit yearly.

Deanna Blanchard calls Asheville home too. She didn't want to leave, but the low wages and high cost of living were oppressive.

"The problem with Asheville is that the salaries are so low because it's a tourist town," she says. "We call it the 'tourist tax.'"

Deanna was doing fine in her accounting management role, and it was the most money she had ever made, but it was a "numbers" job, which she disliked. And it was getting tougher and tougher to make ends meet as the cost of living continued to rise.

"The well-paying jobs aren't here," Deanna says.

That's why despite her job security and friendly coworkers, she was forced to explore other opportunities.

"Can You Write a Letter Like This One?"

Deanna had always loved writing, so she embarked on a search for paid writing opportunities.

"I got *THE* letter," Deanna says, referring to American Writers & Artists Institute's (AWAI) infamous letter promoting *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting* (now *The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting*).

CASE STUDY:

Deanna Blanchard

"AWAI gave me a great foundation for writing copy and helped me get my foot in the door. It's just taken off from there... You can easily make six figures as a writer."

MEMBER:

Deanna Blanchard

LOCATION:

Asheville, North Carolina

FORMER CAREER:

Accounting Manager

HOW SHE GOT HER FIRST CLIENT:

Deanna scored her first copywriting job with A-lister Clayton Makepeace through a colleague's referral.

TOP AWAI PROGRAM:

- *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting* (now *The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting*)

The letter promised that she would never have to worry about a job or rely on others — and that she would be in high demand, earning great money, writing a few hours a day from anywhere in the world, if she chose.

Despite her marketing degree, Deanna had never heard of direct-response copywriting.

“This was such a new idea to me,” she says. “I thought about it for a couple of weeks, then decided, ‘I’m going for it! It’s something I think I can do.’”

Jumping Through Hoops

Deanna tackled *The Accelerated Program* with high hopes, while saving up six months of expenses. Then she quit her job to start freelancing. She reached out to local ad agencies, sure they would see her valuable training and snatch her up.

“Nobody was interested,” she admits. “It wasn’t as easy as I thought it would be.”

Discouraged, she took on a part-time job taking care of the finances for her church.

“It was back to numbers,” she sighs.

Then, a colleague introduced her to A-list copywriter and copy chief Clayton Makepeace, who was looking to hire a new copywriter full-time. She had no samples outside her assignments from *The Accelerated Program*, but Clayton knew the value of AWAI training. It was enough to give her a chance. She had to jump through some hoops to prove her skills, but she got the job!

“It was unreal!” she exclaims. “I was a little intimidated at first and a little starstruck too. Clayton was such a character, larger than life.”

Tough Critiques

“It was a great opportunity to have Clayton critique my copy. It was tough,” Deanna says, “but his wife Wendy was even tougher.”

Clayton and Wendy were also warm and encouraging though. They treated their staff like family. Most importantly, Deanna learned and improved exponentially with their mentoring.

Deanna embraced freelancing again when Clayton’s agency closed, but this time she had experience and connections. A contact hired her immediately, and she secured retainers with two other companies.

She doubled her previous income in accounting management in her first year as a freelance copywriter in the alternative health niche.

When the retainer jobs ended, she worked for multiple health clients on a per project basis. But finding work could be challenging at times. Sometimes projects got dropped or pushed back. She tried to keep her income steady by booking months in advance — and maintained a rainy-day fund, just in case.

Then she pivoted into financial copywriting. It offered a monthly retainer and royalties — so the pay was better and steadier — but it often required 60+ hours a week.

Always Prepared to Pivot

When Deanna’s mom had a stroke in 2021, she pivoted again. She returned to alternative health copywriting to reduce her work hours and stress load. And now, she lives with her mom and stepdad, who need regular care.



“If I didn’t have this freelance business,” she adds, “I don’t know what they would do.”

Despite the added responsibility, she’s grateful that she can take off whenever. She can have lunch with a friend. She’s free to take her parents to appointments. She can work on side projects like writing her novel and ghostwriting for someone else.

Deanna took *The Accelerated Program* 15 years ago and has been making a good living as a copywriter ever since.

“Has it always been easy? Nope. But the work has been steady. And I get to do what I love every day,” she says. “AWAI gave me a great foundation for writing copy and helped me get my foot in the door. It’s just taken off from there. I’m doing exceptionally well for the Asheville area. You can easily make six figures as a writer, especially if you land the right clients.”

Deanna’s Tips For Copywriters

- **Meet deadlines** – Word gets around. Missed deadlines throw off the production schedule, and frustrated clients may not want to work with you.
- **Be professional and easy to work with** – Deanna warns not to take it personally if your client changes your copy. They know their business best, and they are the ones paying.
- **Be teachable** – Change is inevitable. Compliance law changes, the market changes, and your client changes. Be prepared to pivot.

Ready to pursue *the writer’s life*?

Learn more about the program that launched Deanna’s career,
The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting
(now *The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting*).

