

PRESS RELEASES

News Brief - 12/30/97

[Welcome to WGU](#)

[Return to Archives](#)

[What We Are](#)

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Western Governors University Readies For Launch With Key Staff Positions

[Newsletters](#)

[Administration](#)

SALT LAKE CITY, UT -- Western Governors University today announced key staff positions as it prepares for its 1998 launch. The new "virtual university" will open its Internet-based catalog and begin enrolling students in distance education programs and courses in the coming months. The following new staff positions were announced:

[About Your Privacy](#)

[Glossary](#)

[FAQs](#)

Don Foshee, acting chief information officer. In this capacity, he will manage the implementation of WGU's extensive information system, which includes an Internet-based Catalog. Don is president of Innovative Interactions Inc.(i3). His team includes Tim Triplett, Web development and Internet specialist, and Patrick Doggett, designer, analyst and integrator. Don has more than 20 years of experience in design and management of learning networks including the TI-IN Network, Oregon ED-NET, and statewide systems in North Carolina, West Virginia, Illinois, Mississippi and Alabama. He has previously worked with the State of Oregon, University of Texas System, Intel, GTE and US West among others. He is also past president of the U.S. Distance Learning Association and is well known as a speaker on information technology in higher education communities.

Marcia Bankirer, senior academic officer. She will assist in managing the academic program including workforce development. Dr. Bankirer is the former director of Extended and Continuing Education Programs at Iowa State University. She has been with Iowa since 1994 and has helped expand ISU's programming for conferences, off-campus courses and distance learning. She is past president of the University Continuing Education Association and a founding member of the National Universities Degree Consortium. Dr. Bankirer is a graduate of Colorado State University and the University of Wyoming.

Terri Taylor Straut, director of customer and provider relations. She is the former executive director of the University of Colorado's virtual campus initiative. Known as "CU Online," this program has been widely acclaimed as one of the most innovative in the country. Terri has also managed distance education programs for Jones Education Networks and the CU-Denver College of Business. She is a graduate of the University of Delaware and Northeastern University.

Jeanne Glaittli, director of finance and budget. She will manage internal and external financial activities and is responsible for business planning and accounting. She was formerly with KPMG Peat Marwick and has extensive experience in finance and control. She is a graduate of the University of Utah.

Jeff Edwards, director of marketing. He has responsibility for overall marketing including business development, distribution agreements and marketing communications. Jeff previously served as director of public relations for 3Com Corporation's Mobile Communications Division (formerly US Robotics/Megahertz). He also worked in senior marketing and communications roles at Evans & Sutherland Computer Corporation and Hercules Aerospace. He is a graduate of the University of Utah.

Max Farbman, director of development and general counsel. He has responsibility for raising operating capital and serves as the board liaison to the National Advisory Board, which consists of WGU's industry partners. Max has been a practicing attorney for more than 25 years and is of counsel with the firm of Jones, Waldo, Holbrook & McDonough. He is a graduate of New York University and Southwestern University Law School.

Amy Carmer, manager of public policy. She is responsible for WGU's interface with state and federal governments and higher education institutions. Amy has served on the staff of Nebraska Governor Nelson where she served as his policy advisor for K-12 and higher education. She is a graduate of the University of Nebraska and the University of Nebraska Law School.

Marcia and Terri will report to Dr. Bob Albrecht, chief academic officer, located in Denver, Colorado. Jeanne, Jeff, Max, Amy and Don will report to Dr. Jeff Livingston, chief executive officer, who is based in the Salt Lake City, Utah, office.

About Western Governors University

Western Governors University was formed in 1997 as a result of the interest of the governors of the western United States to share higher education distance learning resources. WGU is a competency-based, degree-granting, virtual university that delivers cost-effective education using the Internet and other advanced telecommunications and networking technologies. WGU's mission is to expand educational opportunities for learners everywhere, offering courses from a wide array of sources. Educational access will be provided to a dispersed population of students who might not otherwise have access to higher education and to those needing workplace training. Its corporate offices are located in Salt Lake City, Utah, with academic offices in Denver, Colorado.

The states and territories participating in Western Governors University are Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. The lead governors in the WGU development are Roy Romer of Colorado and Mike Leavitt of Utah, who serve as co-chairs of the Board of Trustees.