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### **Governors Named to New Leadership Positions for Western Governors University**

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*Gov. Tony Knowles (Alaska) joins WGU's Board of Trustees*

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*Gov. Gary Locke (Washington) and Gov. Michael Leavitt (Utah) elected Board co-chairs*

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*Former Colorado Governor Roy Romer re-elected to Board*

SALT LAKE CITY -- Western Governors University (WGU) announced today that Governors Tony Knowles (Alaska) and Gary Locke (Washington) have been elected to positions on the University's Board of Trustees, becoming the newest members of the WGU Board. In addition, Gov. Locke and Gov. Michael O. Leavitt (Utah) have been elected co-chairs of the 14-member WGU Board of Trustees.

The announcement came Friday during the university's regularly-scheduled Board of Trustees and National Advisory Board meetings, held at Novell corporate offices in San Jose, Calif. The 14-member board, consisting of governors, educators, foundation and industry leaders, oversees WGU operations through strategic guidance and formal policy-making.

In addition to the elections of Knowles and Locke, former Colorado Governor and Democratic National Committee Chairman Roy Romer, was re-elected to the Board. Romer, who helped found WGU nearly three years ago, previously held the Board co-chair position along with Leavitt.

Both Alaska and Washington have been WGU members since 1997, providing initial support for the university's formation, as well as representative involvement and course content from educational institutions in both states.

"Out of necessity, the University of Alaska has long been a leader in delivering distance education," Knowles said. "We joined WGU because Alaska's future will be brighter for our students if we take full advantage of emerging information technology. As a board member, I look forward to helping shape this forward-thinking institution that's dedicated to providing students with access and choices."

"WGU is in a unique position in higher education, helping define distance learning and bringing competency-based education to people everywhere. I look forward to working with Gov. Leavitt as co-chair, and the outstanding group of people comprising the WGU Board of Trustees," said Locke.

In addition to the governors, 10 other members of the WGU Board of Trustees were either elected or re-elected, they include: Gov. Jim Geringer (Wyoming); Eric Benhamou, chairman & CEO, 3Com and chair of the WGU National Advisory Board; Dr. Clara Lovett, president, Northern Arizona University; Frank Mayadas, program director, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation; Tom Pelto, vice president, Law & Government Affairs, AT&T; Dr. David Powers, executive director, Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education; Eric Schmidt, CEO, Novell; Barbara Gordon, vice president, Worldwide Sales, Sun; Dr. Sam Smith, president, Washington State University; Anne-Lee Verville, general manager (ret) IBM.

#### **About WGU**

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 by offering on-line access to courses from universities, colleges and corporate training programs through its unique SmartCatalog™.

WGU was formed in 1997 as a result of the vision of the governors of the Western United States to share higher education distance learning resources. WGU's administrative offices are located in Salt Lake City, Utah, and its academic offices are in Denver, Colorado.