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Vision, History
& Mission

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SALT LAKE CITY - Western Governors University (WGU) and Sallie Mae today announced that Sallie Mae has joined the virtual university's National Advisory Board (NAB) and also provided the university with a grant of funds and services valued at \$250,000. Paul Carey, executive vice president, will represent Sallie Mae and will join 13 other government, corporate, foundation and higher education leaders on the board, which works with the university's professional staff and Board of Trustees to provide strategic counseling and guidance. The announcement was made today at the Western Governors Association meeting in Jackson, Wyoming, during remarks by Utah Governor Mike Leavitt, co-chair of WGU's Board of Trustees.

Governor Leavitt said that Sallie Mae's participation would be an enormous boost for the university because of the company's expertise in financing higher education. "Sallie Mae is a wonderful addition to our board, not just because of its leadership in developing innovative loan programs for higher education, but also because of its demonstrated commitment to helping people fulfill their aspirations and life goals."

Bob Mendenhall, WGU's president, echoed the governor's comments. "Ultimately, it is our students who benefit from this relationship, because of the shared goal of WGU and Sallie Mae to expand access to higher education for those who have previously been unable to receive it."

"WGU is a visionary institution, which like Sallie Mae, not only recognizes the value of technology, but openly embraces it as a way to better serve its students. I am honored to join WGU in this endeavor that represents the future of education," Carey said.

Sallie Mae joins a prestigious group on the NAB, including: AT&T, Apple, Cisco, Drake International, IBM, International Thompson Publishing, KPMG, Microsoft, Novell, the Sloan Foundation, Sun Microsystems, Sylvan Prometric and 3Com. The NAB was established in 1997 to provide business and industry perspective in the planning and implementation of WGU. Each member company also provides financial and in-kind business support.

About Sallie Mae

Sallie Mae, founded 26 years ago, provides funds for educational loans, primarily federally guaranteed student loans originated under the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP). The company currently owns or manages \$47 billion in student loans for more than five million borrowers. More information about Sallie Mae can be obtained at www.salliemae.com

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 online access to courses from universities, colleges and corporate training programs through its unique online catalog. 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.