

PRESS RELEASES

News Brief - 7/14/99

Welcome to WGU

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Newsletters

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SALT LAKE CITY - Western Governors University (WGU) today announced that America Online (AOL) 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. George Vradenburg, AOL senior vice president for global and strategic policy, will represent the company and join 14 other government, corporate, foundation and higher education leaders on the board, which works with WGU's professional staff and Board of Trustees to provide strategic counseling and guidance.

WGU Board of Trustees co-chair Gov. Mike Leavitt (Utah) said that AOL's participation would be a major addition to the institution's ability to reach potential students. Co-Chair Gov. Gary Locke (Washington) added, "America Online's leadership in the online services market will bring invaluable expertise to WGU's technology-based learning systems. We welcome them as one of the visionary companies who see the potential of the online environment to improve the lives of people through education."

Bob Mendenhall, president of WGU, echoed the governor's comments; "With AOL's remarkable reach into the homes of millions of learners worldwide, WGU will be able to better fulfill its goal of expanding access to higher education. We look forward to working with AOL to bring higher education to those who have previously been unable to receive it."

"America Online is pleased to offer its support for the innovative distance learning programs of Western Governors University," added Vradenburg. "The magic of this medium is its ability to connect people across great distances, empower them with information and resources, and improve their daily lives. WGU offers a model for how we can use this medium to help students from around the world further their education and expand their horizons as they enter the knowledge-based workforce of the 21st century."

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

About AOL

Founded in 1985, America Online, Inc., based in Dulles, Virginia, is the world's leader in interactive services, Web brands, Internet technologies, and e-commerce services. America Online, Inc., operates two worldwide Internet services (America Online, with more than 17 million members, and CompuServe, with approximately 2 million members); several leading Internet brands including ICQ, AOL Instant Messenger and Digital City, Inc.; the Netscape Netcenter and AOL.COM portals; the Netscape Navigator and Communicator browsers; and AOL MovieFone, the nation's #1 movie listing guide and ticketing service. Through its strategic alliance with Sun Microsystems, the company develops and offers easy-to-deploy, end-to-end e-commerce and enterprise solutions for companies operating in the Net Economy.

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 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.

More information about America Online can be obtained at www.aol.com