

WGU to honor its largest class: 116 graduates

**Online university:
Ceremony at the SLC
Library will cap a period
of remarkable growth**

The Western Governors University and Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr. will honor the Internet-based school's largest graduating class Saturday.

The 116 graduates represent 29 states and one South American country, Colombia. Nearly 90 of the graduates are receiving

bachelor's or master's degrees from WGU's teacher education program, according to President Robert Mendenhall.

Saturday's 10 a.m. commencement will be in the auditorium of Salt Lake City's Main Library, 210 E. 400 South.

The ceremony caps a year of remarkable growth for WGU, which began offering online classes in 1999. Enrollment has more than doubled — from 1,500 students to more than 3,000. The school now offers more than 30 degree and certificate programs,

Mendenhall said.

WGU gets its name from Western governors who pioneered the virtual university under the leadership of then-Utah Gov. Mike Leavitt. It is the nation's

first on-line, competency-based institution to receive accreditation.

The school's administration office is in Salt Lake City.

— *Shinika A. Sykes*