

Western Governors University Nursing Education Program Receives \$500,000 Grant From The Texas Workforce Commission

Western Governors University (WGU) www.wgu.edu. (PRNewsFoto/Western Governors University)

SALT LAKE CITY, UT UNITED STATES

Pilot Program for Nation's First Competency-Based B.S. in Nursing Leading to RN Licensure Set to Begin in Texas This Fall

Salt Lake City /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Western Governors University, www.wgu.edu, has received a \$500,000 grant from the Texas Workforce Commission for the development and launch of the first national, accredited online competency-based bachelor's degree program aimed at preparing students for initial licensure as registered nurses. The program, which is called the Multi-State Approach to the Preparation of Registered Nurses, or MAP-RN, is being developed by WGU in collaboration with state workforce agencies and healthcare institutions. The Texas pilot program is slated to begin this fall.

(Logo: www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20081030/DC42901LOGO)

Last year, more than 50,000 applicants to nursing schools were turned away, despite a nationwide shortage of registered nurses. This innovative new program is designed to help address this crisis in U.S. healthcare by making quality nursing education more accessible to working adults. The program combines WGU's online, competency-based academic approach with intensive clinical simulations and clinical practice at partner hospitals, supervised by onsite clinical coaches serving as WGU adjunct faculty. Texas is the second state to launch a pilot program for this degree program; the first pilot is set to begin in California in July.

In addition to the Texas Workforce Commission, WGU has partnered with The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, U.S. Department of Labor, the California Workforce and Development Agency, Cedars Sinai Medical Center, Catholic Healthcare West, Hospital Corporation of America, Kaiser Permanente, Tenet Healthcare, and Universal Health Services. For more information regarding this program, go to www.wgu.edu/TexasRN.

"Prospective nurses will now have access to a high quality degree program that will enable them to earn a B.S. and prepare for their RN license flexibly and affordably," said WGU President Robert Mendenhall. "The B.S. in Nursing leading to initial licensure program complements WGU's other CCNE-accredited bachelor's and master's degree nursing programs for already-licensed RNs and supports our mission to provide educational opportunities and degree programs to meet the needs of underserved populations and employers with critical workforce needs."

About Western Governors University (WGU)

"[WGU is] the best relatively cheap university you've never heard of."

- TIME magazine (Nov. 2008)

WGU is the only accredited online university in the U.S. offering competency-based degree programs. The private non-profit university has been a leader in online education for more than 10 years. WGU is the recipient of the USDLA 21st Century Award for Best Practices in Distance Learning for 2008, awarded in recognition of WGU's success in expanding access to higher education. WGU has been honored as one of the 2008 Top 20 Military Friendly Colleges and Universities by Military Advanced Education magazine. WGU sponsors the Online Student Survival Guide, a blog that addresses many of the questions and daily concerns online students from any online college or university face.

Now serving more than 13,000 students, WGU was founded by 19 U.S. governors, and is supported by more than 20 leading corporations and foundations. They include institutions such as AT&T, BearingPoint, Dell, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Hewlett-Packard, HCA, Microsoft, Oracle, Qwest, SunGard Higher Education, Sun Microsystems, and Zions Bank. WGU offers bachelor's and master's degrees in business, information technology, teacher education, and health professions, with students in all 50 states. More information is available at www.wgu.edu.

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