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WGU News
For Immediate Release

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USDLA Recognizes Western Governors University President Robert Mendenhall for Outstanding Leadership in Distance Learning

WGU President Honored with Prestigious Distance Learning Award at National Conference

Salt Lake City, Utah (May 11, 2010) Western Governors University, www.wgu.edu, President Dr. Robert W. Mendenhall has received the U.S. Distance Learning Association (USDLA) Award for Outstanding Leadership by an Individual in the Field of Distance Learning. The celebrated award, announced last week at the USDLA's National Conference in St. Louis, Missouri, is presented annually to individuals engaged in advancing distance learning.

A leader and innovator in higher education, Dr. Mendenhall has served as President of Western Governors University, the nation's only competency-based online university, since 1999, the year that WGU accepted its first student. Under his leadership, WGU has grown to a national university, with more than 18,000 students in all 50 U.S. states, setting the standard for quality and affordability in accredited, online higher education. Non-profit WGU offers 50 bachelor's and master's degree programs in high-demand career fields such as Business, Education, Information Technology, and Healthcare, including Nursing.

"As a premier organization for the entire distance learning profession, we are honoring Dr. Mendenhall and Western Governors University for leadership in the industry," said Dr. John G. Flores, CEO of USDLA. "Dr. Mendenhall has raised the bar of excellence and we are truly honored by his contributions to the distance learning industry."

The USDLA Awards were created to acknowledge major accomplishments in distance learning and to highlight those distance learning instructors, programs, and professionals who have achieved and demonstrated extraordinary results through the use of online, videoconferencing, satellite and blended learning delivery technologies.

[About Western Governors University \(WGU\)](#)

“[WGU is] the best relatively cheap university you’ve never heard of.” – TIME magazine

Featured on the NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams, WGU is the only university in the U.S. offering competency-based degree programs and the only non-profit, fully online university in the country. WGU offers degree programs in Business, Education, Information Technology, and Healthcare Professions, including Nursing. Since its inception in 1997, WGU has grown into a national institution, serving more than 18,000 students in all 50 states. The university maintains its commitment to making higher education accessible by keeping tuition affordable—undergraduate tuition for most programs is less than \$6,000 per year, and will not increase in 2010.

WGU is regionally accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and nationally accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC). WGU’s Teachers College is the first and only exclusively online provider of teacher education to receive accreditation from the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). WGU nursing programs have been accredited by the Commission for Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

The university has earned the support of more than 20 leading corporations and foundations. They include institutions such as AT&T, Dell, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Lumina Foundation, Hewlett-Packard, HCA, Microsoft, Oracle, Qwest, SunGard Higher Education, Sun Microsystems, and Zions Bank. More information is available at www.wgu.edu.

About United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA)

The United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) is a non-profit association formed in 1987 and is located in Boston, Massachusetts. The association reaches 20,000 people globally with sponsors and members operating in and influencing 46% of the \$913 billion dollar U.S. education and training market. USDLA promotes the development and application of distance learning for education and training and serves the needs of the distance learning community by providing advocacy, information, networking and opportunity. Distance learning and training constituencies served include pre-k-12 education, higher and continuing education, home schooling as well as business, corporate, military, government and telehealth markets. The USDLA trademarked logo is the recognized worldwide symbol of dedicated professionals committed to the distance learning industry. <http://www.usdla.org>