



News Release: New Online University for Indiana, 6/11/10

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News Brief - 6/11/10

Governor Daniels Announces New Online University for Indiana

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Executive Order establishes charter for WGU Indiana, the state's first competency-based university

Indianapolis — Governor Mitch Daniels today announced the establishment of WGU Indiana, http://indiana.wgu.edu, a new online, competency-based university aimed at expanding access to higher education for Hoosiers.

"Today we mark the beginning of, in a real sense, Indiana's 8th state university. WGU Indiana will fill the clearest and most challenging gap remaining in our family of higher education opportunities, helping thousands of adult Hoosiers attain the college degrees they've wanted and needed, on a schedule they can manage, at a cost they can afford," said Daniels, who was elected to the board of directors of WGU in January.

WGU Indiana's academic model is unique—rather than earning degrees based on credit hours or time spent in class, students are required to demonstrate competency in degree subject matter. They advance by writing papers, completing assignments, and passing exams that demonstrate their knowledge of required subject matter.

WGU Indiana is being established with support from the Lumina Foundation for Education and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The university will operate independent of direct state funding and be self-sustaining on tuition.

"WGU Indiana is a great example of the innovative thinking that is very much needed in higher education today," said Jamie Merisotis, president of the Lumina Foundation for Education. "Its online, competency-based approach to learning shows great promise as a cost-effective model for delivering quality higher education."

"Innovation is critical if we are to dramatically increase the number of young people who earn a degree or credential after high school," said Mark Milliron, deputy director of postsecondary success for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "The programs offered by WGU Indiana, which allow students to work full time while they earn their degrees, offer another pathway for students to complete a quality college education."

Allison Barber has been appointed as WGU Indiana Chancellor. A native of Indiana and former Indiana public school teacher, Ms. Barber has served in development and education roles in the government and non-profit sector for nearly 20 years.

- David Harris, President & CEO, The Mind Trust
Kathy Davis, former Lieutenant Governor, founder of Davis Design Group
Jamie Merisotis, President & CEO, Lumina Foundation for Education
Linda Buskirk, President, Accountable Solutions, Inc.
Vince Bertram, Superintendent, Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation
State Senator Earline Rogers, Indiana
Ron Stiver, Senior Vice President, Engagement & External Affairs, Clarian Health

