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WGU Extends Economic Turnaround Scholarship, 12/7/10

Online university has awarded nearly \$750,000 in scholarships over the past 18 months

Salt Lake City — In May 2009, non-profit, online Western Governors University, www.wgu.edu, launched a competitive scholarship program aimed at helping laid-off workers return to college to complete bachelor's or post-baccalaureate degrees. Nearly 150 students have been awarded \$750,000 in scholarships as part of the Economic Turnaround Scholarship Program, and today, the online university announced that it is extending the program into 2011. The need-based program provides up to \$1,250 per six-month term for up to four terms to new WGU students who have lost their jobs in the past 18 months.

"While we know that the economy is improving slowly, high unemployment continues," said WGU Vice President of Marketing and Enrollment Patrick Partridge. "Many workers have been unemployed for an extended period of time, and in many cases, the jobs they lost will not be coming back." This scholarship provides these individuals with a chance to prepare for new opportunities by completing a [bachelor's degree](#) in a high-demand field such as business, information technology, teaching, or healthcare, including nursing. The scholarship is also open to bachelor's degree holders who wish to earn a post-baccalaureate certificate leading to licensure as a teacher.

In a recent interview on CBS News program *60 Minutes*, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke discussed the importance of higher education to the country and our economy, "If you're a college graduate, unemployment is five percent. If you're a high school graduate, it's ten percent or more. It's a very big difference. It leads to an unequal society and a society which doesn't have the cohesion that we'd like to see."

To be eligible for WGU's Economic Turnaround Scholarship, applicants must be able to complete a bachelor's or post-baccalaureate degree in less than two years and be admitted to WGU. All bachelor's degree programs in the College of Business, College of Information Technology, and College of Health Professions are eligible. In addition, bachelor's degree programs in the Teachers College, as well as post-baccalaureate degree programs (leading to initial teacher licensure), are eligible. To learn more about the program, call 1.866.225.5948.

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