WGU Washington Newsroom

News Releases

News Releases

WGU Reduces Student Debt by 41 Percent News Brief - 8/18/16

Online, nonprofit university recognized with the Exemplary Model Award by the American Association of University Administrators (AAUA)

KENT — Western Governors University (WGU) is being lauded for reducing student debt and helping address a nationwide problem in higher education. The nonprofit university's Responsible Borrowing Initiatives, which to date have reduced student borrowing at WGU by \$400 million nationally, received the Exemplary Model Award at the American Association of University Administrators' (AAUA) annual conference held in San Antonio, Texas.

"WGU's innovation, along with its low tuition, has a positive impact on student finances during and after enrollment and addresses directly a central access problem in American higher education," said AAUA Awards Chairman Dr. Jerome Neuner. "Careful financial aid advising and new procedures at WGU have led to a 41 percent decrease in average student borrowing and a default rate of just five percent, less than half the national average."

WGU Washington is the locally-based affiliate of WGU. The first legislatively-endorsed, online university in the state, it was established in 2011 to provide a low-cost, high-quality educational option for Washingtonians. Today, Washington is home to more WGU students than any other state in the country.

Nationwide, student debt has surpassed \$1.3 trillion. WGU is addressing the problem of ballooning debt by educating students about responsible borrowing. In 2013, WGU developed its Responsible Borrowing Initiatives to encourage students to borrow only what they need to complete their degrees, helping students make informed decisions and borrow wisely. Since launching the initiatives, average borrowing per WGU student (of those who take out loans) has decreased by \$3,230 per year, a 41 percent reduction. Debt at graduation for undergraduates has also decreased each year since the program's inception. In 2016, the average debt among WGU students who took out loans was \$16,862, which is less than half the national average.

"WGU students have responded to our recommendations, and the outcomes are not only benefiting our students but also contributing to the solution of a national problem," said Bob Collins, WGU's Vice President of Financial Aid. "WGU continues to focus on providing an affordable education that leads to career success and helping our students borrow responsibly to pay for that education."

WGU's tuition, which has not increased since 2008, is about \$6,000 per year for most programs, regardless of the number of courses completed. WGU's innovative, competency-based learning model allows students to advance as soon as they demonstrate mastery of course materials, making it possible for many students to accelerate their progress toward a degree, saving both time and money. The average time to complete a bachelor's degree at WGU is about two and a half years, making the average cost for a bachelor's degree about \$15,000.

Jake Riddell, Public Relations

Manager

Phone: 206-512-0025 Email: jake.riddell@wgu.edu More Information: 877-214-

7004

RSS FEED

Looking for a way to get the latest WGU Washington news directly to you as it becomes available? Subscribe to the WGU Washington news feed!

Subscribe

SOCIAL MEDIA





Tube

APPLY NOW LEARN MORE 877.214.7004

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Admissions Tuition and Financial Aid Academic Experience **About WGU** Washington

Accreditation Newsroom Employment at Student Portal Subscribe

DEGREES & PROGRAMS

WGU Washington is an accredited online university offering online bachelor's and master's degree programs.

TEACHERS COLLEGE

Licensure

Programs Graduate **Programs** **COLLEGE OF**

BUSINESS Bachelor's Degree Master's Degrees

COLLEGE OF I.T. COLLEGE OF Bachelor's

Programs Master's Programs

HEALTH Bachelor's Degrees Master's Degrees WGU National WGU Indiana WGU Missouri WGU Nevada WGU Tennessee **WGU Texas**