FEATURE NEWS

WGU Launches New Easy-Access Library Services

WGU launched a streamlined virtual library in January 2011. You will still access the library through the “Resources” tab of your AAP, but you will no longer need to remember multiple passwords to access the various library resources. Students now will have immediate access to research databases, course reserves, and over 75,000 e-books. The new library also includes 24/7 reference support, so no matter what time or day of the week you want to access the library, you’ll have access to the guidance and support of a reference librarian.

WGU’s new inter-library loan provider, The Michigan Information Transfer Source (MITS), will give our students access to the extensive collections of the University of Michigan, one of the ten largest collections in the United States. Students can request journal articles as well as books through the MITS service by filling out an article or book loan request form located on the library home page. Most articles will be e-mailed directly to the students within 24 hours, and book loans will ship to students within 48 hours. Book loans also will include a convenient return mailing envelope.

The new virtual library includes a personal workspace for WGU students. This workspace allows you to save articles you’ve located in your research. Students can also save their own papers, videos, and other research projects to their workspace, and publish materials from their workspace to the World Wide Web. The web publishing tool can be used to create rich presentations combining text, video and audio resources.

The library home page includes links to a number of tutorials covering information about accessing and using the new library site to evaluating and properly citing source materials. For questions on how to navigate the new site or where to find resources, students can now chat online with a librarian. Additional assistance will also be provided by the Student Services and Learning Resources departments.
**Coming Soon to Your Computer! The WGU Channel**

WGU is proud to announce the upcoming launch in February 2011 of a new student resource, one we’re calling the WGU Channel!

The WGU Channel is an on-demand library of informative and how-to presentations on various topics that range from scheduling assessments to using and navigating the student portal.

We developed the content for the WGU Channel from student and mentor feedback. Many students commented that they wanted and needed a supplemental resource following the Education Without Boundaries (EWB) course of study—a resource that could be referenced time and time again. To address this common need, we chose the format of a self-service video library.

---

**MESSAGE FROM THE BURSAR OFFICE TO WGU STUDENTS**

Now that 2010 has ended, it is time to start thinking about your taxes again. We have already been very busy preparing the 1098T tax forms for availability by January 31, 2011.

Students can electronically access their 1098T tax form through the student portal. Simply log into the student portal and go to the “Resources” tab. Locate the “1098T Form” link located near the bottom left side of the page on your screen, then select the “1098T Tax Form” link. Even if you have withdrawn or graduated, you should still be able to log in to the portal and view your tax form.

If you have technical trouble or have forgotten your username or password, please contact the WGU Helpdesk at 877-435-7948, ext. 3103. Live technical support is available to you weekdays from 6:00 am to midnight (MST) and from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm on weekends.

The information we report in the tax form is the amount billed in the tax year for tuition and fees, any prior year adjustments, and any scholarships and financial aid grants you have received. Although this information is being reported to the IRS by WGU, you are responsible for reporting the actual amount you have paid.

If you have questions regarding the information provided on your form 1098T, please first access the “1098T Frequently Asked Questions” link to see if your question has been answered there. It is located next to the “1098T Form” link on the “Resources” tab of the student portal. If your question has not been addressed in the FAQs, then contact the Bursar office at 1-877-435-7948, ext. 3105, or email us at bursar@wgu.edu.

IMPORTANT NOTE: For your privacy and security, WGU cannot email or fax your 1098T form to you. WGU cannot determine if you qualify for any tax credits or the amount of any tax credit for which you may be eligible. Please consult your tax advisor for more information or contact the IRS at the “IRS Help with Tax Questions” link at http://www.irs.gov or telephone the IRS at 1-800-829-1040.
Now in its fourth year, the iModules scholarship program annually provides individual financial scholarships to students who are enrolled in secondary or higher education institutions which are current iModules clients (Western Governors University - Alumni & Career Services is a client of iModules).

Here’s a timely reminder for students: The iModules Scholarship deadline for this year is April 1, 2011 – and that’s no foolin’. iModules will be awarding ten scholarships of $1,500 each, and will announce successful recipients on May 3, 2011. There’s no time to lose! To obtain guidelines for the required essay along with an application form, visit www.imodules.com/scholarships.

In a recent press release, iModules stated that it “believes that helping students with their academic pursuits is one of the greatest gifts it can give back to its clients and the communities they serve.” Have more questions? Visit their web site at: www.imodules.com/scholarships.

Deep Links to Learning Resources

New and updated Courses of Study (COS) are now incorporating “deep links” to learning resources, which means that you, as a student, will be able to access textbook, library, and other learning resources with only a single-sign-on (SSO)—and a smoother entry means less time needed to access your resources. Once these links are in place, you will no longer need to remember or enter multiple passwords, and deep links will likely reduce other pesky access-related issues.

How do we create a deep link?

The learning resource—whether external course, module, textbook, or chapter—is entered into our Learning Resource Repository. This repository now generates a unique link, which is then added to the activity level in your course of study. You will be able to access your learning resources directly through the course of study itself without having to go through a process of enrollment and confirmation for each separate resource and without leaving the course of study. And that means a seamless experience for you.

Currently, SkillSoft, MindEdge and Soomo are ready for integration into the SSO system and Pearson is in the final stages of quality control. Courses of study that utilize resources from these providers will become available to students over the next few weeks and months. SkillSoft resources already automatically enroll students, and therefore will be linked in your current course version over the next few weeks. It is necessary for us to update MindEdge and Pearson resources by publishing a new version of the course of study (we call this versioning), and thus these courses will be published over the coming months for students newly entering a course.
WGU Career Cafes

Grab a cup of coffee or a soda and join WGU Alumni and Career Services for these webinars designed to help you succeed in your job search. Whether you are a new student or alumni, now is the time to start developing the skills you need to get ahead.

**February 2**

**Employer Information Session:** Getting That First State Job

The State of California offers a career for almost every field; however, getting into the State can be challenging without an understanding of the hiring process which is designed to ensure a merit-based system. After this webinar, you will understand how to navigate the State Personnel Board’s website and unlock the opportunities that await!

Time: 12:00 – 1:00 pm EST, 11:00 – 12:00 pm CST, 10:00 – 11:00 am MST, 9:00 – 10:00 am PST

**February 9**

**Teacher Recruiting Fairs**

Education job fairs are a great opportunity for new and experienced teachers and administrators to network and interview with schools and hiring managers. Join us for tips and strategies that will help make the most of these networking events.

Time: 12:00 – 1:00 pm EST, 11:00 – 12:00 pm CST, 10:00 – 11:00 am MST, 9:00 – 10:00 am PST

**February 16**

**Getting Started with Optimal Resume’s Practice Interview Software.**

The key to a successful interview is practice, practice, practice. To assist you, WGU has recently licensed Optimal Resume’s unique interview preparation tool. This interview software will allow you to create and review real-to-life multimedia interview scenarios.

Time: 12:00 – 1:00 pm EST, 11:00 – 12:00 pm CST, 10:00 – 11:00 am MST, 9:00 – 10:00 am PST

**February 23**

**The Federal Government Is Hiring!**

With the growing need to attract top talent, an increase in the amount agencies are spending on student loan repayment, signing bonuses and relocation expenses, and unparalleled opportunities to pursue a wide array of career experiences, this is a great time to consider a career in the federal government. A representative from The Partnership for Public Service’s Annenberg Speakers Bureau presents this program and offers advice on how to find and apply for a job or internship with a federal agency.

Time: 12:00 – 1:00 pm EST, 11:00 – 12:00 pm CST, 10:00 – 11:00 am MST, 9:00 – 10:00 am PST

**Join Us for Job Club**

Are you currently seeking employment? To assist you in your search and keep you motivated, WGU Alumni and Career Services is hosting weekly Job Club sessions for each program. To find out more, please see: http://alumni.wgu.edu/jobclub

**RSVP INFORMATION**

Space is limited, so please RSVP at: http://alumni.wgu.edu/februarycareercafes

Webinar connect information for all presentations:

Join us at: http://wgu.connectpro.acrobat.com/careerservices/

Conference Phone Number: 1-866-244-8528. Use participant code 422298.

All sessions will be recorded.

To view recorded webinar sessions, please go to: http://www.wgu.edu/careerservices

WGU Alumni & Career Services: careers@wgu.edu 866-895-9660 ext. 2085
CAREER CORNER

The Alumni Speak: Are you ready to interview right now?

Written by Enrique Colon, WGU Alum, 2010

If you are like millions of Americans today, you may be unemployed or in a miserable job looking for a change. You are what I and many recruiters consider “on the job market,” but are you prepared to interview for a great job right now? If you were online at Starbucks and happened to strike up a conversation with the hiring manager for a company that you have been actively pursuing, would you be ready to sell yourself on the spot and answer those tough interview questions? I would bet the hiring manager is ready to ask them.

Last year, I attended the annual Society for Human Resources (SHRM) Staffing Conference in Orlando and during that time I was preparing to relocate to San Diego. Thus, I was “on the market” and aggressively seeking employment and I had just earned my degree from WGU. I felt that I have always been great at interviewing and selling myself, but was I really? Sitting in a session with a speaker who happened to be the executive vice president of human resources for a top pharmaceutical company in the area where I was moving to, I heard her talk about what a great company she worked for. As I listened, I grew very interested, excited and eager for the session to end so that I could pitch myself for a job. I waited patiently as others before me were asking questions about her presentation. When it was my turn, I handed her my resume and explained my situation. Of course I also wanted to let her know that I just graduated from WGU and completed my degree while working full-time. I’m going to impress her! She asked me a question that I will never forget. It was a simple question, but one I could not answer at the time. “I see you are an HR professional of many years, but chose to pursue a business management degree,” she prefaced, and then asked, “What do you really want to do?” My mouth opened but nothing but um’s and ah’s came out. I stuttered my way to the worst answer I felt I could possibly have given her. I honestly replied, “I think I need to think that out a little better.” She responded, “When you are able to answer that question, feel free to give me a call!”

My point is to always be prepared to interview and sell yourself. You never know when you are going to meet the person who will be the decision maker in your next potential job. You will not always meet these people in conventional places, such as at career fairs or professional events. You may just meet them while in line at your local grocery store. Make sure you clearly understand your career path and where you want to go. Review your resume often and be prepared to answer those very tough interview questions.

Before the Door Opens

Preparing for Good Interviews with a Powerful New Tool

Does your mouth sometimes get a little dry thinking about interviews? That’s not a bad thing actually—but you need to know how to best use your energy in preparing for a good interview.

WGU Alumni & Career Services has recently signed on with OptimalResume.com, the leading application services provider of online career tools to offer a state-of-the-art practice interview program to students and recent graduates. Using this interview practice program will help users gain valuable interview skills before ever stepping foot into a potential employer’s office. The application offers tough sample interviews conducted by professional actors to simulate a live interview situation. A virtual coach helps to understand what is behind the question and offers strategies for how to position answers.

This user-friendly program also allows you to record your responses using a webcam and microphone for later review and sharing. Then, if you wish, Alumni & Career Services mentors can give critiques that will better prepare you for the real thing. This will dramatically improve your ability to think on your feet by knowing what to expect and the best kinds of responses. With many different kinds of interview situations ranging from a high-pressure interview to the final interview, you are able to test your responses in a number of ways. The best part of this program is that it is free to all registered students and graduates. It is offered through WGU Alumni & Career Services at this direct link: https://wgu.optimalresume.com.

Please contact WGU Alumni & Career Services at careers@wgu.edu if you need any help accessing the interview software.
WGU’s ISA Center

WGU’s Information Security and Assurance Center is in full-force with a number of events happening this spring. Visit the site and check the calendar for exciting webinars from students, alumni, faculty, information security professionals, and friends of WGU. The WGU ISA center features a community landing page and message boards. Job listings and career opportunities are also available. There’s even an event pod featuring live and pre-recorded MSISA capstone presentations and media from WGU students. Connect to the ISA Center and enhance your learning experience today!

Visit http://www.wgu.edu/isacenter for details!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

February 9, 2011
Presenter: Christina Raftery, Information Systems Security Officer, FBI Los Angeles Field Office

Cyber threat awareness within the security operations center is a key to creating a workforce able to respond to malicious attacks. Preventing a cyber attack has become almost impossible with the amount of malicious software and viruses so being able to respond and quarantine is a important in a proactive operation. Overall structure and education is the key to a proactive security operations center. The session will discuss digital “fingerprinting” and pattern behaviors of hackers.

March 9, 2011
Virtual Nihilism: Wikileaks and Cyberwar by Civilians
Presenter: Dan Wolf, President, Cyber Pack Ventures and former Director, Information Assurance at NSA

The most important legacy of the WikiLeaks affair will likely be the rapidly escalating cyberwar that the group’s renegade disclosures have sparked. U.S. officials protested that the release was damaging to national security. Amazon Web Services ceased hosting the WikiLeaks Web site because WikiLeaks had violated the company’s “terms of service” agreement. WikiLeaks quickly found a new host server in Switzerland. Meanwhile, angry supporters of Assange—operating under the unoriginal collective name “Anonymous”—launched a cyberattack against Amazon, at one point bringing the company’s European sales to a halt. Visa, MasterCard and PayPal also quit doing business with WikiLeaks, citing possible violations of their service agreements. Anonymous began assailing those companies in what the hackers called “Operation Payback.” Their weapon of choice has been a “distributed denial of service” attack. Then, an anti-WikiLeaks group of hackers launched “Operation Fightback”—an attack against the Anonymous group. At least one of the Anonymous servers was knocked offline. And, at least for a time, the wildly popular social networking sites Facebook and Twitter took down the pages that Anonymous members had been using to coordinate their electronic warfare.

This bloginar will focus on the technologies and technical issues involved in this tit-for-tat battle.

MENTOR PROFILE:
TIMOTHY PEREZ

Where are you from?
I am a native southern Californian from Orange County, California.

When did you join WGU?
August 2009.

What do you enjoy about WGU?
I enjoy working with an excellent team of faculty and staff that are truly dedicated towards helping our students succeed. WGU employs a unique educational model which I have embraced and truly believe will revolutionize the common perception of education.

What are your leisure activities?
Biking and hiking are two of my favorite outdoor activities, and I also enjoy spending time with my wife and family, and playing the piano.

Favorite vacation spot:
Hawaii.

More on you:
I started my academic journey at Santiago Canyon College by earning an associate degree in liberal arts and computer information systems. I transferred to Chapman University where I obtained a bachelor’s degree in computer information systems. I then continued my studies at National University where I earned my master’s degree in information systems. I am currently enrolled in the doctoral program for information systems at Dakota State University and have selected a specialization in information assurance and computer security.

Prior to joining WGU, I worked at a local municipality where I served as a senior member of the information technology staff for eight years. I am multi-faceted with expertise in a wide variety of technical areas such as web development, networking, programming, security and project management. I have prior teaching experience in both the on-ground and online settings.
The Alpha Epsilon Sigma chapter of Kappa Delta Pi (KDP) recently completed a major membership drive. KDP is the international honor society for education, and our chapter accepts applications twice a year, prior to WGU commencements. The most recent application window ended on January 21, 2011. We received over 175 applications and referrals for membership! This not only exceeded the goal that was set for us by the national Kappa Delta Pi society, but truly shows how much support our chapter is garnering at WGU.

This membership drive could not have been accomplished without the hard work of several key WGU staff and mentors. Heather Dodds, a counselor for our chapter, conducted mentor training in December 2010. The goal of this training was to teach mentors about the qualifications of the KDP honor society, but also how to identify and sort out potential students for our chapter. Subsequently, several course mentors posted ads on their community boards which outlined requirements to join the Alpha Epsilon Sigma chapter of KDP as well as a link to begin their application. Due to their training, student mentors were able to send out e-mails to their students who meet honor society requirements.

In September 2010, our chapter held officer elections. The results put together a team of officers who are not only passionate about being a part of this honor society, but are also proud to serve. Your current officers are: Tommy Schubert, chapter president; Christy Raby, vice-president; Brandi Davison, membership chair; Linda Ann-Burt, treasurer/secretary; Denise McKenzie-Huffman, fundraiser chair/education foundation representative; and Katrina Maydom, historian/centennial liaison. Among the officers, three are WGU alumni—Christy Raby, Brandi Davison and Linda Ann-Burt.

Recently, Heather Dodds stepped down as KDP counselor to our chapter following a job position change at WGU. Heather was instrumental in establishing the Alpha Epsilon Sigma chapter of Kappa Delta Pi at WGU, and in laying the foundation to help ensure the future success of the honor society at WGU. Heather will be sorely missed, and the chapter gratefully appreciates her hard work and dedication. Heather graciously recruited replacement counselors who could take over her role with equal passion and dedication. Thus, the chapter welcomes Dr. Kristin Spencer and Chelsea Barnett as our new counselors! Dr. Spencer is a mathematics course mentor for the Teachers College at WGU. Chelsea Barnett is a student mentor in elementary education and special education.

As a special note to all WGU alumni in education: You are eligible to apply for membership in Kappa Delta Pi through the Alpha Epsilon Sigma chapter at WGU. We will have another membership drive in July, so please feel free to visit our website on the Alumni page for WGU as well as join our Facebook group at http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=155133586181. You will obtain the most up-to-date information there about the honor society and our chapter. If you have any questions regarding membership, you can also e-mail me at wgukdppresident@gmail.com, or Membership Chair Brandi Davison at wgukdpmembershipchair@gmail.com.

We are looking forward to an amazing year here at WGU! It is the centennial year for Kappa Delta Pi—so, let’s bring it in with a bang!
Teacher Success Tips for Job Fairs

Savoir Faire at the Job Fair

While the teacher hiring season is still a few months away, teacher job fairs are popping up all over the country. This is a great time to network with school districts and human resources personnel and make the connections you will need when teacher positions become available in the late spring/early summer.

Before attending any job fair, here are a few recommendations to consider:

1. Look over the event registration site to see if advance registration is required and if there is a registration fee. Also, most job fairs will list the schools attending the event on the registration site. Take note of the list before you pay the registration fee to see if the attending schools are of interest to you.

2. Prioritize the schools you most want to speak with so you can make good use of your time when you arrive.

3. Dress professionally and have multiple copies of your resume to hand out.

4. Memorize a 30-second “elevator” speech to introduce yourself to potential employers.

5. Be prepared for an pre-interview with the recruiter on the spot. The recruiter may use this opportunity to determine if you should be contacted for a full interview.

6. Bring your professional portfolio if you already have experience teaching to display your work history and expertise.

7. Prepare a list of customized questions for each school that shows you did your homework in gathering background research on their district. Avoid asking about salary at a teacher job fair.

8. Ask for each recruiter’s business card or contact information. This allows you to follow up directly with the recruiter at a later date.

Understandably, you will encounter many qualified teacher candidates at these job fairs—just like you! The more educated you are about the schools attending the fair, the greater edge you have over your potential competition. You might want to research a school’s mission statement or their school improvement plan so you can discuss how you might help them reach their publicized organizational goals. You may want to look at the school’s most recent grade, as issued by the state. In what areas did that school excel? What areas do they need to work on and how might you help them achieve greater success? These are just some examples of how a little background research may provide the insights and confidence you need when you meet with a recruiter.

Below is a list of some of the many nationwide job fairs posted for the upcoming winter/spring seasons. Click on the link provided to obtain more information or to visit the registration site. You should also check with the local school districts in your area to see if they are holding smaller career fairs within your county.

For additional ideas on how to succeed at a teacher job fair, please view the following presentation:

http://alumni.wgu.edu/s/1110/images/FileLibrary/e1b443ac-41f4-4b1a-8481-1c95bb0517fa.pdf

Step forward with confidence, and enjoy the job fairs!
Please join us for an upcoming career cafe webinar on teacher recruiting fairs. Additionally, the Alumni & Career Services team has compiled a brief list of teacher fairs.

**February 9**

Teacher Recruiting Fairs

Education job fairs are a great opportunity for new and experienced teachers and administrators to network and interview with schools and hiring managers. Join us for tips and strategies that will help make the most of these networking events.

Time: 12:00 – 1:00 pm EST, 11:00 – 12:00 pm CST, 10:00 – 11:00 am MST, 9:00 – 10:00 am PST

Please RSVP at: [http://alumni.wgu.edu/februarycareercafes](http://alumni.wgu.edu/februarycareercafes)

Scroll through the list and look for an event near you!

**Teacher Recruiting Fairs**

Like many WGU students, I’m an independent learner. I keep studying, even though I’m not in school. Those studies led me to write a historical novel, which came out in January 2011 from Rosa Mira Books. The Glass Harmonica: A Sensualist’s Tale is set in the early 1800s, and it’s about America’s first pop star. I loved writing this book, and the challenge of finding 20 hours a week to write outside of my full-time job made me feel even more connected to my students.

I’ve also written a scholarly work, Dream a Little: Land and Social Justice in Modern America. I taught for seven years at the University of Utah and then left to pursue other dreams: I toured the world with my husband for a year, wrote, helped start a Utah magazine, and, in general, made sure that I was never settling for someone else’s life. Pick your own goals, and make them happen – that’s the WGU way.

---

**DOROTHEE KOCKS**

Where are you from?
I’ve lived many places – Germany, Chicago, Maine, Rhode Island, to name a few – and now consider Salt Lake City my home.

When did you join WGU?
February 2010.

What do you enjoy about WGU?
The students inspire me. They are living their dream, making it happen, week by week. And I get to help. It’s a great job.

What are your leisure activities?
I ski and hike, I walk my dog, I read a lot. And I play a bright shiny red accordion.

Favorite vacation spot:
I love to travel, so I can’t pick just one spot. Traveling helps me keep alive the wonder of being alive in this world.

More on you:
I moved west to teach at the University of Utah in the history department, but ironically, history was the only class I’ve ever failed (in high school). I understand when students say history can be boring. Good teachers can make us love any subject, though, and I was lucky to find fantastic professors at Brown University, where I did my PhD in American Studies.

---

**JOY MCIRVIN**

Where are you from?
I live in Colville, Washington.

When did you start at WGU?
September 1, 2009.

Your program of study:
Bachelor of Arts, Special Education.

Your favorite aspect of being a WGU student:
WGU has been a perfect fit. It has allowed me to take time for my family and job when needed and fit college in where I can. I was able to maintain my job as a paraprofessional, a business with my husband, keep up with two very active teenagers, and maintain a household—all while pursuing my degree. Being able to choose when I worked on my studies made a huge difference in the timeline for finishing my degree program. The flexibility that WGU offers their students is by far my favorite aspect.

What are your plans after you finish your degree?
IncomplimenttomyeducationthroughWGU and my experience as a paraprofessional in the classroom, I have been offered a middle school (5-8) special education teaching position pending the completion of my teaching certificate. I should be able to start my teaching position immediately following graduation. The flexibility of WGU allowed me to work at an accelerated pace and achieve a tremendous goal.

Outside of work and WGU, what do you like to do?
My love of faith, family and friends is my passion. I love to spend time doing absolutely anything or nothing at all with my husband Dave, our two daughters Haley and Katie, and extended family. Scrapbooking family memories, reading anything I can get my hands on, playing and coaching softball, and being a 4-H leader in our local chapter are some of the hobbies I enjoy most.

---
STUDENT PROFILE: MONIQUE ADAMS

Where are you from?
I am from Indianapolis, Indiana.

When did you start at WGU?
December 1, 2010.

Your program of study:
Bachelor of Science, Accounting.

Your favorite aspect of being a WGU student:
The flexibility to move through the degree program at my own pace, the wonderful customer service of the staff, and my mentor! My mentor has been very knowledgeable and responds to my requests promptly.

What are your plans after you finish your degree?
Once I finish my bachelor’s degree in Accounting with WGU, I will go on to receive my master’s in Accounting, and I will also continue my education with WGU, and receive my master’s in business administration.

Outside of work and WGU, what do you like to do?
With my busy schedule, I still make time to hang out with family and friends. I like to go to the movies, watch television, play poker, do yoga and work out. I like to have a healthy balance between my schoolwork and my social life, which helps to keep my stress levels down.

STUDENT PROFILE: DAVID M. CROSBY

Where are you from?
Originally, I’m from Southern California, and I spent some time in Seattle, Washington, before moving to San Jose, California.

When did you start at WGU?
December 2009.

Your program of study:
MBA, IT Management.

Your favorite aspect of being a WGU student:
An unwavering commitment for providing extensive and high-quality education, by all the talented and professional people at WGU, is a reflection of their mission. This is a testament to the college’s culture of enhancing the ability of students to reach their educational goals and professional accomplishments. There is also a strong sense of community between the students, mentors and administration.

What are your plans after you finish your degree?
WGU has been my partner for over a year while I obtain my MBA by March 2011. My goal is to leverage all the tools and education WGU has provided and continue my executive career in business. The friendships of so many at WGU will be a valuable asset in finding my next rewarding and challenging position.

Outside of work and WGU, what do you like to do?
Traveling with my family is one of my passions, discovering new sights and cultures. I also enjoy playing golf, repertory theatre, music and cooking. Sailing is another enjoyment for which I hope to return to this year.

More on you:

MENTOR PROFILE: SHEILA PITTS

Where are you from?
I did the most part of my growing up in Spotsylvania, Virginia.

When did you join WGU?
I joined WGU only six months ago.

What do you enjoy about WGU?
I enjoy (nay) LOVE! the student-centered focus that WGU has and which has not faltered since the first day I started at WGU! As a mentor and a former college student, this student-centered focus is an amazing encouragement to me as I serve my students and meet their needs. It keeps my directive for service clear and the students can absolutely tell the difference. WGU can fit just about anyone from all walks of life that are determined to get their higher education.

What are your leisure activities?
I enjoy traveling, dreaming and learning new things. My sister claims my love for learning is the most expensive hobby I enjoy. For me, learning is not a hobby, but a progression of self! Oooh, how profound.

Favorite vacation spot:
Anywhere that I can enjoy quality time with my husband and children doing a variety of family activities and seeing new things.

More on you:
In simple terms and the best way to sum up me: I am an advocate. Whether I am advocating for students or others, I enjoy being a supporter. I have spent the better part of my career as a counselor for professionals and crime victims, and now for students.

WGU’s Online Degree in Health Informatics Earns Key Accreditation

WGU’s Bachelor of Science, Health Informatics degree has received accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The accreditation, which is granted after extensive reviews based on industry-developed standards, helps increase certification eligibility and job marketability for graduates of WGU’s Health Informatics program.

An independent accrediting organization, CAHIIM was created to evaluate the quality and integrity of health informatics and health information management programs. The accreditation process includes a voluntary peer review, an onsite visit, and a review of degree requirements that evaluate the course of study using CAHIIM standards. It also incorporates ongoing improvement reports and periodic reviews to assess program performance over time. Program accreditation by CAHIIM is necessary to be eligible for the Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA) certification exam, a highly respected credential in the healthcare industry.

“Earning CAHIIM accreditation for our Health Informatics bachelor’s degree program helps ensure that our graduates are learning the things they need to know to be successful in the health informatics field,” said WGU Vice President of Marketing and Enrollment Patrick Partridge. “Our B.S. in Health Informatics, which is all online and very affordable at less than $5,800 per year, is ideal for healthcare or IT professionals who wish to move into this high-demand career field.”

For more information about WGU’s online bachelor’s degree in Health Informatics, go to www.wgu.edu/healthinformatics.

STUDENT PROFILE:
MARY STOLZ

Where are you from?
I live in Ohio right now, but have lived in many places throughout the United States.

When did you start at WGU?
I started on November 1, 2010.

Your program of study:
Master of Science, Nursing - Education.

Your favorite aspect of being a WGU student:
I love the flexibility it gives me to take care of substantial family commitments while completing my degree. I don’t have to choose to be a student or a mom, I can do both. I also love competency-based education. As a home-school teacher, this fits very well with my own education philosophy.

What are your plans after you finish your degree?
My husband and I will eventually open our own non-profit agency supporting individuals with developmental disabilities to live in the community. That may be a few years off and, until then, I will continue to work in the developmental disabilities field.

Outside of work and WGU, what do you like to do?
I am first and foremost a mom. My interests include reading, adoption, religion and travel.

More on you:
I am a mom to nine children right now. My husband and I have five biological kids, and four (so far) that we have adopted. We have three boys with Down syndrome, two of whom were adopted. We are adopting two more children with Down syndrome this year, hopefully late summer/early fall. Our kids range in age from 27 to 10, and our new boys will be age 6 and 7 by the time they come home. I have one daughter who is a student with WGU, starting the same time I did, for her education degree. We like to have family competitions for who can complete a task, without revisions needed, first! My husband recently completed his marketing degree with WGU, and after I have completed my MSN-Education, he will begin his masters degree, probably in healthcare management, with WGU.

We keep a blog of our adoption and family life: www.moretulipsfromholland.blogspot.com (And we have WGU as an ad on our blog!)
STUDENT PROFILE:
TREVA SINGLETON
Treva Singleton finished her received her Bachelor of Science, Nursing degree in December 2010.
She is the first and only person in her family to receive a bachelor’s degree.

Where are you from?
I’m originally from southern California.

Your program of study:
Master of Science, Nursing - Education.

Your favorite aspect of being a WGU student:
I love the convenience of it being completely online. I currently work in an intensive care unit (ICU) on nights and have four children, so attending a traditional university does not work for me.

What are your plans after you finish your degree?
I plan to continue on to get my degree as a nurse practitioner.

MENTOR PROFILE:
TAMMY NELSON
Tammy Schossler Nelson calls Columbia, South Carolina her home now. She grew up in a little known town called Oil City, Pennsylvania. After earning her Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing she jumped into the Army and spent the next 20 years circling the globe. Her favorite assignment was Vicenza, Italy where she spent almost five years. Watch out, she still has her Army boots and her trusty boot knife.

Tammy earned her Master’s degree as a Clinical Nurse Specialist with an emphasis in Emergency Medicine at the University of Texas at Houston. Though most of her experience is in emergency medicine, she has also spent several years in quality management. She has worked for the last year in the prelicensure program for nursing as a first term mentor. Tammy says’ “What a challenge! We are trying very hard to mold this fairly new program into a successful, challenging and sought after model.” Regarding her students, Tammy says, “These students of ours, they are incredible. Their energy and their resilience and their momentum make me smile. They are extremely determined to take their place at the bedside and in the healthcare facility providing compassion and skilled nursing care for communities across the country.”

Outside of work and WGU, what do you like to do?
I love spending time with my family most of all. But I also enjoy knitting. I was told a lot of surgeons knit to keep their dexterity sharp. Plus my grandmother knit up to the day she passed away, so I thought I needed to keep that tradition alive!

More on you:
I want to encourage all to pursue your dreams! Sometimes your dreams may seem unattainable, but I truly believe when there is a will, there is always a way!

Tammy lives in Columbia with her two children Elizabeth and Joseph. They are 9 and 11 years old and when Tammy first became a nursing instructor several years ago, she came home to tell her children about her new job. Tammy says “You would not believe their reaction! It was if I had won an academy award! They are so convinced that teachers are to be admired and applauded. That is the first thing they tell people about our family, that their mom is a teacher. I would do it all again to see that reaction!”