



**OHIO CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 26, 2025

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**Ohio Chamber Announces Preferred Online Education Partnership  
with Western Governors University**

*COLUMBUS, OHIO* – The Ohio Chamber of Commerce today announced a new partnership with Western Governors University (WGU), officially naming the institution as its preferred online education provider.

This collaboration reflects the Chamber’s ongoing commitment to expanding workforce readiness and career advancement opportunities for Ohioans across the state.

“We’re excited to partner with WGU to offer Ohioans a high-quality, flexible pathway to career-relevant degrees and credentials,” said Steve Stivers, President & CEO of the Ohio Chamber. “This partnership will support Ohio employers in upskilling their workforce and provide individuals with more tools to succeed in today’s competitive job market.”

A fully accredited online university that is dedicated to making higher education accessible for as many people as possible, WGU has opened higher education pathways for students who previously lacked access due to location or other barriers.

Through its student-centered design and tech-enabled innovation, WGU has served more than 300,000 graduates nationwide.

“Western Governors University’s flexible, self-paced program allowed me to overcome obstacles and change the course of my life,” said WGU alumna Shanell Murphy, who serves as the Director of Safety, Quality and Patient Experience at the Cleveland Clinic’s South Pointe Hospital. “As a first-generation college graduate, and a single mother, I needed a university that fit into my life. This partnership is a win for Ohio that will expand access to higher education and help more Ohioans reach their potential.”

WGU's accessibility, flexibility, and affordability make it an ideal option for working professionals and nontraditional students who want to advance their education while continuing to work on a full- or part-time basis.

"Ohio needs to upskill and cross-skill existing resources and talent to keep up with the demands for an increased workforce. With the announcement that WGU is the Ohio Chamber's preferred online university, we can meet that demand through employers across the state," said Barb Smoot, President and CEO, Women for Economic and Leadership Development. "Because so many Ohioans often have the demands of childcare and eldercare, traditional means to gain new skills aren't often an option. WGU's fully online, accredited, competency-based program dramatically shortens the time to degree completion in a very cost-effective way. As the WGU Advisory Board Chair, I see the value of WGU's innovative approach and have adopted it for my own organization."

Through this partnership, the Ohio Chamber will work alongside WGU to promote educational opportunities for Ohioans, bolster talent development, and meet the evolving needs of businesses across the state.

The Ohio Chamber is the state's leading business advocate and represents thousands of companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

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