
WGU signs partnership with Community Colleges of Appalachia

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Community Colleges of Appalachia Signs Transfer Agreement with WGU

Paves the way for seamless credit transfer and access to scholarships

Liberty, S.C. (August 4, 2025) — Leaders from [Community Colleges of Appalachia](#) (CCA) and [Western Governors University](#) (WGU) have signed a transfer institution agreement that will create opportunities for residents of Appalachia to further their education through WGU's accredited online degree and certificate programs while remaining in their home communities.

With 85 member institutions stretching from Mississippi to New York, CCA is a voluntary association of public community colleges serving the common interests of member colleges and their communities. CCA members in North Carolina include:

- Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
- Blue Ridge Community College
- Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute
- Forsyth Technical Community College
- Haywood Community College
- Isothermal Community College
- Mayland Community College
- McDowell Technical Community College
- Southwestern Community College
- Surry Community College
- Tri-County Community College
- Western Piedmont Community College

According to the [Appalachian Regional Commission](#), the region is growing in population but at 4.3% lower than the national average. The region also faces several challenges related to education and income:

- 27.3% of Appalachians have a bachelor's degree or higher, behind the national average of 35%.
- Median household income in the region is around \$14,000 below the U.S average: \$64,588 vs. \$78,539.

The common goal of the agreement is to provide CCA member-institution graduates and employees with flexible, personalized learning pathways to higher education and professional development through WGU's competency-based online programs. The agreement will also formalize the transfer of applicable credits between CCA members and WGU, so graduates of member schools will likely not need to repeat coursework as they pursue bachelor's degrees through WGU.

Graduates, staff and faculty of CCA member schools will also be able to apply for specially designated [Learn Where You Live Scholarships](#) valued up to \$3,000 each. Tuition is around \$4,000 per six-month term for most WGU bachelor's degree programs, and students can take as many classes as they wish within a term with the consent of their assigned program mentor.

WGU is an accredited, nonprofit online university offering more than 80 bachelor's and master's degrees and certificate programs in business, technology, health care and K-12 education. WGU's asynchronous competency-based programs are designed to fit into busy work and home schedules and create pathways to opportunity.

"This partnership is especially meaningful for our small and rural colleges, where access to affordable, flexible bachelor's degree programs is often out of reach," said Dr. Kevin Boys, executive director of CCA. "WGU's model helps eliminate those barriers and opens doors for both students and employees to continue their education without leaving their communities. We're proud to partner with organizations that share our commitment to expanding opportunity across our 85 member institutions."

"According to the [Community College Research Center](#), about 80% of entering students indicate they wish to obtain a bachelor's degree or higher, but only 15% of cohorts starting in 2016 actually earned a bachelor's within six years," said Dr. Courtney Hills McBeth, WGU's chief academic officer and provost. "They face many barriers such as cost, transfer of college credits, and family and work obligations. This agreement will provide a real option for many community college graduates in Appalachia who wish to pursue a bachelor's or master's degree while remaining in the region."

To learn more about CCA, visit www.ccofapp.org. For more information about WGU, visit www.wgu.edu.

About Community Colleges of Appalachia

CCA is a voluntary association of public community colleges serving the common interests of member colleges and their communities through programs and services responsive to the unique cultural, geographic and economic development challenges facing the region. CCA builds greater awareness among the general public, the higher education community, regional and national funding sources, and others of the vital contributions now being made by the community colleges of Appalachia in responding to the needs of their communities and of the potential for additional resources to expand and enhance these efforts. Learn more at www.ccofapp.org.

About WGU

Western Governors University, the nation's leading nonprofit, online university, is transforming higher education to be more student-centric, affordable, accessible to all, and relevant to the workforce. Established in 1997 by 19 visionary U.S. governors, WGU creates life-changing pathways to opportunity for those underserved by traditional institutions — working adults, historically underrepresented communities and a diverse, growing number of learners looking for a flexible, online model that better suits their life circumstances. WGU's competency-based education model allows students to

demonstrate mastery as they progress through programs at their own pace. Learn more at [wgu.edu](https://www.wgu.edu). Follow WGU on [LinkedIn](#).