

## COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT

### Western Governors University and Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners

Western Governors University (WGU) and the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners (HCBocC) enter into this Collaborative Agreement (Agreement) as of the date of the last signature below. This Agreement outlines the collaboration that will occur between WGU and HCBocC to encourage HCBocC employees to pursue educational opportunities to advance their personal goals and the work of HCBocC.

Through this collaborative effort, WGU will provide HCBocC employees flexible, personalized learning pathways to higher education (bachelor's and master's degrees, and credentials) through WGU's innovative online university and applicable WGU affiliates. Together we seek to provide a streamlined approach and expand access to higher education. WGU is pleased to provide continuing education options to HCBocC employees and staff in support of employee development goals.

WGU is a private, non-profit institution offering bachelor's and master's degrees in business, information technology, K-12 teacher education, and health professions, including nursing. The competency-based programs measure learning rather than time, allowing students to progress through courses as soon as they can demonstrate mastery of the material. WGU's online programs are mentor-supported and designed to fit into busy work and home schedules, assisting in the goal to upskill employees.

HCBocC is a political subdivision of the state of Ohio. HCBocC currently has approximately ~~4,300~~ 4,300 employees located in Hamilton County, Ohio. HCBocC strives to support the upskilling of their employees by providing financial assistance for job-related courses and training.

#### Purpose

- This Agreement formally recognizes that HCBocC will collaborate with WGU in order to provide greater educational opportunities to its employees.
- Under the terms and conditions of this Agreement, participating employees who enroll in WGU will have access to apply for a scholarship opportunity reserved for WGU's collaborative partners.

#### WGU Collaborative Agreement Scholarship

Employees from HCBocC are eligible to apply for the WGU Collaborative Agreement Scholarship in the amount of \$2,500, which is disbursed in increments of \$625 per semester for up to 4 terms based on satisfactory academic performance.

#### Obligations of WGU

- WGU is solely responsible for the funding and award decisions for the Collaborative Agreement Scholarship.

- While we expect that most of the HCBocC employees will be prepared for WGU's rigorous programs, WGU retains sole discretion in admission decisions.
- WGU will provide webinar training, print, and digital materials to employees to ensure understanding of the opportunity of WGU at the request of HCBocC.

### **Obligations of HCBocC**

- HCBocC agrees to highlight WGU as an education benefit through their standard internal communication channels (such as employee newsletters) at least once a quarter and to establish a web link from the HCBocC internal web page to WGU's partner welcome page.
- If HCBocC offers other tuition assistance programs, WGU degree programs will be added to the list of programs eligible for the highest level of assistance.
- WGU will be invited by HCBocC to participate in any local education/employee education benefit fairs, employee and/or leader information seminars, and "lunch and learn" presentations that the HCBocC may offer.

### **Joint Obligations**

- WGU and the HCBocC will collaborate on an announcement of the signing of this Agreement with a mutually agreeable press release. A signing event may also occur in conjunction with the announcement if mutually agreed between the parties.
- WGU will collaborate with HCBocC in developing methods of communication to share about WGU opportunities including the Collaborative Agreement Scholarship.
- The parties agree to treat all education records created, disclosed, or maintained under this Agreement in accordance with the requirements of the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Each party assures that neither will discriminate against any individual based on race, religion, creed, color, gender, age, disability, veteran status, national origin, or other protected status.
- Each party reserves the right to control the use of its name and identifying marks in every respect including usage of its logos and trademarks, and each agrees to obtain prior express written permission from the other before such usage.
- The parties agree to maintain open communication to provide support and engagement for this Agreement.

This Agreement serves as the basis of the collaboration between HCBocC and WGU and may be modified by mutual written consent or terminated by either party upon 30 days prior written notice to the other party. In the unlikely event the Agreement is terminated, WGU agrees that HCBocC employees then receiving any educational benefit described in this Agreement will receive the full value of that benefit towards their studies at WGU as long as they remain in good academic standing at WGU.

Our common goal for this Agreement between WGU and HCBocC is to support individuals to upskill and further their careers. The parties will revisit this Agreement every 5 years, or on such

other timeframe as determined by the parties, to ensure it is still meeting the needs of both WGU and HCBocC.

**WGU**

*Alison Bell* Nov 7, 2022  
Alison Bell (Nov 7, 2022 13:17 EST)

Name: Alison Bell Date  
Title: Regional Vice President

**Contact information – WGU**

Strategic Partnership Manager

**HCBocC**

*Jeff Aluotto* Nov 29, 2022  
Jeff Aluotto (Nov 29, 2022 11:56 EST)

Name: Jeffrey Aluotto Date  
Title: County Administrator

**Contact Information – HCBocC**

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APPROVED AS TO FORM  
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