

## South Dakota Department of Labor

700 Governors Drive

Pierre, SD 57501

[www.sdjobs.org](http://www.sdjobs.org)

**For Immediate Release:** January 4, 2008

**Media Contact:** Dawn Dovre, 605.773.3094

### **Labor Department announces local recipients of Western Governors University teaching scholarships**

**PIERRE, S.D.** – The South Dakota Department of Labor announces Marie Skovlund of Huron, Carmen Jensen of Wessington, CJ (Cheryl) Clem of Belle Fourche, Dacia Yalowizer of Meadow and Shellee Kuper of Spearfish have been awarded \$7,500 scholarships through Western Governors University (WGU).

Recipients must reside in rural areas and want to become licensed teachers in math or science, or be existing teachers who live in rural areas and want to earn a master's degree online in math or science education. Local South Dakota Career Centers worked with rural school districts to identify and prepare potential rural teacher candidates.

“These scholarships are unique because they allow the student to access higher education through online competency-based programs,” said Labor Secretary Pam Roberts. “This especially helps in rural areas where school districts have trouble recruiting math and science teachers, and it is difficult for rural residents to travel long distances to a traditional campus.”

Half of the scholarship for each of these recipients is funded through the SDDOL's workforce training program which offers education and job training designed to increase employment skills for adults and youth. These funds will cover tuition, fees and books. The other half of these scholarships is part of a U.S. Department of Labor grant.

WGU is working to increase the national pool of highly qualified rural teachers, particularly with the nationwide shortage of math and science teachers. The WGU online Teachers College is only four-years-old, but already has more than 4,600 students. This includes 1,050 students in math and science teacher education, making WGU one of the largest providers of math and science teacher education in the nation.

More information is available at [www.wgu.edu/ruraleducators](http://www.wgu.edu/ruraleducators). To learn more about workforce training and opportunities, visit [www.sdjobs.org](http://www.sdjobs.org).

###

Cutline (Skovlund): Huron Career Center Manager Robin Wallum (right) and Employment Representative Judy Eden (left) assisted Marie Skovlund with the WGU scholarship application process.

Cutline (Jensen): Through contacts between the Huron Career Center and the Wolsey-Wessington School District, Carmen Jensen learned about the WGU scholarship. Pictured left to right are: Superintendent James Cutshaw, Principal Carol Rowen, Jensen, and Huron Career Center Manager Robin Wallum.

Cutline (Clem): Northern Hills Career Center Manager Lisa Johnson (right) assisted CJ (Cheryl) Clem with the WGU scholarship application process.

Cutline (Kuper): Rapid City Career Center Manager Penny Kutz (left) assisted Shellee Kuper with the WGU scholarship application process.