newsworthy trends

New Year's Resolutions Worth Keeping

(NAPS)—Once again, it's that time of year when we always pledge, "out with the old, in with the new." But if you're like most people, you've found it difficult to maintain the energy and optimism the New Year brings once the holidays are over. A recent online poll tallying the ten most popular New Year's resolutions included perennials like losing weight, quitting smoking, becoming more organized, sticking to a budget, saving money, and finding a better job. The common thread in all of them is resolving to take more control over life. Absent from the list was one of the best means of accomplishing the challenging task of taking control—that is, a resolution to continue one's education, opening new doors to personal and professional fulfillment.

Of course, many people think that it is too expensive, too inconvenient, or too late to return to school. But, with today's new roster of online education opportunities, taking control of your future may be as simple as logging on to your computer from the comfort of home.

University of Phoenix Online is at the forefront of the trend in online learning, and offers a variety of degree specializations at every level from Associates to Ph.D. In online degree programs like those offered by the University of Phoenix Online, students manage coursework the way they manage meetings at work—by scheduling time between other obligations and events on their calendars. This is how Hedy Hightower-Reeves, a manufacturing planner for Clorox, earned her degree. "As a working mother, I was able to use my time wisely. I could use the day and evening for my job and my family; then, when the kids went to bed, I went online."

Like any resolution, deciding to

Earning a college degree from an online university is a resolution that gets high marks.

make it is the easy part, while getting started is a bit harder. Here are some things to look for to make sure your on-line education resolution can work for you:

• Look for accredited programs.

• Seek classes that are conducted via proven technologies, such as e-mail and bulletin boards.

• Make sure instructors have received training in facilitating a productive online classroom.

• Make certain technical support is available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, in case of glitches.

• Look for a university that will assign you a personal advisor(s) who will be there to answer questions.

• As a rule, you should be able to earn your degree in 2 or 3 years, attending classes on a part-time basis.

• Look for universities that have large enrollments, but small numbers of students in each class!

• When choosing an online university, request information about the success and happiness of students and alumni. If you don't know a graduate of the university, ask the university to provide some names of graduates you can contact.

For more information on the University of Phoenix Online and its programs, visit *http://online. uophx.edu/benefit*, or call 1-800-796-3791.