EDUCAUSE Honors 2001 Award Recipients

T he EDUCAUSE awards program is an important opportunity to recognize outstanding contributions in the use of information technology in higher education. The awards bring peer endorsement and public visibility to professional achievement in many areas, covering both individual and institutional achievement.

J. Gary Augustson

For 2001, the award for Excellence in Leadership was given to J. Gary Augustson, vice provost for information technology at The Pennsylvania State University. This lifetime award honors extraordinary influence, statesmanship, and effectiveness on both individual campuses and within the higher education community.

Augustson is widely respected for his early and skilled leadership of higher education's national networking efforts and for his key role in shaping the higher education position on national IT policy issues. He was instrumental in the start of Internet2, the University Corporation for Advanced Internet Development (UCAID), the Pennsylvania Research and Economic Partnership Network (PREP net), and the Coalition for Networked Information (CNI). For more than 20 years, he has kept Penn State positioned as a leader in applying information technology to institutional challenges, with a focus on facilitating learning communities and supporting top-quality research.

The EDUCAUSE Award for Leadership in Information Technology was awarded to Carl F. Berger, director of advanced academic technologies and of the Collaboratory for Advanced Research and Academic Technologies (CARAT) at the University of Michi-gan, Ann Arbor, and to Carl W. Jacobson, director of management information systems at the University of Delaware.

Bentley College received the award for Excellence in Campus Networking, which honors comprehensive, strategic, and enterprise-wide use of networked technologies to empower faculty, students, and administrators. Worcester Polytechnic Institute received an honorable mention designation in this year's network award competition.

The EDUCAUSE Award for Systemic Progress in Teaching and Learning recognizes replicable, scalable, and sustainable enterprise-wide programs and practices that have used technology to transform teaching and learning in institutions of higher education. For 2001, two institutions received this award. George Mason University was honored for its Technology Across the Curriculum (TAC) program. The second award in this category was given to the State University of New York (SUNY) for its system-wide SUNY Learning Network.

The EDUCAUSE Award for Exemplary Practices in Information Technology Solutions honors campus projects that have addressed common higher education challenges with creativity, efficiency, and effectiveness. The 2001 award was given for the Interactive University Project at the University of California, Berkeley, and for Student Technology Services at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.

The *EDUCAUSE Quarterly* Contribution of the Year Award went to coauthors Anne Scrivener Agee and Dee Ann Holisky for their article "Technology Across the Curriculum." (See the sidebar.)

For 2002, the awards for campus networking and for information technology solutions have been refocused, and a new award has been added for excellence in administrative information systems. Descriptions of the awards and more information about past winners are available at <http://www.educause.edu/awards/>.

EQ Contribution of the Year

One article from this journal is honored each year with the *EDUCAUSE Quarterly* Contribution of the Year Award. The award is designed to recognize the outstanding peer-reviewed article from the previous year's issues of *EQ* (not the calendar year, since the award is presented during the annual conference in the fall of each year). The award also encourages other information technology professionals to contribute their experience and knowledge through submitted articles.

For 2001, the award was given to Anne Scrivener Agee, executive director of instructional technology, and Dee Ann Holisky, associate dean for academic programs in the College of Arts and Sciences, at George Mason University for their article, "Technology Across the Curriculum," which appeared in Vol. 23, No. 4. The article chronicles the development of the TAC program to foster and certify IT fluency throughout all GMU curricula. With its practical focus on service to teaching and learning (including research and scholarship) and clear description of transformative teaching processes, effective campus-wide collaborations, and assessment guidance, the article presents a valuable overview of an eminently useful program.

EDUCAUSE Pursues Research Agenda

For the past two years, EDUCAUSE has been evaluating potential strategies for implementing a research program to capture and share the data and information members need to effectively plan for, manage, and use information technologies on their campuses. Several research initiatives have been implemented or are being planned to further such an agenda.

Current Issues Survey

In 2000, EDUCAUSE launched the first annual Current Issues Survey to capture information from members about current and emerging campus IT-related issues. The survey was repeated early in 2001. As in the previous year, results of the survey were summarized and shared through an article in *EDU-CAUSE Quarterly* as well as in a Web-based report <http://www.educause.edu/issues/issues.html>. The survey was developed and continues to be updated through input from the EDUCAUSE Current Issues Committee.

Member Core Data Survey and Service

EDUCAUSE recently established a Research Task Force to advise the association about the potential development of a member-based research strategy to focus on collection of "core" campus data for the purpose of peer comparisons and information sharing, possibly through a Web-based database service. Such a research initiative would not duplicate, but would cooperate with, existing IT-related data collection efforts and explore opportunities to partner with other associations in such core-data collection efforts. A key activity on the agenda of the newly formed task force will be determining what constitutes core data and how such data could be most effectively captured.

EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research (ECAR)

In 2001, ECAR was created to respond to EDUCAUSE members' increasing requests for research and analysis to help campus leaders inform and reinforce their IT-related decisions. Through a network of scholars, analysts, researchers, and practitioners, ECAR collects and analyzes data about the use and management of IT in higher education. ECAR subscribers receive products that range from comprehensive research reports to frequent research bulletins on topics of immediate interest.

The first bulletin, "The Next-Generation Infrastructure," proposes a new model for infrastructure needed to glue current and future IT applications together. This next generation of middleware puts the user at the center of a framework that expands to include the Web, authentication, authorization, personalization, services, and content.

The second research bulletin, "Organizational Models for Delivering Distance Learning," presents the models adopted by six university systems or multi-campus universities to deliver distance education. The bulletin authors describe each institution's approach to governance, services, and funding, followed by a series of policy questions associated with distance education and online courses.

The first two research studies — one on wireless communications and another on application service providers (ASPs) and IT outsourcing — are under way.

For information about ECAR or becoming a subscriber to ECAR publications, see <http://www.educause.edu/ecar>.

EDUCAUSE Demonstrates Institutional Digital Signatures

EDUCAUSE, along with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Federal Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) Steering Committee, announced the successful submission of electronic grant forms signed with institutional digital signatures to the NIH. The milestone was celebrated at a proof-of-concept demonstration for media representatives on January 31st at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

The demonstration contrasted the pile of paper formerly required for a grant application to NIH with a real-time transmittal of an electronic form carrying two digital signatures identifying the researcher and the institutional official. Digital signatures not only identified the signers definitively, they also ensured that the same form had been signed by both parties and that the form had not been changed during transmission.

Participants included the University of Alabama–Birmingham, the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and Dartmouth College. Other institutions in the project are the University of California Office of the President, the University of Texas–Houston Health Science Center, and Georgetown University.

To support this new extension of digital signature technology, EDUCAUSE used a PKI bridge — the Higher Education Bridge — that allows colleges and universities to recognize and trust each other's digital signatures. Participating institutions linked their trust infrastructures to the Higher Education Bridge Certification Authority (HEBCA). Then, working with the Federal PKI Steering Committee, EDUCAUSE linked the Higher Education Bridge to the Federal Bridge, letting administrators at NIH validate the digital signatures sent by the three universities.

Establishing the Higher Education Bridge and linking it to the Federal Bridge will have an enormous impact on improving the efficiency and reliability of electronic transactions among government agencies and academic institutions. As Peter Alterman, Director of Operations for the Office of Extramural Research at NIH, explained, "The technology supports digital signing of almost any kind of electronic document or file for trusted, secure communications between any campus and any federal agency."

Institutions may use this approach to expand all sorts of electronic transactions, such as financial statements, student loan agreements, and enrollment services for distance learning. Moving paper processes to electronic media saves money and reduces processing time. Adding trustworthy electronic interactions to this trend makes even more innovation possible.

Major innovations in this project were
- creating a network of mutually trusted and interoperating PKI bridges,
- interconnecting differing directory systems, and,
- most importantly, the government's relying on electronic credentials issued by academic institutions to their faculty and staffs.

As Keren Cummins, Digital Signature Trust Vice President for Government Services, explained, "It's rewarding to see that the Federal Government's investments in the Federal Bridge CA and in its ACES PKI infrastructure are beginning to have such practical impacts."

Putting this project in context for higher education, EDUCAUSE Vice President Mark Luker said,

> The higher education community is a complex collection of institutions that need trusted communications among campuses and federal agencies. Building a Higher Education Bridge Certification Authority and linking it with its federal counterpart allows campuses to accomplish this using the same digital signatures they issue for their own business needs. Until trusted electronic communication is achieved, institutions and agencies must operate overlapping systems of electronics and paper, and must incur the cost of unnecessary operations, wasted time, potential liabilities, and unrealized educational opportunities.

Luker's article "A 'Bridge' for Trusted Electronic Communications in Higher Education and the Federal Government" appears in the January/February 2002 issue of *EDUCAUSE Review* and can be accessed online at <http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/erm.html>.

NLII Selects Fellows for 2002

The National Learning Infrastructure Initiative (NLII) has selected Colleen Carmean and Jeremy Haefner as Fellows for 2002. Carmean is director of consulting services for information technology at Arizona State University West, and faculty associate in integrative studies. Haefner is a faculty member, senior faculty associate for information technology, senior faculty associate for teaching and learning, and director of the Teaching and Learning Center at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. Both NLII Fellows are from relatively small, young, and innovative state universities that are trying new approaches to meet their students' needs. Carmean and Haefner started their terms in January 2002. For more information about NLII and the Fellowship Program, visit <http://www.educause.edu/nlii/>.