Major Program News

The summer months of this year have precipitated several noteworthy developments for the three EDUCAUSE major initiatives, including an important new partnership for the National Learning Infrastructure Initiative (NLII), a timely white paper on broadband from Net@EDU, and a study on IT alignment from the EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research (ECAR).

In June, the NLII launched a collaboration with the New Media Consortium (NMC), which brings together NMC's expertise in identifying potentially valuable emerging technologies with the NLII's experience in aligning technology use with learning principles and practices. The work of the two organizations will center on the NMC's Horizon Project, which seeks to identify and describe emerging technologies likely to have a major impact on teaching, learning, and creative expression within higher education.

The NLII has created the Horizon Project Virtual Community of Practice to work in parallel with the Horizon Project's advisory board. This group is charged with assessing the six technologies listed in the project's NMC 2004 Horizon Report. In addition, it is slated to build on themes identified by the advisory board for the 2005 Horizon Report as well as resources identified by the community.

On other fronts, the NLII released its 2004 Annual Review, "New Learning Ecosystems," summarizing the results of the organization's activities in the past year. In that time, the NLII focused on several leading-edge strategic issues involving learners, learning principles and practices, and learning technologies, which ranged from learning space design to new learners to games and simulations.

In the networking arena, Net@EDU's Broadband Policy Group this summer released "Broadband America—An Unrealized Vision," a white paper calling for a revitalized vision and renewed efforts to bring about a national broadband network that fully supports the needs of the academic community and its educational mission.

The paper identifies three guiding principles for broadband deployment—affordable broadband access, a new regulatory structure, and federal support for research—and outlines major objectives and policy goals that flow from them. The Broadband Policy Group is working in tandem with the EDUCAUSE policy team to encourage the changes to federal regulatory policy required to see these goals accomplished.

In other networking news, the Joint Committee of the Higher Education and Entertainment Communities (in which EDUCAUSE is a participant) submitted a report to the House Judiciary Committee on the substantial progress made during the past academic year to address misuse of computer networks, copyright infringement, and other challenges associated with illegal file sharing on college campuses. The report covers developments in legitimate online services, educational initiatives, enforcement, and technology.

On the research front, ECAR released *Information Technology Alignment in Higher Education*, a study that analyzes how higher education IT leaders align their organizational plans, investments, projects, and actions with the priorities of their universities and colleges as a whole, while remaining aligned with the goals of the individual schools and departments within the institutions.

In addition, ECAR has introduced a publication series called Roadmaps, which synthesizes important IT issues and provides recommendations for action in higher education. These brief publications draw on ECAR research studies and case studies and are available to the public.

Joining ECAR as a senior fellow is Donald Z. Spicer, CIO and associate vice chancellor for Information Technology for the 13-institution University System of Maryland. As a senior fellow, Spicer is advising on networking and integrated communications services and participating in a team studying the relationship between process innovation and IT investment. He is also the principal investigator of an ECAR research study to be released in 2005. Spicer is maintaining his position at the University System of Maryland.

Learn more about the NLII at <http://www.educause.edu/nlii/>, Net@EDU at <www.educause.edu/netatedu/>, and ECAR at <http://www.educause.edu/ecar>.

New Web Site

EDUCAUSE has launched a redesigned Web site, with significantly improved functionality and access to resources. The new site, planned with help from association members, offers such new features as improved navigation and site searching, a consolidated online resource center, personalization options that enable users to save favorite searches and receive e-mail alerts when content of interest is added, and a member directory enhanced with a peer directory element. Visit the new site and offer us your feedback at <http://www.educause.edu>.

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