



Included below is a press release regarding Mary Holmes, Ferris State University E-learning administrator. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Holmes Receives 2010 Blackboard Catalyst Award for Community Collaboration

BIG RAPIDS – Hoping to collaborate with other universities across the nation and to improve student user's Blackboard experience, Ferris State University's Dr. Mary Holmes has been awarded the 2010 Blackboard Catalyst Award for Community Collaboration.

Holmes, Ferris' E-learning administrator, meets weekly via telephone with individuals from other colleges and universities to discuss strategies and to generate ideas for creating a better Blackboard experience for the users at each member's home college; Holmes was nominated by the other members of this workgroup for the award.

“We chose to nominate Dr. Holmes based on her continued leadership of the CE/Vista Workgroup, a collection of North American Higher Education institutions representing more than 350,000 students. Dr. Holmes runs these weekly meetings in an inclusive, collaborative fashion that invites the participation from each and every user,” Blackboard Senior Solutions Engineer Matt Davis said.

“Mary is able to deftly expose issues that require participants to take actions; action that results in a better environment for faculty to teach in and students to learn in,” Davis said. “Maintaining a highly complex platform like Blackboard Vista is a mission critical task for many institutions.

“The learning that occurs during the phone conferences help institutions effectively manage their implementations. It is a shining example of how collaboration between institutions benefit all involved, and we are grateful for Mary's leadership,” Davis concluded.

Holmes explained that being a part of this workgroup gave her many useful ideas and solutions for the advancement of FerrisConnect, a full-featured e-learning platform and course management system run through Blackboard Vista; Ferris students, staff and faculty use FerrisConnect to perform a wide variety of educational tasks.

Holmes will accept the award at the annual Blackboard conference, BbWorld 2010, in Orlando, Fla., at The Blackboard Client Awards Luncheon on July 15.

Blackboard, a software company, works with more than 5,000 institutions and millions of users to increase the impact of education by transforming the experience of education. They achieve this goal through the development and licensure of e-learning products and software applications that are used to deliver learning content, engage learners and measure their performance.

- 30 -

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