

## **Blackboard Receives 2017 WCET Outstanding Work (WOW) Award Recognizing The Company's Innovative Accessibility Solution**

**Blackboard recognized as outstanding innovator in higher education by WCET**

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Blackboard Inc., a leading education technology company for teaching, learning and student engagement, has won a 2017 WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) Outstanding Work (WOW) award for its revolutionary accessibility solution, Blackboard Ally, which makes digital course content more accessible for all learners.

Since 2004, WCET has presented the WOW award to colleges, universities, and organizations that implement exceptionally creative, technology-based solutions to contemporary challenges in higher education. The WOW award helps WCET meet its mission of promoting innovative and effective practice by providing exemplary programs as models for the higher education community to adapt for their own students and faculty. WOW award recipients have all implemented solutions in areas shown to have impact on student success.

# **Blackboard®**

Blackboard Ally integrates with an institution's existing learning management system (LMS) and automatically runs course materials through an accessibility checklist that looks for common accessibility issues. The solution generates a range of more accessible alternatives for the instructor's original content including Semantic HTML, audio, ePub, and electronic Braille. It provides educators with guidance for improving the accessibility of their course materials, while also supplying comprehensive reporting on the current state of content accessibility at both the course and institutional level.

The solution is currently available in the latest release of Blackboard Learn with the Original experience, Moodlerooms and Canvas. It will be made available for Moodle 3.2 in October 2017, as well as additional platforms in the future.

"Each and every year, the WOW Awards committee has a challenging task to review outstanding proposals from across the country to select our final award recipients," said Kara Monroe, Vice President for Academic Innovation and Support at Ivy Tech Community College, and chair of the WOW Awards committee. "This year's four award recipients represent the entire 2017 class of proposals as an outstanding reflection of the innovation, quality, leadership and vision needed to help students, faculty, and institutions succeed in higher education today."

The WOW awardees will be recognized by WCET's national community of higher education innovators during the WCET 29th Annual Meeting in Denver, CO, October 25-27th, 2017.

"We're honored to be the first educational technology company to receive a WOW award in the history of the program," said Phill Miller, Vice President of Teaching and Learning at Blackboard. "Blackboard is committed to partnering with institutions worldwide to increase awareness of course content accessibility and to provide support for teaching students of all learning styles and abilities."

For more information about Blackboard Ally, visit <https://www.blackboard.com/accessibility/blackboard-ally.aspx>.

**About Blackboard Inc.**

Our mission is to partner with the global education community to enable learner and institutional success, leveraging innovative technologies and services. With an unmatched understanding of the world of the learner, the most comprehensive student-success solutions, and the greatest capacity for innovation, Blackboard is education's partner in change.


### **About WCET**

The WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) is the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of technology-enhanced higher education. WCET is widely recognized as one of the most informative, reliable and forward-thinking organizations regarding the role of technology and innovation in higher education. More information about WCET's institutional membership resources and services can be found on WCET's website - <http://wcet.wiche.edu/>.

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