

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIST OF THE YEAR AWARD 2008 WINNERS

Association for Learning Technology (ALT) Learning Technologist of the Year Award is now in its second year of operation.

The Award is open to individual members of ALT, and to individuals and teams based in ALT member organisations. There is a team and an individual award.

The aim of the Award is to celebrate and reward excellent practice and outstanding achievement in the learning technology field.

The Award was presented at the ALT conference in Leeds on 10 September 2008 by David Cavallo, Chief Learning Architect for OLPC (One Laptop per Child).

THE WINNING AND COMMENDED ENTRANTS

Three team entries and three individual entries were short-listed and invited to make presentations to the judging panel. The awards are as follows:

INDIVIDUAL AWARD

WINNER

Josie Fraser

COMMENDED

Stuart Hepplestone from Sheffield Hallam University

TEAM AWARD

WINNER

The **Learning Technology Group** at Lancaster University

COMMENDED

The **Learning Technology Team** at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
The **Technology Directorate** at Ufi learndirect

OVERVIEW OF THE WINNING AND COMMENDED ENTRIES

WITH COMMENTS FROM THE JUDGING PANEL

INDIVIDUAL AWARD



Josie Fraser

Josie Fraser won the individual award for her wide-ranging, influential, and sustained contribution in the learning technology field across a spectrum of contrasting projects.

JUDGES' COMMENTS

"Josie is responsible for ground-breaking work in the learning technology domain. Examples of her work include:

- research and production, with Will Gardner, on Childnet International's Cyberbullying Guidance for schools, produced under contract with the Department for Children, Families and Schools;
- leading Childnet's Becta funded research on Young People and Social Network Services;

- between 2005 and 2007, running, voluntarily, the Edublog Awards, an annual event to select the best education blogs of the year;

- playing a prominent role from its inception in the JISC Emerge project, the aim of which is to support the creation of a sustainable community of practice (CoP) that will develop and exploit new emergent technologies (e.g. social software, pervasive computing) in educational settings.

Josie demonstrates great enthusiasm and drive, and, through her work, has succeeded in raising the profile of learning technology as a career choice."



Stuart Hepplestone

Stuart Hepplestone was commended in the individual award for leading the development, implementation, and roll-out of an assignment handler and feedback wizard, which are now used on a large scale at Sheffield Hallam University.

JUDGES' COMMENTS

"The panel was very impressed with:

- the thoughtful approach taken by Stuart to his work;
- Stuart's success in meeting institutional needs, in the often underemphasised area of formative feedback;

- the extent to which Stuart's work will lead to tangible improvements in the student experience as well as in reductions in teacher workload;

- Stuart's emphasis on learning and teaching – and his success in strongly engaging many teaching staff across the University in the effective use of technology."

TEAM AWARD



The Lancaster University Learning Technology Group

The **Learning Technology Group** at Lancaster University won the team award for successfully providing an integrated learning technology service that has had a major and beneficial impact for students and staff across the whole of Lancaster University.

Team members are Aditya Vadali, Dan Jackson, Georgia Georgiou, Mark Bryson, Mike Cowie, Rich Ranker, Steve Powell, and Tim Ellis.

JUDGES' COMMENTS

“The Learning Technology Group (LTG) is an outstanding example of an excellently managed, cohesive, multidisciplinary, and highly collaborative team. LTG provided clear and convincing evidence about the positive impact of their work on teaching and learning across the University, and

about the value that teaching staff place on the Group’s activities. Specifically, the Group:

- is unusual in the way that it provides an integrated service, including infrastructure, software development and maintenance, user training, and help desk support;
- puts a very strong emphasis on gathering user requirements, and on iteratively improving services and systems through systematic collection of user feedback;
- is impressively focused on technology as an enabler of learning;
- has succeeded in creating and supporting a comprehensive range of tools and applications, whose use is central to academic practice.”



Cally Taylor, Johnny Finnis, and Christine Cé

The **Learning Technology Team** at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine was commended in the team award for developing, as online courses for use in less developed countries, an MSc in clinical trials and a PGDip/MSc in infectious diseases, and for enhancing the School’s capacity to produce further online courses of this kind.

Team members are Cally Taylor, Christine Cé, and Johnny Finnis.

JUDGES' COMMENTS

“The panel was very impressed with the:

- focused and committed way in which the team had tackled issues of accessibility and standards-conformance;
- effective way in which the team had approached its work overall;
- impact the team is having on practices with the School, and on the School’s learners worldwide – particularly in parts of the world where technology infrastructure is limited;
- team’s use of an underlying pedagogic model to underpin the design of the courses.”

TEAM AWARD, CONTINUED



**Ufi Technology Directorate
team members**

The **Technology Directorate** at Ufi learndirect was commended in the team award for successfully in-sourcing the production of and transition to a new learning platform that supports over two million learners.

Team members are Bazil Caygill, Bella Abrams, Cathy Tarbox, Dick Moore, Katie Attwood, Paul Harris, Phil Harper, Richard Dickinson, Richard Joseph, Simon Mather, and Simon Taylor.

JUDGES' COMMENTS

"The panel was very impressed with the team's:

- outstanding technical and managerial achievement in

creating, in house, the new system, and in seamlessly migrating all of Ufi/learndirect's courses across onto the new system;

- passion and commitment to meeting the needs of learners;
- successful building of dialogue between the IT development team and the rest of the organisation – particularly those concerned with learners and learning;
- systematic use of formal project management methodologies.
- The panel was also particularly impressed with the new system's tutoring-interface, along with the underlying technology of the new system."

The other short-listed entrant was **Barry Nicholls**, from Liverpool John Moores University, for creating and maintaining a timesaving and quality enhancing software application to support laboratory experiments in analytical chemistry.

JUDGES' COMMENTS

"Barry's work in this area is a long-term commitment, and his tenacity and professionalism in developing and improving the labs software, has made a real and beneficial difference to students and staff at Liverpool John Moores University."

THE JUDGING PANEL FOR THE 2008 AWARD

- Angela Sanders, NIACE
- Bob Banks, Tribal Group, and member of the ALT Research Committee
- Hannah Whaley, Dundee University, and joint winner of the 2007 Award
- Margaret Bennett, QIA
- Stephen Heppell, CEO of Heppel.Net Ltd, and Professor of New Media Environments at Bournemouth University (Chair)
- Steve Ryan, London School of Economics, and incoming Chair of ALT

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