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GRCC professor receives two global awards for course design

July 26, 2013 GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — A Grand Rapids Community College professor received two global awards for outstanding course design.

Cheryl Kautz, who has taught in GRCC's Computer Information Systems Department since 2007, was awarded two 2013 Blackboard Catalyst awards for Exemplary Course Program. Blackboard Inc., a developer of educational software, recently honored Kautz and the other award winners during a conference in Las Vegas. Kautz received her first Catalyst Award in 2012.

The Blackboard Catalyst Awards program annually recognizes and honors innovation and excellence in the Blackboard global community of practice, where teachers and learners work every day to redefine what is possible when leveraging technology.

"Technology is not just for distance learners; it can also be leveraged for on-campus courses," Kautz said. "The on-campus courses I teach include many online components. Technology enables students and a teacher to remain connected throughout the week, in between class meetings, and provides access to information, ideas, learning resources and tools. It gives me the opportunity to engage and interact with students more."

"The efforts made by Cheryl Kautz really do make a difference in enhancing the learning experience at (GRCC) and for many other institutions across the globe," Ray Henderson, Blackboard's president of academic platforms and chief technical officer, said in a letter announcing the award.

"Cheryl is a talented and dedicated member of our adjunct faculty group," said GRCC Provost Dr. Gilda Gely. "This award also recognizes the outstanding support of the college's Distance Learning and Instructional Technologies Team and of the entire Computer Information Systems Department."

Grand Rapids Community College, established in 1914, offers opportunities for more than 30,000 students annually in degree courses, certification and training programs, workshops and personal enrichment classes. GRCC holds classes on the downtown Grand Rapids campus as well as several locations throughout Kent and Ottawa counties.