OEC Announces the 2020 Recipients of the Open Education Awards for Excellence, Individual Awards

CONCORD, Mass. - **Oct. 11, 2020** - *PRLog* -- The Open Education Awards for Excellence provide an annual recognition to outstanding contributions in the Open Education community. The recipients of these awards demonstrate excellence, goes above and beyond, and exemplifies dedicated and enthusiastic leadership in open education. The awards are presented by the Open Education Global Board of Directors to recognize truly exceptional work and dedication to open education.

Join us in congratulating the following 2020 Individual Award winners:

The **Leadership Award** is presented to **Wayne Mackintosh**, an individual that is a strategic innovator with a passion for open sourcing education and is a committed advocate and user of free software for education. Mackintosh is the founding director of the OER Foundation, established in 2009 and headquartered at Otago Polytechnic, New Zealand. He is coordinating the establishment of the OER universitas (OERu), an international innovation partnership which aims to widen access to more affordable education for all. Wayne holds New Zealand's UNESCO / ICDE Chair in OER at the Foundation and Otago Polytechnic, and serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the OER Foundation.

The **Educator Award is** presented to **Alegría Ribadeneira** who is making an incredible difference at Colorado State University and regionally because of the amazing work she does for students and for the leadership she demonstrates in approaches to teaching. Alegría has become a beacon to her colleagues of this kind of open pedagogy which empowers students, often using a range of new technologies and platforms. As such, Alegría's colleagues across campus have benefited by learning ideas of open pedagogy such as renewable assignments and student-authored learning materials, as well as supporting technological tools. Even instructors across the state and nation have similarly benefited as she has given workshops on teaching ideas and strategies at the state and national level, including her work with the National Heritage Language Resource Center at UCLA.

A *new* award for 2020, the **Emerging Leader Award,** is presented to an individual that is actively engaged in the use and promotion of OER and Open Practices, **Rajiv Jhangiani** from Kwantlen Polytechnic University, CA. Currently, Dr. Jhangiani is the Acting Vice Provost, Teaching & Learning and Associate Vice Provost, Open Education at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in British Columbia. He previously served, as an Open Education Advisor and Senior Open Education Research & Advocacy Fellow with BCcampus, an OER Research Fellow with the Open Education Group, a Faculty Workshop Facilitator with the Open Education Network, an Associate Editor of Psychology Learning & Teaching and NOBA Psychology, and an Ambassador for the Center for Open Science.

Another *new* award, the **Support Specialist Award** is presented to two recipients, first, to **Amy Hoffer** from Open Oregon Educational Resources. Amy has had a huge impact, both in the state of Oregon and nationally, since she became the Coordinator of Statewide Open Education Library Services for Oregon's higher education in 2015. She offers evidence-based and innovative opportunities for faculty to learn about OER, including biennial symposia, open textbook reviews, and online course redesign training. She created the openoregon.org website and runs the state's OER grant program, overseeing the selection, support, and sharing of dozens of grant projects resulting in millions of dollars in savings and a very high return on investment.

The second **Support Specialists Award** is presented to **Apurva Ashok** who is the Project Lead at Rebus Community, a Canadian charity that supports open publishing. She runs the Textbook Success Program, a year-long professional development course for OER creators. Apurva works with librarians, faculty, and administrators to guide them through best practices for open publishing and to grow their capacity for open textbook creation. Currently, Apurva is running three cohorts of the Textbook Success Program, which represents over twenty different open textbooks in development.

The **Student Award** is presented to the student whose achievements inspire or advocate for the promotion and advancement of open educational resources and open education. This year, the Student Award is presented to **Nick Sengstaken**, a student from UNC Chapel Hill, U.S. for his leadership in pushing back against the publishing industry's practices that have slowed the adoption of OER – both at the campus and national level. As an intern with the Student Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) and as chief of staff in the UNC Chapel Hill student government, Nick has tirelessly pushed for OER – and the ways that publishers are trying to eliminate cheap book options for students.

About the Open Education Awards for Excellence https://awards.oeglobal.org/

The Open Education Awards for Excellence provide annual recognition to outstanding contributions in the Open Education community, recognizing exemplary leaders, distinctive open educational resources, and open projects & initiatives.

About the Open Education Global https://www.oeglobal.org/

Open Education Global is a member-based, global, non-profit supporting the development and use of open education around the world to expand access to education enabling every person on earth to access and contribute; improve the quality of education; make education more affordable; improve student success; foster collaboration and sharing through co-creation of education materials and the freedom to use, customize, improve and redistribute them; generate pedagogical innovation using the collaborative, interactive culture of the Internet; and to foster international partnerships and a global participatory culture of learning, creating, sharing and cooperation.

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