

# Blackboard Announces Winners of the 2026 Catalyst Awards

*Thirty institutions across eight countries recognized for teaching and learning excellence*

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, June 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Blackboard today announced the winners of the 2026 Catalyst Awards, its annual program recognizing institutions and individuals driving meaningful change in education. This year's awards honor excellence across eight categories, highlighting the many ways organizations across higher education, government, and professional learning are improving outcomes, expanding access, and elevating the learner experience.

The 2026 award winners were selected from a total of 136 submissions from 19 countries, one of the most competitive and creative pools in the program's history. Submissions were evaluated on criteria including the results achieved and the initiative's potential to serve as a best practice for the broader education community.

Nominees and winners will be honored at [Building Blackboard Together \(BbT26\)](#), Blackboard's flagship user conference, taking place July 13–15 in Dallas, Texas.

"What makes the Blackboard community exceptional is its members' commitment to sharing ideas, challenging conventions, and helping one another succeed," said Bruce Dahlgren, CEO of Blackboard. "This year's Catalyst Award winners represent the very best of that community. Their leadership, dedication, and results are making a measurable difference in classrooms, campuses, and communities worldwide."

The 2026 Blackboard Catalyst Award winners by category:

**Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness:** Recognizing institutions who have strengthened their assessment practices and driven meaningful behavioral change through the use of Blackboard's Institutional Effectiveness solutions.

- Augusta Technical College, USA. Dr. Amanda Bylczynski
- University of Connecticut, USA. Dr. Sally Chamberland and Kaitlyn Anderson
- University of the Cumberlands, USA. Academic Affairs

**Blackboard Adoption & Engagement:** Celebrating system administrators who drive successful

Blackboard adoption through strategic leadership, faculty support, and continuous improvement.

- National Aviation Academy, USA. Jeremy Paoletti and Richard DeBord
- Sam Houston State University Online, USA. SHSU Online Operations: Dr. Ruth Chisum
- University of Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. Deanship of eLearning: Dr. Ali Alshammari
- University of the West of England Bristol, United Kingdom. Digital Learning Team: Glenn Duckworth, Alice Denny, and Izzy Levy
- Youngstown State University, USA. Youngstown State Online's Instructional Design and Development Center

Ethical AI Leadership: Honoring institutions advancing responsible, transparent, and inclusive approaches to AI that promote trust and equitable outcomes for learners and educators.

- King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia. Deanship of eLearning and Information Technology: Dr. Ali Saeed Alzahrani, Dr. Eid Mohammad Albalawi, and Dr. Mosleh Hmoud Al-Adhaileh.
- Lamar University, USA. The Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning/University Innovation
- University of Phoenix, USA. Academic AI Pillar Implementation Team: Dr. Marc Booker, Emily Breuker, Bridget Beville, and Doris Savron

Government Learning Transformation: Recognizing government organizations that leverage Blackboard to deliver innovative, mission-driven training and workforce development programs that strengthen readiness and performance.

- Oak Ridge Enhanced Technology and Training Campus, USA. ORETTTC Capabilities Team
- Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), USA.

Innovation in Accessibility: Recognizing institutions using Blackboard and/or Ally to create more accessible and inclusive learning experiences.

- Central Arizona College, USA. Digital Accessibility Team
- Coppin State University, USA. Innovation, Development, Education, and Assessment (IDEA) Team
- Gordon Institute of Business Science, South Africa. Digital Education: Liezl Wagenaar, Danhesree Moodley, and Samantha Gladyssek
- The University of Law, United Kingdom. Technology Enhanced Learning & Teaching Team: Kerri Trounce, Jack Gibbons, and Steve Cherry

Leading Change: Honoring institutions that use Blackboard to drive transformational change on campus and across the wider education community.

- Boston University, USA. BU Virtual: Wendy Colby, Jennifer Jackson and Kaylin Goncalves

- Universidad de Las Américas, Chile. Michelle Bass Del Campo
- Universidad Internacional de Valencia, Spain
- University of Pretoria, South Africa. University of Pretoria E-Education Unit
- University of Reading, United Kingdom. Technology Enhanced Learning

Teaching Excellence: Celebrating instructors who set the standard for high-quality teaching within Blackboard. These educators apply strong pedagogy, intentional design, and dynamic digital practices to create engaging and inclusive learning environments.

- Jouf University, Saudi Arabia.
- The University of Sheffield, United Kingdom. MSc HCRD Course Team
- Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas, Peru. Jessica Vlasica

Training & Professional Development: Highlighting institutions and corporations that use Blackboard to elevate training and development for educators and staff. Their programs strengthen skills, support technology adoption, and foster organizational growth.

- Norfolk State University, USA. The Office of Extended Learning/NSU Online Team
- Odessa College, USA. Professional Learning Center
- The University of Notre Dame Australia, Australia. Michelle Katavatis and the Innovation & Design Team
- Universidad del Pacífico, Peru. Gestión del Aprendizaje: Christian Alberto Jibaja Bernuy
- University of Maryland, Baltimore County, USA. Instructional Technology Team

For more information on the 2026 Catalyst Award winners, the full list of nominees, and complete category descriptions, visit [www.Blackboard.com/catalystawards](http://www.Blackboard.com/catalystawards).

## About Blackboard

Blackboard delivers the digital environment for transformational teaching and learning. We serve thousands of institutions with the industry's most AI-advanced LMS, Ally for accessibility, Evaluate for course effectiveness, and institutional effectiveness solutions that put educators and learners at the center. We're an education company that builds technology. Learn more at [blackboard.com](http://blackboard.com).

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