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Winners announced for the fifth annual SANSational Awards

WCET (the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies) and the WCET State Authorization Network (SAN) are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2019 State Authorization Network SANSational awards: University of Louisville, James Madison University and University of Virginia, and Western Governors University.

Boulder, CO – WCET (the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies) and the State Authorization Network (SAN) are pleased to announce the winners of the 5th annual SANSational Awards. These awards recognize outstanding efforts by SAN member institutions and organizations in developing a high-quality, comprehensive solution to a challenging state authorization issue. Works recognized by the SANSational Awards present solutions that meet the needs of regulators, the institution and, most especially, students. These efforts serve as models which can be adapted or replicated by others.

The 2019 SANSational Award winners are categorized into two areas: (1) Compliance Innovations: Institution policy, tools, compliance teams, or other inventive or novel compliance management practices" and (2) Licensure Programs: Notifications and disclosures for professional licensure"

- **University of Louisville**
 - **Awarded:** Licensure Programs - Notifications and disclosures for professional licensure program status in each state.
- **James Madison University and University of Virginia**
 - **Awarded:** Compliance Innovations - Institution policy, tools, compliance teams or other inventive or novel compliance management process
- **Western Governors University**
 - **Awarded:** Compliance Innovations - Institution policy, tools, compliance teams or other inventive or novel compliance management process

"The SANSational Awards is a yearly recognition of the outstanding work of the members of the State Authorization Network," said Cheryl Dowd, the Director of SAN. She continued: *"The efforts of this year's winners demonstrate their commitment to improvement at their own institutions, and publishing them through nomination for this award makes it possible for other institutions to see innovative ideas in compliance. We're proud of the collaborative culture among the SAN member institutions. We're here to acknowledge great work and help each other."*

The SANSational awardees will be recognized by WCET's national community of higher education innovators during the [2019 WCET Annual Meeting](#), November 5-7, 2019 in Denver, CO.

A webcast to highlight the SANSational award winners will be held in late 2019. For more information on the webcast and the awards, please visit: <https://wcetsan.wiche.edu/resources/sansational-awards>

Further Information on 2019 Award Winners

University of Louisville

Awarded: Licensure programs - Notifications and disclosures for professional licensure program status in each state.

The University of Louisville's (UofL) online learning team continuously renews their commitment to providing transparent and readily accessible licensing disclosure information—helping students make more informed higher education decisions. As we continuously strive for excellence in this area, we regularly evaluate new ways to improve ease of use and understanding of licensing information for prospective students. Our current efforts include, but are not limited to, presenting the information in a concise and sortable web format, ensuring accuracy of the information we provide through regular review and thoroughly linking to these pages in all relevant web, marketing and enrollment materials.

Over the last year, we've adopted a more accessible and digestible organization of our licensing information on our website, creating a better overall user experience when students seek out this information. We ensure that students reach these pages through consistent and intentional links within marketing collateral, which helps increase the likelihood that students view the information relevant to them prior to enrollment. The licensing requirement information presented on these pages is reviewed and updated on an annual basis across all programs and by state, ensuring compliance with SARA and any pending federal legislation. Finally, where necessary, disclosure language is customized to meet both unique program specifications and the individual student needs.

Through these steps, we believe we're serving the best interests of our students and guaranteeing they have the information they need to make the best decision(s) for their education.

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James Madison University and University of Virginia

Awarded: Compliance Innovations - Institution policy, tools, compliance teams or other inventive or novel compliance management process

The volume and variety of policies, conditions, exceptions, and expectations around state authorization call for a tool that will enable a state authorization coordinator—especially an inexperienced one -- to have an organized “To Do” list and tracking tool at their fingertips. Sarah Cheverton, Assistant Coordinator of Online Learning at James Madison University and Cheryl Carroll, Manager of Academic & Distance Education Compliance at the University of Virginia collaborated to develop such a tool called the Distance Learning Compliance Organizer and Toolkit. Cheverton and Carroll demonstrated that the core spreadsheet can be used as a standalone tool or as a central coordination tool integrated within a larger online collaboration environment. In either “flavor,” the Organizer and Toolkit will help inexperienced and skilled coordinators develop a more organized, efficient, and effective state authorization compliance process.

The Distance Learning Compliance Organizer and Toolkit core spreadsheet is a simple Excel file, easily adaptable to an institution's unique needs. Content is entirely editable and new content can easily be added. When integrated into an institution's organizational tools and collaboration systems, it can be shared with learning activity coordinators and others who need to enter content, upload and link to data files, and communicate with their state authorization coordinator. Carroll demonstrated that at UVA

the core spreadsheet was uploaded to and easily integrated with the Smartsheet® environment, an enterprise collaborative platform, creating a “program management tracker” version of the Organizer and Toolkit. Utilizing the Smartsheet platform enables users to create input forms, dashboards and reports from templates as well as creating workflows with only one license being required: the institutional state authorization administrator must have a license, which allows other distance learning stakeholders at the institution to view and edit documents and data depending on their permissions level.

The Distance Learning Compliance Organizer and Toolkit core spreadsheet is freely available for download at <https://www.jmu.edu/online/state-authorization/checklist/>. A functional sample of the Distance Learning Compliance Organizer and Toolkit - program management tracker is available upon request from Carroll. For more information about Smartsheet®, visit <https://www.smartsheet.com/>.

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Western Governors University

Awarded: Compliance Innovations - Institution policy, tools, compliance teams or other inventive or novel compliance management process

As part of WGU’s commitment to expanding access to high-quality, relevant, and affordable higher education at scale, WGU’s Accreditation and Compliance team regularly evaluates how the team can develop new strategies and tools to inform university policy and practice. Through close collaboration across departments, WGU’s Accreditation and Compliance team realized it needed to better inform other university stakeholders about current state- and program-specific compliance and accreditation.

With this problem in mind, the Accreditation and Compliance team worked quickly to design short, two-page reports that provide university leaders with a snapshot on authorization, approvals, licensure, and accreditation, as well as data on enrollment, graduates, student demographics, and key performance indicators (KPIs). Produced throughout the year, the new reports provide meaningful information for WGU leaders to ensure they have access to up-to-date information as they engage with external stakeholders across the nation.

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About WCET

WCET – the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies - is the leader in the practice, policy, & advocacy of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. WCET is a member-driven, nonprofit which brings together colleges and universities, higher education organizations and companies to collectively improve the quality and reach of technology-enhanced learning programs. The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), WCET's parent organization, serves states, students, and institutions throughout and beyond the American West, and is one of four U.S. regional interstate compacts.

Learn more: <http://wcet.wiche.edu>

About the State Authorization Network (SAN)

Working collaboratively, institutions can navigate the state regulations processes more efficiently than working on their own. WCET's State Authorization Network (SAN) is the leader for guidance and support for navigating regulatory compliance for out-of-state activities of post-secondary institutions.

Learn more: <https://wcetSAN.wiche.edu>