Media Release

Adult and Rural Education Leader Wins WCET’s Highest Award

For Immediate Release
November 12, 2010
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Boulder, CO — The WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) announced today that it is honoring Sue Maes, dean of continuing education and co-director of the Institute for Academic Alliances at Kansas State University, with the Richard Jonsen Award, given annually to a WCET member whose career has been committed to improving postsecondary educational programs and services through innovative uses of technology. The award also recognizes Maes’s exceptional service to WCET, a membership organization that works to accelerate the adoption of effective practices and policies, advancing excellence in technology-enhanced teaching and learning in higher education. The announcement was made at WCET’s annual membership conference in La Jolla, California.

“Maes’s work has made a major difference in advancing opportunities for rural adults to access postsecondary education—an area that’s of critical importance today,” says Ellen Wagner, WCET’s executive director. “She’s also a nationally recognized expert on the establishment and sustainability of academic collaborations and has played a pivotal role in the creation of several educational consortia.” Maes helped to launch the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance (www.gpidea.org), which offers online graduate coursework and programs in the human sciences, and the Big 12 Engineering Consortium (www.big12engg.org/), which offers distance education programs in nuclear engineering. In addition, Maes served as president of the University Continuing Education Association and was inducted into the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame in 2000.

Maes’s engagement with WCET began in the organization’s earliest years, when she and other WCET members helped institutions and states to extend educational programs and services via videoconferencing networks, assisting them with technical, programmatic, and student support services requirements. Maes guided the creation of several WCET programs that continue today, including a consortium for doctoral nursing education and an e-learning consortia wiki.

The award, named in honor of Richard Jonsen—the WICHE executive director who founded WCET in 1989—was presented at an awards ceremony in La Jolla. “We are pleased to honor Sue Maes for her commitment to improving rural access to education and lifelong learning, her belief in the strength of communities and partnerships, and her vision for finding effective and pragmatic technology solutions to expand access to education,” says Wagner.

The WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) accelerates the adoption of effective practices and policies, advancing excellence in technology-enhanced teaching and learning in higher education. More detailed information about the Richard Jonsen Award is available on WCET’s website at:
http://wcet.wiche.edu/advance/wcet-awards.