

PRESS RELEASE

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Karen DePauw Wins Debra W. Stewart Award for Outstanding Leadership in Graduate Education

Washington, DC – The Board of Directors of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) has announced that Dr. Karen DePauw, vice president and dean for graduate education at Virginia Tech University, is the 2016 Winner of the Debra W. Stewart Award for Outstanding Leadership in Graduate Education. The awards ceremony was held during the CGS 56th Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

The award was created by the CGS Board of Directors to recognize outstanding leadership in graduate education, and particularly those leadership qualities exemplified by the Council's fifth President, Debra W. Stewart. The selection committee gives consideration to nominees with a strong reputation for ethics and integrity, a history of active participation in the graduate community, and a record of strategic vision and actions resulting in meaningful impacts. Areas of special consideration include evidence-based innovation, program development, diversity and inclusion, student learning and career outcomes, personnel management, policy advocacy in support of graduate education and research, and fiscal responsibility.

Dr. DePauw becomes the award's first recipient for her invaluable contributions to the Virginia Tech graduate community. Her many accomplishments include: success in building a strong, diverse graduate community in multiple locations in Virginia; establishment of the national award-winning, Innovate Graduate Life Center; creation of the signature academic initiative: Transformative Graduate Education; initiation of 14 unique interdisciplinary graduate education programs; and promotion of work-life management programs that foster thriving (not surviving) during graduate studies.

"We applaud the Council of Graduate Schools' recognition of Dr. DePauw's many contributions to graduate education," said Virginia Tech President Tim Sands. "Her work has significantly advanced the quality of our student's experience, and her dedication to the wellbeing of our graduate community exemplifies the Virginia Tech spirit of service."

"Karen DePauw's leadership has contributed greatly to the success of graduate students at her institution and to the enterprise of graduate education worldwide," said Dr. M.J.T. Smith, dean of the Graduate School at Purdue University and chair of the Council's Board of Directors. "Dr. DePauw's innovative use of technology and life-long commitment to building a diverse and inclusive graduate community sets a standard of leadership for deans of graduate education across the globe."

Nominees for the award must be a current senior, graduate dean at a CGS member institution (Regular or Associate) and cannot be an active member of the CGS Board of Directors. Nominations are made by CGS member institutions and are reviewed by a selection committee of former graduate deans in the CGS community. The winner receives a \$4,000 prize to support continuing innovations at the awardee's institution.

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The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.