

ADVANCING ASTD'S VISION

Awards in this category honor ASTD members for their contributions to ASTD's vision of worldwide leadership in workplace learning and performance.

Gordon M. Bliss Memorial Award

This award recognizes a member who has made significant contributions in three areas: advancing ASTD's vision and goals; improving an employer's or client's workplace learning and performance; and enriching a community through volunteering professional skills.

Katherine Holt is a catalyst for change – helping people and organizations to engage heart, mind, spirit, and will to see new possibilities for themselves, their organizations, and the world.

Her life's work is anchored in her commitment to her values. Katherine operates from a whole systems perspective and wants her values of courageous leadership, authentic action, collaborative learning, respect for diversity, and sustainable living to be reflected in every aspect of her work. She is passionate about people making changes that make a difference. A fellow ASTD leader recently described Katherine as “professional, supportive, caring, and tenacious in her quest to help people increase their effectiveness. Her gift is her deep belief in the strengths we all possess.”

ASTD Contributions

When Katherine Holt joined the ASTD board in 2000, she drew on her experience living in Asia for seven years and focused her attention on advancing the society's global initiatives. She recruited individuals for leadership positions and met with groups from outside the United States to invite their further participation in ASTD. She supported the start-up of global networks for ASTD members and provided ongoing counsel to staff. She served as the Society's secretary and chaired the Strategic Directions Committee for two years during which she encouraged ASTD to play a greater leadership role in setting standards for e-learning and the profession. She also promoted collaboration with related professional organizations.

Katherine gave unselfishly of her time and professional expertise to introduce individual development planning to ASTD staff in 2003. She developed materials and donated a week of her time to coach managers and conduct workshops for all staff to launch the effort. She called upon her professional network of colleagues at Personnel Decisions International, Development Dimensions International, and Wilson Learning to donate print and online resources. Her volunteer coaching and consulting time plus the donated resources became an invaluable investment for ASTD.

After her board tenure, Katherine chaired the Awards Strategy Committee where she helped others gain recognition for their contributions to the field. She most recently brought her expertise in research, competency modeling, and assessment to ASTD's competency model and certification initiatives. She was the lead technical advisor for the competency model and chaired the task force that reviewed the areas of expertise for the knowledge test and certification. She brought new talent as well as established professionals into the process, which ensured that the model reflected current and new thinking. Her collaborative style guaranteed that everyone was included in the decision making. She helped craft the study research design, conducted scores of interviews, and worked round-the-clock to polish the model in time to meet a critical deadline. She provided thought leadership while championing innovation and high standards throughout the study.



Katherine E. Holt

Workplace Contributions

Katherine has worked with clients in many industries throughout the world. She has consulted with management and human resource professionals about global leadership, cross-cultural team building, talent management, and organizational change issues. She has provided assessment, feedback, and coaching to executives throughout North America, Asia, and Australia.

Katherine worked for Personnel Decisions International (PDI) for 16 years prior to establishing her own firm. She managed PDI's office in Tokyo, helped to start their operations in Singapore and China, and was widely recognized as one of the top executive coaches in Asia-Pacific. She pioneered the concept of customized 360-degree models in the U.S. and was instrumental in developing PDI's PROFILOR® family of multi-rater tools and competency models.

Her own firm, Peakinsight LLC, a global network of coaches and consulting partners, specializes in organization development for sustainability. Katherine advocates creating organizations which value their people, model ethical leadership, champion environmental and social responsibility, and invest in innovation for future growth.

Community Contributions

In addition to ASTD, Katherine volunteers her professional skills to benefit the non-profit global network Zero Emissions Research and Initiatives (ZERI). She coaches ZERI practitioners, supported the development of a model eco-village in Japan, and recently organized a 12-day ZERI certification training course. As an outgrowth of that training, she helps ZERI graduates provide teacher training and offer summer camps for children.

Katherine works with the U.S. Partnership for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development to raise awareness across the country. In her local community in Colorado, she is co-facilitating “Imagine Durango,” an Appreciative Inquiry project that will help make the hopes and dreams of multiple stakeholders a reality. She also participates in the Green Business Roundtable and leads nature walks for elementary students at the Durango Nature Center.

Deeply committed to change and collaborative learning, Katherine is a research member of the Society for Organizational Learning. She chaired the 2001 Linkage Change Conference and reviews books on change leadership for Berrett-Koehler and Pfeiffer/Jossey-Bass. She received her Ph.D. in industrial relations from the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota.

Katherine Holt is an exemplary leader in ASTD, a highly effective practitioner of workplace learning and performance throughout the world, and a selfless volunteer and coach to many organizations and individuals.