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ISOC Monthly Newsletter

Trailblazing CSNET Network Receives 2009 Jonathan B. Postel Service Award

Internet Society recognizes leaders of effort that pointed the way towards today's Internet

Stockholm, Sweden – 29 July 2009 – The Internet Society (ISOC) today awarded the [Jonathan B. Postel Service Award](#) for 2009 to CSNET (the Computer Science Network), the research networking effort that during the early 1980s provided the critical bridge from the original research undertaken through the ARPANET to the modern Internet.

Today's award recognizes the pioneering work of the four principal investigators that conceived and later led the building of CSNET—Peter J. Denning, David Farber, Anthony C. Hearn and Lawrence Landweber—and the U.S. National Science Foundation program officer and visionary responsible for encouraging and funding CSNET—Kent Curtis.

Stephen Wolff, a past recipient of the Postel Award, said, "CSNET was a critical link in the transition from the research-oriented ARPANET to today's global Internet. CSNET also helped lead the way by sharing technologies, fostering connections, and nurturing the worldwide community that provided a foundation for the global expansion of the Internet."

The Internet Society presented the award, including a US\$20,000 honorarium and a crystal engraved globe, during the 75th meeting of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) in Stockholm, Sweden. The awardees have requested that the Internet Society present the honorarium to non-profit organizations they believe support the spirit of the award.

Lynn St. Amour, President and CEO of the Internet Society, said "In many ways, CSNET helped set the stage for the Internet that today reaches more than 1 billion people. CSNET's community-driven, self-sustaining governance structure was an early example of the model that helps ensure that even as today's Internet grows and evolves, it remains an open platform for innovation around the world."

About CSNET

CSNET began in 1981 with a five-year grant from the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF). Five years later, CSNET connected more than 165 academic, government and industrial computer research groups comprised of more than 50,000 researchers, educators and students across the United States and around the world. It had concluded a seminal resource sharing agreement with the ARPANET and was self-governing and self-supporting. Open to all



Dave Crocker accepted the 2009 Jonathan B. Postel Award on behalf of CSNET.

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computer researchers, it demonstrated that researchers valued the kind of informal collaboration it made possible. CSNET's success and acceptance encouraged the NSF to undertake the NSFNET program which brought open networking to an even larger academic community and presaged the emergence of the modern Internet.



CSNET Executive Team Meeting 1986

Peter Denning was head of the computer science department at Purdue University. His team included professor Douglas Comer, who was responsible for the software that ran TCP/IP over the GTE Telnet X.25 commercial packet network.

David Farber was a professor of electrical engineering at University of Delaware. His team included then graduate student David Crocker, who was responsible for Phonenet, dial-in telephone connections to relay servers for email exchange.

Anthony Hearn was head of the information sciences department at RAND. His team included Michael O'Brien, who was responsible for the relays connecting CSNET and ARPANET.

Lawrence Landweber was a professor of computer science at the University of Wisconsin. His team included professor Marvin Solomon and Michael Litzkow who were responsible for the name server, a precursor of modern Directory Services.

At the NSF, the late Kent Curtis helped conceive the entire effort and, with assistance from Bill Kern, saw it through its formative years. He was recognized for his pivotal role by the Computing Research Association's first distinguished service award in 1988.

About the Jonathan B. Postel Service Award

The [Jonathan B. Postel Service Award](#) was established by the Internet Society to honor individuals or organizations that, like Jon Postel, have made outstanding contributions in service to the data communications community. The award is focused on sustained and substantial technical contributions, service to the community, and leadership. With respect to leadership, the nominating committee places particular emphasis on candidates who have supported and enabled others in addition to their own specific actions. Previous recipients of the Postel Award include Jon himself (posthumously and accepted by his mother), Scott Bradner, Daniel Karrenberg, Stephen Wolff, Peter Kirstein, Phill Gross, Jun Murai, Bob Braden and Joyce K. Reynolds (jointly), Nii Quaynor, and La Fundación Escuela Latinoamericana de Redes (EsLaRed). The award consists of an engraved crystal globe and a US\$20,000 honorarium.

For more information about the Jonathan B. Postel Service Award, visit: <http://www.isoc.org/postel>

About the Internet Society

The Internet Society is a non-profit organization founded in 1992 to provide leadership in Internet related standards, education, and policy. With offices in Washington, D.C., and Geneva, Switzerland, it is dedicated to ensuring the open development, evolution, and use of the Internet for the benefit of people throughout the world. More information is available at: <http://www.isoc.org>

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Lynn St. Amour and Dave Crocker with the Postel Award crystal globe.

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ISOC's key initiatives target the critical issues that affect all aspects of Internet development and growth. They embody ISOC's philosophy that the Internet is for everyone and they provide the organization with a solid foundation from which to positively influence standards development, access, business practices, and government policies. www.isoc.org