

# 2013-2014 OCUFA TEACHING AND ACADEMIC LIBRARIANSHIP AWARDS

CITATION FOR WINNER MS. KAREN REID

The logo for OCUFA, consisting of the letters 'OCUFA' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly shadowed, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.

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## **CITATION FOR MS. KAREN REID**

**Prepared by Ashkon Hashemi , CFS**

**Read by Alastair Woods, Chairsperson, CFS**

It is with great pleasure that the OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship Awards Committee presents a 2014 OCUFA Teaching Award to Ms. Karen Reid. Karen is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Toronto.

A lecturer at the University since 2001, Karen has several times been recognized for her teaching excellence and as a top-notch educator. Notably, she has been awarded the University of Toronto's highest teaching honour, the President's Teaching Award, as well as the Joan E. Foley Quality of Student Experience Award and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teaching Award.

Submissions in Karen's dossier mention the difficult and abstract concepts that students are required to learn in the computing science courses that she teaches. That she succeeds in enabling the learning of these concepts is evident in student comments. Of note is Karen's ingenuity in conducting her lectures where a mix of humour, enthusiasm, logic, innovation and practice serve to engage students in their learning.

Karen expects a lot from her undergraduates. She sets the bar very high but then delivers amazing support in the form of availability and access on course related issues, and career mentoring. A second year computing science student commented, "she has infected me with her passion for computer systems and also sparked in me a vast new interest in the field." And a former student wrote, "Karen made a huge difference in my life by providing tools and



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knowledge that I still rely on as a CEO of ... a mobile application development company.” Students recognize the value and quality of the teaching experience delivered by Karen. The Computer Science Student Union has four times presented Ms. Reid with their Award for Teaching Excellence.

A true proponent of experiential learning, Karen has supervised over 100 students involved with many projects. The results of these projects are far-reaching. Students gain valuable, hands-on experience that could not be easily acquired in the classroom, and which puts them in good stead when entering the job market. The projects have also resulted in the creation of important teaching and learning tools. Two of these tools are MarkUs and DrProject. MarkUs is an online tool that provides a rich interface for students, teaching assistants and faculty for the grading and submission of student projects. The Chair of the Department of Computer Science comments that it “has been used by tens of thousands of students .... and has revolutionized the way that our programming courses are administered”. DrProject is a suite of integrated tools that support team programming. A colleague of Ms. Reid’s notes that the suite provides the students with a standard set of tools that facilitates the required collaboration of a software development team, and also allows faculty to manage course content in a “more coherent manner and with less effort”.

Karen has also co-developed an innovative, industry funded national program – the Undergraduate Capstone Open Source Projects (UCOSP). This program has brought hundreds of students from more than 25 universities together to gain practical software development experience while working with mentors from industry on actual projects.

In addition to her innovation in teaching and learning, Karen has participated significantly in her department and faculty. She has provided leadership in course and curriculum development, notably collaborating on the re-thinking of the Department of Computer Science undergraduate curriculum. Karen has also been a leader in supporting instructors and teaching assistants through her presentation and participation in workshops and tutorials. Recently Karen completed



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a three-year term in her department as Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies. The department Chair commented on the immensity of the portfolio that Karen had assumed and that she performed the tasks “exceptionally well, on top of her outstanding classroom teaching”.

In a discipline where a computer program that is 90% successful is in fact a failure, Karen succeeds in equipping her students with the resources necessary to succeed in industry and the academy.

The Teaching and Academic Librarianship Award Committee delights in presenting a 2013-2014 OCUFA Academic Librarianship Award to Ms. Karen Reid.