



Lubbock, Texas (January 31, 2020) – LEARN Board of Directors has selected Akbar Kara to succeed Pankaj Shah as President and Chief Executive Officer, effective January 31, 2020.

Kara has served as LEARN’s only Chief Technology Officer since 2006. He has 26 years of direct networking experience with campus, regional, and international networks supporting science and discovery. Prior to LEARN, Kara served as Network Director at the Columbia University Medical Center. Kara recently led and completed a \$2M optical backbone upgrade of the entire LEARN network and he also architected a regional collaboration strategy with the neighboring states that reduces TCO for content delivery and other network services. Over the years, Kara has served five times as WAN Transport Committee Chair for an International Super Computing Conference.

Mark Stone, Chairman of LEARN Board of Directors said, “I am delighted to announce Akbar Kara as LEARN’s new CEO. Akbar is a proven leader in the R&E community and has led and grown LEARN for more than a decade.”

“I am looking forward to building upon the momentum at LEARN and leading the team in deriving more value for our membership through innovation,” Kara stated.

Additionally, LEARN is looking to hire a Chief Technology Officer. The job description and application instructions can be found by clicking [here](#).

LEARN (The Lonestar Education And Research Network) is a consortium of 41 organizations throughout Texas that includes public and private institutions of higher education, community colleges, libraries, the National Weather Service, and the K-12 public schools. The consortium, organized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, connects its members and over 500 affiliated organizations through high performance optical and IP network services to support their research, education, healthcare and public service missions. LEARN is also a leading member of the national community of advanced research networks, providing Texas connectivity to national and international research and education networks, enabling cutting-edge research that is increasingly dependent upon sharing large volumes of electronic data.