

Expressions!

OF OKLAHOMA VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

National STW director says work, school are related



J.D. Hoye, national School-to-Work director, addresses about 3,000 vo-tech educators at Summer Conference in Tulsa.

“What is going on when we have a hard time associating work with education?”

This was just one of the points J.D. Hoye, director of the national School-to-Work office, raised during her speech to about 3,000 vo-tech educators from across the state on the challenges facing technical education in the near future.

Ms. Hoye’s speech was one of the highlights of the 30th annual Summer Vocational and Technical Education Conference held at the Tulsa Convention Center from Aug. 4-6.

She said that since she had joined the national School-to-Work initiative she had realized that many people have a problem with the words “school” and

“work” being in the same phrase.

She added that one of the reasons for resistance to School-to-Work was the fact that many people still believe education should be for education’s sake. Ms. Hoye also said that many people still have an antiquated view of education.

“There are people who want the classroom to be a museum to their own past,” she said. “And your profession — teaching — is the only one that everybody on the planet thinks they are expert in.”

Ms. Hoye said that a large number of students learn best by applying what they learn and do not do well in lecture format classes.

She stated that applied courses, in which students use math and science principles to solve real-life problems, must be as rigorous as traditional lecture classes. Applied courses allow teachers to reach students who, a generation ago, would have learned practical applications of math and science in skilled and semi-skilled jobs that did not require high school diplomas. However, those jobs are almost gone.

“Location and resources will no longer determine the sorts of jobs our people have,” Ms. Hoye

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Summer Conference

said. "Knowledge and skills of our workers will be the most important factors. How we do as a nation will be determined by the degree to which we educate all of our citizens."

The conference also featured several seminars. One panel titled "Where the Rubber Meets the Road," comprised of three representatives from Tulsa's business community, told vocational educators what they were looking for in potential employees.

Sitting on the panel were Shannon Warren of PennWell Publishing, a local publishing house for several magazines including *The Oil and Gas Journal*; Tom Pipal, director of Training and Development for WorldCom, a telecommunications provider; and Gary Creekmore, human resource manager of Walden's Machine, Inc., a company that manufactures parts for the aerospace industry.

Some of the tips they offered vocational educators to prepare students for the workplace included teaching interviewing and communications skills.

Ms. Warren stated that written communication skills were essential to the workplace because so much communication is done by e-mail today.

"How we do as a nation will be determined by the degree to which we educate our citizens."

*J.D. Hoye,
National School-to-Work
director*

Educators participate in business institute

Thirty-six Oklahoma vocational teachers participated in a week-long entrepreneurship institute June 2-6 to learn how to teach their students about opening and operating their own businesses.

Instructors will incorporate the principles learned at the academy in classes this fall. The academy was sponsored by the Marketing Education division of the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education and held at Francis Tuttle Area Vo-Tech School, Oklahoma City.

"The future of America lies in its small businesses," said Gene Warner, the academy's coordinator. Warner, program administrator for Marketing Education, said entrepreneurship education is especially important to vocational students.

"Vocational students are much more likely to operate their own businesses than non-vocational students," he said. "Teaching them such things as how to develop a business plan, how to obtain financing and how to market their business dramatically increases their chances for success."

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Board members visit Lucent Technology

Members of the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education got a firsthand look into America's technological future and the role that the state's vo-tech system is playing in helping to build it during the board's July meeting at Lucent Technology's Oklahoma City plant.

Jim Styring, Lucent's vice president of manufacturing, outlined Lucent's partnership with the vo-tech system's Training for Industry Program. Styring said the plant's main product is telephone switching systems.

Styring said the Oklahoma City plant was the "mother ship" for ten international factories. "In each of those, technical competence is paramount for us to succeed. We have to be able to attract and maintain high quality employees because that's our competitive edge," he said, pointing out that technical, planning and logistics skills are very hard to come by.

Styring said the TIP program, through Francis Tuttle, has helped Lucent initially screen and train 700 new employees and has another 300 potential new employees in the pipeline.

"This has been a very successful program for us . . . the quality of these new employees is excellent," he said, pointing out that it has also been a winning partnership for the state of Oklahoma as well. Lucent has the option of locating plants anywhere but they choose to do it in locations where "we can employ and retain high quality people that will give us a competitive advantage . . . who can do the best job of anybody in the world. That's the bottom line of any business or industry that is interested in coming to Oklahoma."



A Lucent Technology engineer shows State Vo-Tech Board members through the Oklahoma City plant. They are from left, Kirk Hoster, Shawnee; Bill Lunn, Tulsa; Kathy Packowski, Ponca City; Ann Felton, Oklahoma City; John Hugon, Duncan; and Edna Hennessey, Lawton.

New Hugo Housing director is a vo-tech grad

Stan Self, recently named executive director of Hugo Housing Authority, is a product of public housing himself. He claims to have achieved this position through grit, determination and Oklahoma's vo-tech system. Self plans to use his past as a guide to help others.

Hugo Housing Authority operates 240 housing units providing rental assistance and operates two homes for the

elderly and disabled. In this new position, Self hopes to ease some hardships by enabling people to live in more suitable conditions.

For the past 12 years, Self has been involved in public services and community action agencies, working with disadvantaged people. However, he credits the Oklahoma vocational-technical education system for heading him in the right direction.

Two vocational instructors, in particular, stand out among those who believed in him.

"Leona Edwards, who is a career specialist for the Oklahoma Department of Vo-Tech and Ron Wagner, who was my diesel mechanic instructor at Hugo High School in 1975-1976 and Kiamichi-Hugo Area Vo-Tech School. They led me toward the open door of opportunity during high school," Self said.

As a junior at Hugo High School, Self enrolled in diesel mechanics at Kiamichi Vo-Tech. During this time he was twice elected president of his school's Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA). VICA is a high school student organization that encourages self-improvement through scholarship, citizenship and participation in school and community activities.

Graduating with a certification in diesel mechanics, Self was hired by a barge company, Chotin

Transportation, often traveling from Louisiana to Ohio to fix barge diesel engines. He then went to work in the oilfields for Haliburton Services, enabling him to travel abroad to France, England and Egypt. A year and a half later,

Self returned to Hugo. It wasn't long until he applied for a position, dealing with economically disadvantaged people, with the Job Training Partnership

Act (JTPA). Self is a leader in the community as a local Jaycee, Hugo City Council member and secretary for the Treasury for the Choctaw County Industrial Trust Authority.

—By Adam Penner

VO-TECH



Teachers spend summer connecting school, work

More than 80 area kindergarten through high school educators from the Cimarron Career Opportunity Partnership area participated in School-to-Work activities during June and July, according to Cindy Long, CCOP coordinator.

Teachers became educators-as-interns or "job shadows" at local businesses. They also participated in the week-long "Composing Careers Summer Academy" held on the Oklahoma State University campus. Several others attended the "High Schools That Work" conference in Atlanta, Ga.

Most of these teachers got a healthy dose of what they usually assign their students — homework.

"Connecting School and Work" was a job shadowing experience involving the educators and 50 local and area businesses. It was jointly coordinated by the CCOP and the Tech Prep Consortium at Meridian Technology Center, Long said.

Vo-Tech schools get alternative fuels grant

Gov. Frank Keating has approved a \$90,120 grant to improve alternative fuels training programs at five state area vo-tech schools. The funds are available through the Stripper Well Overcharge grant.

The five schools receiving funds are Francis Tuttle, Oklahoma City; Wes Watkins, Wetumka; Great Plains, Lawton; Autry Tech, Enid; and Northeast, Pryor.

The funds will be used for short-term training programs to train auto service technicians and vo-tech instructors in the installation of alternative fuels systems in cars, said Ned Gray, adult education coordinator at the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education.

The grant will beef up an existing compressed natural gas (CNG) training program that the state's vo-tech system has been offering since 1990, Gray said.

Federal mandates, which take effect in 1998, require fleets of 10 or more vehicles to operate 30 percent of their fleet on alternative fuels conversion.

Increased usage of alternative fuels also offers Oklahoma several benefits, Gray said.

"Expanded use of alternative fuels also benefits Oklahoma's economy because we are the second largest producer of compressed natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas in the nation. It makes economic sense to use our own natural resources," he said.

Gray said that a \$5 million nationwide scholarship pool is available to those wanting to enroll in the alternative fuels training program.

Ivan Armstrong, program administrator of trade and industrial education programs for the state vo-tech agency, said the need for the training programs is great.

"There are not nearly enough trained technicians in Oklahoma to install, service and maintain alternative fuel systems in vehicles," he said. "This training program will position Oklahoma to meet the demand for additional alternative fuel conversions, maintenance and services."

—By Adam Penner



Applause . . .

Francis Tuttle Staffer Honored

Michael Roach, information specialist at Francis Tuttle, was recently recognized as the nation's first Certified Distance Learning Instructor

(CDLI). Roach completed a rigorous three-year program which started in 1994 with his participation in the charter class of the Teletraining Institute's Academy for Distance Learning.

Keating Receives CPS Title

Sharon Keating, a secretary at Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education,

Business and Industry Training Services (BITS), has been awarded the title of Certified Professional Secretary (CPS). She received the award from the worldwide organization Professional Secretaries International.

Metro Tech Students Receive Top Honors

Two Metro Tech students received top honors at the school's completion ceremony. Janet Pritchett, 41, and Daniel Davila, 18, were named Superintendent's Students of the Year. They each received a \$200 cash award.

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Students named to STW committee

Students have been named to serve on a prestigious statewide Student Advisory Committee for Oklahoma's School-to-Work system. The students are Jesse Craig, Okmulgee; Jennifer Tom, Broken Bow; Rickey Hunt, Oklahoma City; Jonathan Smith, Duncan; Lucretia Petrik, Medford; Kim Ussrey, Tulsa; Sarah Cressman, Alva; Becca Turnbull, Muskogee; Amanda Willis, Tulsa; Jeff Stiles, Mannford; Jasper Harrison, Oklahoma City; Colin Holman, Altus; Oliver Plumley, Red Rock; Melissa Bolin, Durant; Bill Ghere, Tulsa; David Matlock, Moore; and Morgan Robison, Tulsa.

The advisory committee is the first of its kind in the United States.

Advisors for the group are Shawntel Smith, Miss America 1996; Kenneth Corn, 1996 national president for the Future Business Leaders of America and University of Oklahoma student; and Patty Crabbe, School-to-Work marketing specialist.

The newly formed School-to-Work Student Advisory Committee gives students an opportunity to provide direction and input on building a successful

statewide School-to-Work system, said Smith.

The students represent each of Oklahoma's 11 School-to-Work regions. The members of the Student Advisory Committee range in age from high school juniors to students completing their first and second years of post secondary education.

"The students come from all parts of Oklahoma and are ethnically and culturally diverse and have a broad array of School-to-Work experience such as job shadowing, internships, volunteer programs, and school-based enterprises," said Crabbe.

Members of the advisory committee will meet with other students from across the state for Success Connections III, a School-to-Work conference sponsored by the State Chamber of Commerce. The conference will be held Oct. 29-30 at the Tulsa Convention Center.

For more information about Success Connections III call Norma Cox at the State Chamber, (405) 235-3669.

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