

# Expressions!

OF OKLAHOMA CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

## *Federal funds provide 'seed money' to establish virtual technology system*

Congressional passage of a bill containing \$1.42 million to provide "seed money" for Oklahoma's proposed technology-based virtual training center will speed the center's operational date, according to state *CareerTech* director Dr. Ann Benson.

"This will allow us to begin offering online courses by the fall," Benson said. "That's about six months earlier than we initially predicted."

Benson said additional funding for the training center is being sought from state appropriations and private foundations.

The U.S. House of Representatives approved funding for the project at the urging of Congressman Wes Watkins, Stillwater. The bill has also passed the U.S. Senate, and President Clinton has indicated he will sign it.

The federal funds will be used to purchase file servers and software, employ three network technicians, and develop and/or purchase online course content.

Watkins said development of the virtual training center could be a boon to convince high-tech firms to locate in rural Oklahoma.

"Center personnel could work with those firms to develop customized, Web-based courses and training as well as appropriate video-conferencing for their specialized employment needs. And it could be available, on demand, 24 hours every day, seven days a week," Watkins said.

Of the \$1.4 million, about \$500,000 will be used to upgrade information hubs in Watkins' Third Congressional district. The remaining \$921,000 will help fund the new virtual technology system.

The system will be headquartered at the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.

"This system will use technology to bring business and industry, students and educators together in new ways," said David Jinks, the *CareerTech* agency's Educational Technology Resources coordinator.

"This will help us bring high-tech jobs to rural Oklahoma," Watkins said. "The digital divide that exists between rural America and our better-equipped city neighbors is a serious concern for me and for most of America."

### INSIDE . . .

- School-to-Work ..... 2
- Online testing ..... 3
- Costa Rica ..... 4
- Certification ..... 5
- ACE council ..... 5
- Benson ..... 6



*Congressman Wes Watkins played an instrumental role in securing funding for the state CareerTech's virtual technology system. Pictured from left to right are David Jinks, manager of Educational Technology Resources at ODCTE; Watkins; Dr. Ann Benson, state CareerTech director; and Margaret Ellibee, manager of Innovative Programs and Research at ODCTE.*

# School-to-Work project takes students inside operating room

Many young people dream of becoming a doctor or a nurse when they grow up. But how many of them have what it takes to stand the rigors of a career in the medical field?

A program at Putnam City High School allows students to experience life in the health industry up close as firsthand witnesses to human organ donation.

The program is in collaboration with the Oklahoma Organ Sharing Network (OOSN) and Integris Baptist Medical Center's Zuhdi Transplantation Institute.

Putnam City High School teacher Linda Bowling said about 13 students from her health career cluster mentorship class are involved with the program. Students in the class have expressed a desire to pursue a career in health care.

During the semester, students wear pagers from OOSN that notify them when a potential organ donor has been identified. Students come straight to the hospital where, if possible, they participate in a consultation with the donor's family. They also witness organ recovery and transplantation in the operating room.

"We want these students to experience the donation and transplantation process first-hand—from the time the families give consent for donation until the recipients receive their organs," said Samantha Mitchell, recovery coordinator for OOSN.

Students interested in joining the program go through a rigorous screening procedure. According to Bowling, the students and

their parents come to a conference at school where the program is explained in detail.

This is the second semester students from Bowling's health career cluster mentorship class have been involved in the collaboration with OOSN and Integris Baptist Medical Center.

"So far, three of the 13 students in my class have witnessed a transplant," she said.

About seven students were part of the inaugural program. Most of them are continuing their education in college and are interested in pursuing careers in pathology, athletic training and nursing.

"This program raises awareness about organ donation and also provides exploration of careers in the health field," Bowling said.

In addition, because of their involvement with OOSN and Integris Baptist Medical Center, students in the health career cluster mentorship class have started a community-wide organ donation awareness campaign.



**Expressions!** is the official publication of the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. It is published five times a year (from September through May) by the Communications and Marketing division. Story ideas are welcomed. Please send your ideas to the address below, or call (405) 743-5109.

## career tech

Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education  
1500 West Seventh Avenue, Stillwater, OK 74074-4364

**Ann Benson**, State Director

**Ron Wilkerson**, Chief Communications Officer

**Ann Houston**, Community Relations Specialist

**Manny Otiko**, Media Relations Specialist

**Tom Fields**, Photojournalist

This publication is printed and issued by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education as authorized by 70 O.S. 1981, Sec. 14-104, as amended. 5,000 copies have been prepared and distributed at a cost of \$808.51. Copies have been deposited with the Publications Clearinghouse of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.

The Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or veteran status. 00-014237

# CareerTech's online testing and curriculum advances e-education revolution in Oklahoma

For educators like Joy Bendrick, curriculum coordinator at Moore Norman Technology Center, testing students has been a time-consuming and labor-intensive job, involving pencils, scan sheets and stuffing envelopes. Then comes the wait — sometimes up to two weeks.

For Oklahoma's career and technology education students, that lengthy process is changing, thanks to a newly established statewide online testing system. The testing division of the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education is pioneering the innovative program.

The online testing system, launched in October 2000, is maintained through a software program called Question Mark. The system allows students to take competency tests in more than 100 occupational areas ranging from Web page designer to engine performance technician.

Students access the test Web site, enter a password and then answer randomly generated test questions. Within minutes, students have both their test results and an idea of how prepared they are for their chosen occupational field, says Pam Hargrove, testing specialist at the state CareerTech agency.

Bendrick said Moore Norman students were among the first to try online testing — and so far they have been pleased with the results.

"Students love seeing their test scores immediately," she said. "They like the instant feedback on how well they scored."

The new process has reduced thousands of hours of staff time spent processing enormous amounts of paperwork. Educators who formerly mailed huge envelopes of tests to the state CareerTech agency for

grading can now simply check their computer screens to see how well their students scored.

"Teachers no longer have to worry about scan sheets and hard copies of the tests. Everything is online," said Kimberly Sadler, coordinator of instructional systems at the state CareerTech agency. "And they still get an analysis of the test to see how the class, as a whole, is doing."

In addition to online testing, the CareerTech agency is also pioneering online curriculum with the help of Training Associates, an educational software firm based in Phoenix, Ariz.

The agency, one of the nation's largest developers of career and technology education curriculum, faced the daunting task of moving its extensive library of occupational curriculum materials to an online format.

With the help of Training Associates, six courses have already been translated for Internet-based instruction,

Sadler said. They are Nursing Skills, Pharmacology Skills, Introduction to Horticulture, Child Care Teacher Assistant, Electrical/Electronic Systems Specialist, and Steering and Suspension Specialist.

The online curriculum allows students to access course content, take unit tests, link to online resources, discuss topics with classmates via a chat room, view video clips and store class notes. The online curriculum uses a CD-ROM to provide for online and offline learning. Additional titles will be available later this year.

Innovative marketing concepts, such as a CD business card, are used to promote curriculum products. Customers interested in viewing curriculum materials can survey about 2,000 titles in an online catalog at <http://www.okcareertech.org/cimc/catalog.htm>.



## Costa Rica tour teaches educators about impact of global economy

Preparing Oklahoma students to do business in the global economy was one of the goals of a recent trip to Costa Rica by Eddie Smith, state program administrator for agricultural education at the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.

Smith was part of a delegation of educators from 12 states who toured schools and industries in Costa Rica. The tour was organized by the National FFA Foundation to give instructors a better understanding of the impact of the global economy on agriculture.

Costa Rica is a country of about 3.5 million people located in Central America. Its warm climate is conducive to agricultural production such as beef, bananas, coffee, cocoa, citrus fruits and medicinal plants.

The American delegation visited sites in San Jose (the capital), Limon and Cartago. According to Smith, agriculture is one of Costa Rica's biggest sources of income, although interest in the field has slacked off over the years because of migration of rural people to urban areas.

"Costa Rica has agricultural colleges that prepare students for careers in all areas of the agricultural industry—from the service sector to production," he said.

The agricultural colleges have a unique approach to education, which requires all students to undertake an entrepreneurial project.

Earth University, located in the province of Limon, is one of Costa Rica's premier postsecondary agricultural education institutions. The school, with its 400 students, attracts young people from all over the world.

Costa Ricans are very aware of the fragility of the environment. One of the problems the country

is facing is deforestation caused by excessive logging, Smith said.

The country has 12 tropical zones that are home to multitudes of plant and animal life.

"Costa Ricans really want to save the country's rain forests from being depleted," he said.

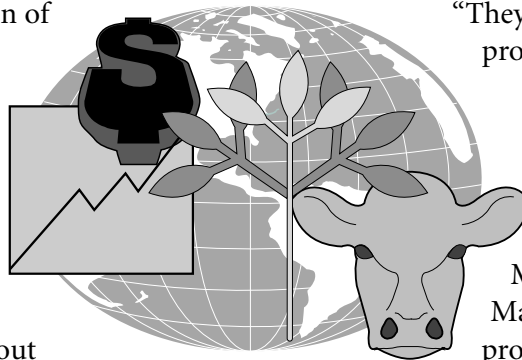
"They have many national parks and protected areas."

Smith said the trip opened his eyes to the impact of the global economy. Costa Rica is home to several American corporations such as Dole, Del Monte, Intel and Coca Cola.

Many of Costa Rica's agricultural products—such as pineapples, bananas and coffee—are exported

directly to the United States.

Smith also discovered that being bilingual is an important skill needed in the global economy. Costa Rican agricultural colleges teach classes in English, although classes at the secondary level are taught in Spanish. Smith plans to incorporate some of the new ideas he learned into Oklahoma's agricultural education programs.



A worker at Earth University, one of Costa Rica's premier agricultural colleges, tends to Brahmin cattle. Classes at Earth University are taught in English and all students are required to participate in an entrepreneurial project.

# Expressions!

## *Four CareerTech instructors receive national board certification*

Four Oklahoma *CareerTech* instructors have been nationally certified by the National Board of Certification for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

They are Carrie DeMuth, business and computer technology instructor at Chisholm Trail Technology Center, Omega; Dean Denton, business education instructor at Broken Arrow High School; Luann Kanaly, family and consumer sciences education instructor at Mid-Del High School; and Micah Miller, business and computer technology instructor at Western Technology Center, Sayre.

The NBPTS announced the newly certified teachers in December. Oklahoma is ranked seventh nationally in teacher certification. This marks the first year for *CareerTech* instructors within a technical field to become nationally certified in Oklahoma, said Kyle Dahlem, director of teacher education for the Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education. Dahlem also serves on the NBPTS board.

“These *CareerTech* instructors are the trailblazers,” Dahlem said. “They met the rigorous, clear and concise standards developed by teachers in the field and assessed by peers. They will now mentor others in this professional growth process.”

The national board certification is a voluntary process, achieved through rigorous performance-based assessment that takes nearly a year to complete. Through the assessment process, teachers document their subject matter knowledge, provide evidence that they know how to teach their subjects to students effectively, and demonstrate their ability to manage and measure student learning.

“These teachers are outstanding examples for their peers in the field to follow,” said Dr. Phil Berkenbile, associate state director for educational services at the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. “The quality of work and time required for this certification is very rigorous and demanding.

“Research shows that teachers earning certification are better teachers in the classroom and leaders in their professional fields,” Berkenbile said.

The NBPTS announced that a record number of 4,694 teachers—doubling last year’s figure—have been certified this year. A total of 9,498 teachers have been certified since the organization was founded in 1987, according to NBPTS President Betty Castor.

## *Boyles serves on ACE advisory council*

Matt Boyles, program specialist at the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, has been appointed to a three-year term on the advisory council for the American Council on Education’s College Credit Recommendation Service (also known as ACE CREDIT).

The service allows students in selected programs to gain college credit recommendations for *CareerTech* studies both nationally and internationally.

American Council on Education (ACE) is a comprehensive association of the nation’s colleges and universities dedicated to analysis of higher education issues and advocacy on behalf of quality

higher education and adult education programs. Its membership includes approximately 1,600 accredited, degree-granting institutions from all sectors of higher education and nearly 200 national and regional higher education associations and organizations.

Boyles is currently collaborating with ACE CREDIT to increase the number of *CareerTech* programs eligible for college credit recommendation. Programs that have already been approved for college credit recommendation include Auto Collision Technology, Drafting, and Business and Information Technology Education (formerly Business Education).

# Expressions!

## *Benson elected vice president of national state directors group*

Dr. Ann Benson, director of the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, has been elected vice president of the National Association of State Directors of Vocational Technical Education Consortium (NASDVTEC).

Benson was elected at NASDVTEC's winter conference held in December in San Diego, Calif. The Oklahoma state *CareerTech* director will serve a one-year term as vice president and then take the reins as the organization's president next year.

Founded in 1920, NASDVTEC is based in Washington, D.C., and includes more than 50 state and territorial *CareerTech* (vocational) education agency heads in its membership.

The association has a growing membership of more than 200 senior *CareerTech* educators and

concerned business, labor and educational officials who share a commitment to quality occupational education at the secondary, postsecondary and adult levels.

"NASDVTEC's mission is to provide leadership in connecting *CareerTech* to workforce development, educational improvement efforts and economic development for the 21<sup>st</sup> century," Benson said.

Serving as vice president of NASDVTEC will allow Benson to play a leading role in *CareerTech* issues at a national level.

"My election means Oklahoma will have a voice in workforce development and other national educational issues," she said.

**JANUARY 2001**

**Oklahoma Department of Career and  
Technology Education  
1500 West Seventh Avenue  
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074-4364**

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Stillwater, Okla.  
Permit No. 244