

# Expressions!

OF OKLAHOMA VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

## Agency considers adopting new name

The Oklahoma Legislature is considering changing the name of the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education to the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. It would also change the name of the State Board of Vocational-Technical Education to the State Board of Career and Technology Education.

The name change is contained in House Bill 2128 co-authored by Rep. Dale Wells, Cushing, and Sen. Mike Morgan, Stillwater. If the name change is passed by the Legislature, it will then go to Gov. Frank Keating.

“This new name reflects not only the high-tech programs we offer but also what we teach and how we teach it,” said Dr. Ann Benson, director of the state agency. She said the new name aligns with Oklahoma’s 54 technology center campuses. In recent years, all have changed their names from “area vo-tech schools” to “technology centers.”

Benson said the new name would also apply to the statewide system of career and technology education. The system includes programs in 399

comprehensive school districts, 24 skills centers (which serve inmates behind prison walls) and 54 technology center campuses. The system also provides a variety of full-time and short-term programs to meet the demand for customized,

specialized training needed by business and industry throughout the state.

Oklahoma’s career and technology education system offers training in high-tech careers, which require rigorous academics in addition to high-tech skills. Many of the system’s graduates continue their education at the collegiate level.

“This name change provides us with the opportunity to better educate Oklahomans about our statewide mission — preparing Oklahomans for success in the workplace,” Benson said.

“Many still have an outdated perception of us. We think that calling ourselves ‘career tech’ rather than ‘vo-tech’ will help change these perceptions because the new name better describes our 21<sup>st</sup> century mission.”

The State Board of Vocational-Technical Education recommended proceeding with the name change at its April meeting, Benson said. In many parts of the country, “vo-tech” is linked with second-rate education for non-college bound students. This is very different from what Oklahoma career and technology education is about, she said.

Business leaders have also told state agency officials that the term “vo-tech” hinders their recruitment of new companies to Oklahoma.

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— Dr. Ann Benson  
State Director

# Expressions!

## Student organization presidents share stage with Bill Cosby at anti-violence summit

Preventing youth violence is a priority with most Americans these days. Since October, eight career and technical student organizations in Oklahoma — with more than 2,000 chapters and 68,000 members — have been doing something about it.

That's one of the reasons why the eight state presidents were invited to be part of the Governor's Summit on School Violence at the Myriad Convention Center. Appearing just before keynote speaker Bill Cosby, the students received a standing ovation from a crowd of several thousand.

Based upon a foundation of leadership training, these organizations are setting a national precedent. They are the first student organizations in the nation to combine forces against violence. These eight groups have joined their 68,000 "voices" into One Voice Against Violence on the local level as a statewide project.

The eight organizations are sponsored by the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education. They are DECA, marketing education;



The presidents of the eight career and technical student organizations shared the stage with entertainer Bill Cosby at the Governor's Safe School Summit. They also talked about their work with the One Voice Against Violence initiative. Pictured from left are Jarrod Cavner, past FBLA president; Sue Botts, past PBL president; Muhammad Allah, past SkillsUSA-VICA president; and Kari Etchison, HOSA president.

HOSA, health occupations education; FBLA, business education (secondary); PBL, business education (postsecondary); FCCLA (FHA/HERO), family and consumer sciences education; TSA, technology education; SkillsUSA-VICA, trade and industrial education, and FFA, agricultural education.

The One Voice Against Violence campaign kicked off last October at the State Capitol. Since then, chapters in high schools and technology centers across the state have been working to prevent violence in their schools.

Hundreds of chapters have coordinated projects, participated in training, and led workshops for students, for both younger students and their peers. They also make presentations at town meetings and civic organizations, according to Dr. Ann Benson, the state vo-tech director.

Kelly Johnson, state business education program administrator and former state advisor for the business education student organizations, FBLA (high school) and PBL (postsecondary), helped the students launch the first One Voice project in 1998.

Together, the groups helped raise \$200,000 for the 168 Pennies Campaign for the Oklahoma City bombing memorial, said Johnson.

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# vo-tech

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# Leadership skills help former student organization president operate business

Change agent. Strategist. Entrepreneur. Risk-taker. Goal-setter. Business developer. Organizer. Wife. Mother. Oklahoma FHA/HERO President, 1981.

What do all of these terms have in common?

They are all synonymous with Stacia Long Glavas, a dynamic young woman who likes to grow things. She says the skills she learned from the career and technical student organization, FHA/HERO (now known as Future Career and Community Leaders of America) have been invaluable as she juggles her growing family with her fast-growing business in Alexandria, Va.

Glavas graduated from Oklahoma State University with a business degree and received her master's degree from George Washington University. Her focus was on international business.

"I met and later married my husband, Pete, when we were both working for U. S. Senator David L. Boren on "The Hill" in Washington, D.C. He was a lawyer, and later, a lobbyist. I was an intern," Glavas said. "I later worked as a legislative aid for a congresswoman."

It didn't take long following their marriage and move to Alexandria for the goal-driven Glavas to start thinking about setting some new goals for herself.

Glavas researched the area companies and services available to fill established needs. She then researched businesses which had the greatest



*Pictured from left to right are Pete Glavas, Stacia Long Glavas and their daughter Hannah Glavas. Pete and Stacia run the Maid Brigade, a residential cleaning franchise.*

potential with the lowest investment.

"I discovered that 70 percent of the women in the Alexandria area work outside the home. There was a high demand for household help," Glavas said. "I now had my goal."

Having a goal combined with a narrowly targeted strategic plan enabled her to meet her short, personal timeline for business startup.

Today, the Maid Brigade employs 140 people who go out in teams of three to clean 700 houses a week. With three branches — two in Virginia and one in Maryland —

Glavas's company has 17 on staff for customer service, accounting, sales, data entry, training, operations, ordering supplies and human resources.

Although this particular business might sound like a good career for a former home economics (now called family and consumer sciences) student, Stacia says she wasn't interested in it from that aspect.

It was the other activities in FHA/HERO that appealed to her business sense, particularly leadership skills and public speaking. Probably most important to the choices she has made in life are the organizational skills needed to lead others.

The Glavas's career paths have now switched. Stacia is semi-retired from the business and enjoys the role of "mom." She carools and helps in the kids' preschool. Pete retired his lobbyist/attorney shingle so he could take the reins of the Maid Brigade, but Stacia still oversees the financial side of the business.



## *Oklahoma businesses say technology centers play vital role in economic development*

A survey of 300 state business and industry leaders has firmly cemented the reputation of Oklahoma's vo-tech system and its technology centers as a cornerstone of Oklahoma's economic development efforts.

Nearly all of the 300 business and industry leaders participating in the random sample telephone survey — 96 percent — ranked the vo-tech system's technology centers as a valuable tool in keeping businesses and industries economically competitive.

Respondents were business executives responsible for hiring or training company employees. A cross-section of manufacturers, wholesalers, service providers and retailers was included in the survey. The telephone survey was commissioned by the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education and conducted by Barry Newton, director of JRA Research in Norman.

Its intent was to gauge customer satisfaction with the vo-tech system and to gather information on ways it could better respond to the training needs of business.

"This business/industry survey is just one segment of an intensive research project including additional surveys, focus groups, roundtables, and discussion groups that will help us develop a new

strategic plan for the vo-tech system," said Dr. Ann Benson, state vo-tech director.

According to the survey, 38 percent of Oklahoma's businesses have either sent employees to training programs at a tech center, had a tech center conduct employee training on site, or hired high school students who had graduated from a tech center. "All executives comprising that 38 percent — every single one — said they were so satisfied they would be repeat customers," Newton said. "That's astounding."

Even companies that had not used the services of the technology centers voiced their approval of the centers as an asset to business.

Results from the survey show that more than eight out of 10 business executives think finding qualified employees, and keeping them, is more difficult than just five years ago. Executives also said employee cross-training and ongoing training programs are vital today if companies are to prosper.

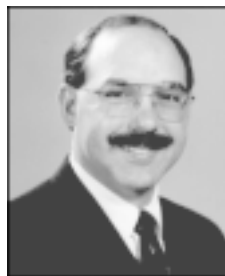
"These are areas where our technology centers can provide a great deal of help," Benson said. "With 54 campuses across Oklahoma, our technology centers offer easy access to 97 percent of our state's population. And, we're affordable and flexible in providing classrooms, equipment or on-site instruction customized to fit the needs of business."

## *DeMuth named interim superintendent of Pioneer Tech*

Bruce DeMuth, assistant state director for technology center services and business and industry services at the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education, has been appointed interim director at Pioneer Technology Center.

The Pioneer Technology Center Board of Education appointed DeMuth to the position after former superintendent Dr. Sally Downey resigned.

Board members had also voted not to renew the contract of Dr. Janet Cox, assistant superintendent.



*DeMuth*

Board President Larry Buck said DeMuth is at the school to help with the day-to-day operations and end-of-the-year activities.

DeMuth has said that he will not be a candidate for the superintendent's job. He began his career in vocational education as an agricultural education teacher and FFA advisor at Fairview Public Schools.

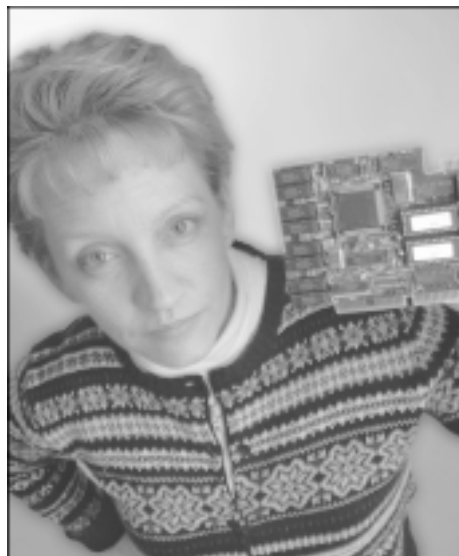
DeMuth joined Meridian Technology Center in Stillwater in 1984 and left to join the state vo-tech agency in 1994.

## Francis Tuttle forms alumni group

With May being a time for graduation ceremonies and saying good-byes, administrators and instructors should be considering some questions related to students who are completing their programs. Do they simply congratulate their students and send them on their way, or do they find new ways to cultivate relationships with them? And what benefits are there to continuing relationships with these former students?

The Alumni Development Group at Francis Tuttle set out this year to address these important questions. They decided to form an alumni association and cultivate these relationships with former students because of the wide variety of benefits for Francis Tuttle as well as the students.

“We decided we need an alumni association to provide our former students with networking opportunities so that they can continue to develop



*Brenda Zavesky is service manager for a prominent technology firm in Oklahoma. A graduate of Francis Tuttle's Microcomputer Technology program, Zavesky is featured in InContext, the technology center's alumni magazine.*

professional relationships with other alumni, businesses, current students, and former instructors,” said Cindy Mitas, Francis Tuttle’s director of marketing and alumni network chair.

“We want to develop these former students into ambassadors or champions who will help us spread the word about our programs to potential students. We also want to continue to develop this group of alumni as potential customers of other Francis Tuttle programs and services so they essentially become what Dr. (Kay) Martin calls ‘customers for life.’ An alumni association can help us accomplish these things,” said Mitas.

The Alumni Network at Francis Tuttle began this year with the formation of the Alumni Development Group comprised of marketing team

members, instructors, and representatives from the Francis Tuttle Foundation and Career Planning Center. This working committee developed a plan and activities for the Alumni Network and helped identify successful alumni who could share their successes with students, staff, and other alumni. The group kicked off the school year by supporting the Superintendent’s Welcome Receptions, which featured successful alumni. Other activities throughout the year included developing an alumni database, creating an Alumni Success Stories video, producing the alumni magazine *InContext*, hosting a booth at Student Appreciation Day, and hosting a Student Recognition Ceremony Reception.

“We’ve seen much success in our first year of development,” Mitas said. “Both current and former students have responded very positively to the Alumni Network and are excited about its potential. The Alumni Development Group is now in the process of evaluating where we are and what we’ve done and are making plans for next year.”

— Paula Gower, Francis Tuttle

### How to Get Started

- Allow two to three years to fully develop an alumni association.
- Get support and funding from school administration.
- Form an alumni development group.
- Set goals and objectives and determine related activities and timelines.
- Invest in building a usable database — this will be an invaluable tool for many purposes.
- Identify what information you need from former students, and build the database to meet those needs.

# Expressions!

## *Mid-Del, SW Airlines collaborate on EV program*

If you have an electric vehicle (EV) that won't work, who do you call? Not Ghostbusters but Mid-Del Technology Center. The technology center is the only facility in the nation that trains technicians to service EVs, according to Sandy Stephens, Business and Industry Services coordinator at Mid-Del Technology Center.

Mid-Del Technology Center's reputation is so strong that Southwest Airlines recently paid Mid-Del instructors to come to Phoenix, Ariz., and teach a 16-hour course to its ground support vehicle technicians.

Mid-Del Technology Center instructors will teach another EV training course for Southwest Airlines fleet technicians in June in Arizona.

Stephens said Southwest Airlines is in the process of switching most of its ground support vehicles from internal combustion engines (powered by gasoline) to electric-powered transportation.

"That's why we are training the technicians now instead of after EVs flood the market," Stephens said.

She said the high cost of gasoline and stringent air emission standards at airports are forcing many airlines to look at cleaner forms of transportation.

Stephens said that the technology center has worked closely with Lynn Winters, head of Southwest Airlines ground support equipment program, to develop its EV program.

"We teach his workers," she said. "He (Winters) realizes that if EVs are going to be accepted, people have to know how to diagnose and troubleshoot them."

The course for Southwest Airlines employees was taught by Christian Shearer, EV instructor at Mid-Del, and Jeff Brant, a graduate student in electrical engineering at the University of Oklahoma who teaches part-time at the technology center.

"The primary reason for this venture is to facilitate the transfer of higher education EV research and development into technical training," Stephens said. "The dual-instructor teaching approach enables us to combine the latest technology with practical application."

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