

TCTC, OU partner in dental program

Tri County Technology Center, Bartlesville, recently became the first technology center in Oklahoma to establish an agreement with a higher education institution to provide a baccalaureate degree in dental hygiene. The partnership — formed with the University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry (OUCOD) Department of Dental Hygiene — will result in a dental hygiene program offered in a rural part of the state.

The new program is a unique arrangement because the course work will be delivered to the Bartlesville site using interactive videoconferencing technology. The clinical work will be conducted on site in Tri County Technology Center (TCTC)'s new 10-chair dental hygiene clinic.

Elaine Dettle, director of TCTC's dental programs, said the new partnership will help reduce the shortage of dental hygienists in the Bartlesville area.

"By providing the education in a distance training format, it allows students to attend classes closer to home," she said. "Local residents will have the opportunity to receive low-cost dental hygiene services provided by students under the direction of dental hygiene faculty and a supervising dentist."

Nine students are currently enrolled in the program, she said. The first section of the program contains rigorous course work including human anatomy, physiology, embryology, oral pathology and pharmacology.



Elaine Dettle is director of dental programs at Tri County Technology Center (TCTC), Bartlesville. TCTC recently became the first technology center to enter a partnership with the University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry Department of Dental Hygiene. The agreement allows local students working toward a degree in dental hygiene to receive course work at Bartlesville through videoconferencing.

"The students also receive computer-based business education as part of the curriculum. Area dentists provide the bulk of the clinical experiences, with several specialists hosting the students in their practices for extended periods," Dettle said.

"We are very excited about having this new professional training opportunity at TCTC," said Lindel Fields, TCTC assistant superintendent. "Dental hygiene shortages are a reality, and the economic impact of this training will be very beneficial to our area."

TCTC also works with a dental advisory council, composed of dentists, dental hygienists and dental assistants in the region, to assist with the new program. The

dental hygiene program will meet all American Dental Association accreditation requirements followed by the OUCOD Department of Dental Hygiene. Prospective students will be required to meet all the College of Dentistry's admission requirements which include 60 hours of prerequisite course work including human anatomy and physiology, microbiology, nutrition, an introduction to statistics, and several other general education and social science courses.

"Graduating students will receive a baccalaureate degree and will be eligible to take the national board and clinical licensure examinations," Dettle said.

Tulsa Technology Center provides online courses for real estate professionals

Like most Americans, Peggy Percefull, CPM, senior real estate manager for CB Richard Ellis, has a busy personal and professional life. But as a real estate professional, she was also faced with the challenge of continually updating her skills. That's why Tulsa Technology Center's RECampus.com was perfect for her. The program offers courses for licensed real estate sales associates and brokers over the Internet. The courses focus on subjects such as home inspection, diversity in business, finance, and property inspection.

"Every three years real estate professionals are required to take 21 hours of continuing education," Percefull said. "I was reminded by a notice that I had 30 days to get my 21 hours of credit. As my administrative assistant was looking for classes for herself, she stumbled upon Tulsa Tech's online courses. This was very convenient for me since I work downtown on-site at the building I manage, Boulder Towers."

Teri Etter, Internet/IT coordinator at Tulsa Tech, was closely



From left Teri Etter, Tulsa Tech Internet/IT coordinator, stands with Peggy Percefull, Tulsa Tech's first online real estate student. Percefull holds a certificate presented to her for being the first to complete the course.

involved with setting up RECampus.com. She worked with Estel Baird, Tulsa Tech real estate coordinator. Baird and her real estate consultant, Charles Bowles, also researched online vendors for real estate.

Keith Huckabay, director of adult and continuing education, described the project as "a team effort involving Teri's guidance and the support of the continuing education team."

Tulsa Tech partnered with Dearborn, a continuing education provider for real estate that supplies the course content, the technical support and an online bookstore. All of the courses have been approved for credit by the Oklahoma Real Estate Commission (OREC).

"It was very exciting to have Peggy as the first student," Etter said. "She helped us work out the bugs and kinks and was very

patient throughout the process."

Percefull said the course was convenient because she could work within her own time constraints.

"There were a couple of minor problems, but I would just call Teri and she worked to make sure they were solved – she was very helpful," she said. "The only disadvantage I encountered with the course was making sure the other employees didn't disturb me while I was testing."

Etter said that 11 students have completed 20 different courses through RECampus.com and eight students are currently working on new courses.

"We are considering adding a course on appraisal," she said.

Etter said RECampus.com is a win-win situation for everyone.

"Real estate sales associates and brokers are technology savvy," she said. "This gives them the ultimate method of delivery."

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Former FFA member is brains behind P.B. Slices

Many people in their 20s are struggling to complete their education and find their place in the working world, but not Stewart Kennedy.

The 29-year-old Kennedy already operates two companies and owns a farm. He and partner Rhett Laubach founded yournextspeaker.com, a firm that organizes motivational speakers for conferences and conventions. He is also president of Kennedy Foods and the inventor of P.B. Slices, the new sliced peanut butter product.

It took Kennedy and a team of food researchers from Oklahoma State University's Food and Agricultural Products Research and Technology Center about three years and several hundred tries to perfect the formula for the new product, which is currently available in test markets at stores such as Wal-Mart and Albertson's.

Kennedy learned the skills he uses in his business ventures in FFA, the career and technology student organization associated with agricultural education. FFA was also the place where Kennedy met Laubach, his future business partner.

That is why he is being recognized as a *CareerTech* champion. Champions are alumni of the system's programs or student organizations who attribute much of their success to their *CareerTech* experience.

Kennedy first became involved in FFA as a student at Edmond High School, although agricultural education runs in his family.

"My dad was an agricultural education teacher and I was also interested in the subject and FFA," he said.

Kennedy was enthusiastic about FFA's leadership contests, conventions and the livestock shows.

"Going to state and national conventions were the highlight of my *CareerTech* experience," he said. "I will never forget the time I heard Terry Bradshaw speak at the national convention. He was very inspirational."

Kennedy gravitated toward the public speaking competitions. Those contests were the springboard to his career as a motivational speaker.

"I would not be a motivational speaker today if it had not been for the FFA speaking competitions," he said.

Kennedy said career and technology education and FFA also taught him many other useful skills, such as entrepreneurship and networking, which are helpful in the world of commerce.

"FFA members have the opportunity to meet the leaders in the state of Oklahoma," he said.



Stewart Kennedy, a former FFA member, is president of Kennedy Foods and the inventor of P.B. Slices, a new sliced peanut butter product.

In college, Kennedy continued in the agricultural education field. He received a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics and a master's degree in agricultural economics and international trade from Oklahoma State University.

Much of what he learned in agricultural education is related to the food industry. In addition to marketing P.B. Slices, Kennedy and his wife also own a peanut farm in Georgia.

He advises young people to take full advantage of the opportunities available through career and technology student organizations such as FFA.

"Student organizations allow young people to meet people from all walks of life," he said. "And they also teach young people valuable skills they will use throughout their life."



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Lawton firm donates \$10,000 for training scholarships

Great Plains Technology Center, Lawton, and Assurant Group, a specialty insurance company, have a long-standing successful relationship. Mark Davis, operations manager for Assurant Group, Lawton, said the firm decided to move to the area because of the "high-caliber training" offered at the technology center.

Assurant Group recently rewarded Great Plains for its efforts by donating \$10,000 to the Great Plains Technology Foundation. The donation will fund training scholarships.

Assurant Group Vice President Doug Hasse said the donation was prompted by the firm's satisfaction with the high standards of performance by Lawton employees. Hasse credited Great Plains Technology Center and the Great Plains Foundation for the rapid growth and early success the Lawton facility has achieved since it opened in March.

About 40 percent of Lawton Assurant employees have taken at least one class at Great Plains, he said.

"We've never had this high level of success at any other facility. We think the only reason for this success is the partnership we have with Great Plains," he said. "This is a great arrangement for us; it's



Mark Davis

exactly what we need to train our employees so they can come on board as effective associates. That's why we're pleased to give \$10,000 to the Great Plains Foundation."

This is the second donation by Assurant to the Foundation. Previously, the company donated \$1,500. Hasse said he and other Assurant executives have worked with community colleges all over the country but have never had the level of success that has been achieved in Lawton.

"The system we've found here in Lawton is by far the best we've worked with. Other places don't have people of the quality we've found here," he said.

"The quality of the people we've hired here has made a big difference in training and ramp-up time," said Jacqueline LaCalli, director of Assurant's Lawton contact center.

By the middle of 2002, Assurant officials expect to have about 350 associates handling sales and customer service in Lawton. Eventually about 450 employees will be hired.