

Expressions!

OF OKLAHOMA VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Students raise funds for memorial

A statewide fund-raising initiative invites Oklahoma students to show how far memories — and a few pennies can go.

Students and educators across the state and nation are being encouraged to each donate 168 pennies towards a memorial for those killed in the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. “168 Pennies: A Student Campaign to Build the Memorial” will run from Oct. 26 - Nov. 26. The fundraising campaign is similar to the effort organized by Nancy Krodel, a Putnam City Elementary School principal, immediately after the April 19, 1995 bombing. Krodel’s campaign raised more than \$50,000 in a few weeks.

The campaign is being coordinated at schools around the state by local vocational student organization (VSO) advisers, said Kelly Johnson, state Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) adviser.



Several vocational students took part in the Oklahoma City National Memorial Groundbreaking ceremony held Oct. 25 in Oklahoma City. Pictured left to right are six vocational student organization presidents and a representative from the Oklahoma School-to-Work student advisory committee. They are Dustin Matthews, FHA/HERO (family and consumer science education); Melissa Grayson, Phi Beta Lambda (post-secondary business education); Brad Clonch, Future Business Leaders of America (business education); Jaretta Stehr, DECA (marketing education); Lucretia Petrik, School-to-Work student advisory committee member; Kristen DeBusk, Technology Student Association (technology education); and Josh Brecheen, FFA (agricultural education).

State VSO advisers at the Oklahoma Department of Vo-Tech Education were approached by Polly Nichols and Rick Robins of the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation about participating in the campaign.

VSO state presidents also participated in the memorial’s ground-breaking on Oct. 25. The seven state vo-tech-sponsored student organizations are: DECA, marketing education; FBLA/PBL, business education; FFA, agricultural education; FHA/HERO, family and consumer sciences education; HOSA, health occupation education; Technology Student Association (TSA); and VICA (Vocational Industrial Clubs of America), trade and industrial education.

Johnson said the 168 Pennies campaign is in line with many of the VSO volunteer activities. Students already support causes such as Tourette’s Syndrome, the March of Dimes and Habitat for Humanity, she said.

“Our VSOs are built around community service,” Johnson said. “This is a wonderful opportunity for students to support something that is meaningful.”

Funds raised by the 168 Pennies campaign will help build sections of the memorial which are dedicated to children, Robins said.

Donors to the 168 Pennies Campaign and the earlier Children’s Memorial Fund Campaign will be permanently recognized in a place of honor in the Memorial Learning Center.

For more information on the 168 Pennies campaign call the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation at (405) 235-3313.

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Expressions!

Career Fair shows students wide array of health occupations

Many students came to the Custer Elementary School Health Career Fair wanting to be doctors or nurses. Instead some left wanting to be radiologists, physical therapists or medical technologists.

Don Claussen, a science teacher at Custer Elementary School, said the aim of the career fair was to give students a broader view of the professions available.

"We hope the career fair will stimulate interest and goal setting early on," he said.

He pointed out that before the career fair some of the male students thought nursing was a profession exclusively for women.

Claussen also said many of the first aid skills the students learned could be useful to them in emergencies. The Health Career Fair, which attracted more than 100 school students, was sponsored by the Custer/Washita County Career Connection Partnership which encompasses Thomas-Fay-Custer, Arapaho and Butler Schools.

A variety of different occupations were demonstrated at the Health Career Fair from dentistry and surgery to music therapy and forensic medicine.



Dr. Thomas Cashero of Intergrity Clinton Regional Hospital gives a demonstration of an x-ray at the Custer Elementary School Health Career Fair. During the career fair students were given practical demonstrations of the many different careers available in the health field.

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votech

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Sandy Wheeler, Health Science instructor at Western Technology Center, Burns Flat, and several of her students demonstrated different health related careers such as massage therapy, music therapy, physical therapy and occupational therapy.

Many of the fields involved fun, physical activities such as dancing and light aerobics. Wheeler said the students were surprised these activities were related to a health career.

She hoped the demonstration showed students there were other careers — apart from being a doctor, nurse or dentist — in the health field.

Participant Kynsee Hamar said she had so much fun at the Health Career Fair she suggested next year's event be longer.

She also learned about CPR and found out it would take a long time to achieve her dream of becoming a surgeon. Hamar said her two favorite displays were surgery and physical therapy.

All of the students who attended the Health Career Fair received a T-shirt and career information on health occupations.

Tri-County student gets real-life experience in Computer-Aided Drafting

When Eric Loggins enrolled in Tri-County Technology Center's Computer-Aided Drafting (CAD) program, he never imagined he would be working on a potential multimillion dollar project. But that's exactly what he's doing for a client of the school's Bid Assistance Program — and the project is proving to be mutually beneficial.

A client of the Bid Assistance Program is bidding on a large government contract for countermeasure missile containers. The firm was extended an actual solicitation opportunity through its profile of daily bid matches provided as a service of the Bid Assistance Program. However, a few minor issues were discovered, and that's when Bid Assistance Coordinator Jo Knight called the school's Computer-Aided Drafting (CAD) program instructor for advice.

"In viewing the bid opportunity and downloading the available documents from the Internet, the client discovered that additional software and capabilities for viewing and reproducing the drawings would be necessary," said Knight. "The client simply did not have this advanced technology available. With rapid changes in procurement methods, it's difficult, at best, for small businesses to keep up with the technology required to make a competitive bid in the short time allowed by the government."

To bridge the technological gap, CAD instructor Danny Cowart volunteered Loggins to take on the challenge as a real-world project.

The client requested that Loggins search the Internet and download more than 80 files and drawings. These drawings were then loaded into an Auto CAD program where they were plotted. The experience of seeing these actual industry drawings gave Loggins the opportunity to practice "real-world" applications.

"This project has given me many opportunities to see other people's CAD work, as well as the chance to apply what I learn in the classroom," he said.



Eric Loggins, a Computer-Aided Drafting student at Tri-County Technology Center, received valuable experience working a multi-million dollar project for a client of the school's Bid Assistance Program.

Cowart said the project also allows other students enrolled in the program to compare the quality of their drawings to CAD professionals.

One of the files downloaded, and eventually printed, was a drawing from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. CAD students found errors in the technical data listings of missing part numbers and brought them to the attention of the contract manager for the Bid Assistance Program's client.

The Bid Assistance Program, which was established in 1986, has helped area businesses and industries gain a competitive edge into federal, state and local government contracting. In the spring of 1997, the program was expanded to serve all of northeast Oklahoma, and an additional coordinator, Pat Young, was added.

"The spirit of cooperation between the school's CAD program and the Bid Assistance Program will allow a firm in northeast Oklahoma to competitively bid against nationwide competition," Knight said. "If the client is successful in obtaining the contract, the economic impact will result in increased jobs, and the potential to draw upon the expertise of Tri-County Technology Center students."

— By Tonda Ames, Tri-County Technology Center

Vo-tech system training helps increase number of Oklahoma business and industry employees

Oklahoma's vo-tech system is training a skyrocketing number of employees for state business and industry, state vo-tech officials announced recently.

More than 180,000 employees of Oklahoma businesses and industries were trained in the vo-tech system's industry training programs in Fiscal Year 1998, an increase of 48 percent over the previous year, said Dr. Roy Peters, Jr., state vo-tech director.

Peters said the training was delivered through the state's network of 29 area vo-tech school districts operating 54 campuses statewide.

The increase came in two areas, Peters said. The first area, customized training programs, experienced a growth of 40,531 enrollees, growing from 87,588 in FY97 to more than 128,000 workers this

fiscal year. This category includes safety training classes and workers enrolled in customized training classes designed for a particular company.

The second area, called the Training for Industry Program, trains new employees for new and expanding industry. This category saw an increase of 17,967 more workers trained than last fiscal year, growing from 34,892 in FY 97 to 52,859.

Larry Keen, who coordinates the vo-tech agency's business and industry services, said the dramatic increase is due to a booming state economy and an increased awareness by companies about how area vo-tech schools can help improve their productivity and profitability.

Keen said that vo-tech's worker training effort is a huge benefit to companies considering Oklahoma as a future plant location site as well as state companies adding new product lines.

Business leaders agree. "Vo-tech has a visible and direct impact on increasing the quality of the Oklahoma workforce. With the dramatic shortage of information technology professionals worldwide, programs like this (TIP) enables companies like WorldCom to attract, develop and maintain the best technical talent possible," said Tom Pipal of Tulsa, WorldCom's director of corporate training and development.

Keen said worker safety is another area that has experienced a big jump in enrollment.

"More and more Oklahoma companies are signing up for our safety training programs because they make the workplace safer and thus reduce Worker Compensation Insurance costs," he said.

Peters said the skyrocketing demand for employee training programs reflects a national and international trend by business to invest in workers.

More and more adults are also returning to school on their own to enroll in short-term training programs, he said. Largest enrollment increases have been in the areas of health and computer training. Overall, enrollment in short-term adult classes rose from 81,625 in FY 97 to 84,902 in FY 98.



Applause

Tulsa Tech Instructor Receives National Honor

Paul King, advertising design instructor at Tulsa Tech's Lemley Campus, was named the national Vocational Industrial Clubs of America's (VICA) Adviser of the Year. King has taught at Tulsa Tech for more than 12 years and has been a VICA adviser for about 25 years.

Francis Tuttle Instructor Honored

Terry Johnson, Francis Tuttle Automotive Collision Technology instructor, was recently named Instructor of the Year by the I-CAR (Inter-Industry Conference on Auto Collision Repair) Education Foundation in Rolling Meadows, Ill., and the Collision Repair Instructors Network (CRIN).

Meridian Tech program recognized by Oklahoma Insurance Department

The Insurance Customer Service Representative (CSR) Academy at Meridian Technology Center was recently honored by the Oklahoma Insurance Department, the first program of its kind to be officially recognized.

During a reception, the Insurance Department and the Oklahoma Department of Vocational-Technical Education presented Meridian Technology Center's business training center with a plaque signifying this recognition.

The academy will train individuals for entrance into the insurance industry as well as prepare current insurance personnel for their licensure exam. Oklahoma law now states that any personnel in the insurance industry who deal with clients must be licensed.

For those wanting to enter the field, a training program has been set up in the business training center that takes one semester to complete. During

this time, individuals learn foundation business skills and then move on to specific training in property, casualty, life and health insurance.

For those already in the field, an in-depth seminar has been scheduled in November and December. Property and casualty will be covered Nov. 30 and Dec. 1-2. Life and health will be covered Dec. 14-15. These sessions are designed to prepare individuals to take the licensure exam.

Students enrolled in the insurance program will also attend these sessions.

"The job opportunities in the insurance field are tremendous," said Jo Ann Hunt, assistant commissioner for the Oklahoma Insurance Department, while speaking to students in the current insurance class.

The Oklahoma Association of Insurance Agents (OAIA) initiated the training because of a shortage of trained personnel. A steering committee made up of insurance industry representatives, business educators from area vocational-technical schools and the state vo-tech met to form the academy. Meridian Technology Center is one of seven programs across the state chosen to train individuals on this particular topic. Other schools with Insurance CSR academies are Autry Technology Center; Indian Capital Area Vo-Tech School, Muskogee; Metro Tech, Springlake Campus; Kiamichi Technology Center, Stigler; and Eastern Oklahoma County Vo-Tech Center, Choctaw. The plan of study for the academy also includes on-the-job training, customer service, sales and telecommunication skills. This training will also be useful in more states than Oklahoma. According to Hunt, the National Association of Insurance Commissioners is working on a uniform license so that individuals can transfer from state to state.

— By Tricia Durfey, Meridian Technology Center



Featured from left are Ned Gray, Oklahoma Department of Vocational-Technical Education adult education coordinator; Doug Major, Meridian Technology Center assistant superintendent; Krisandra Newell, business training center instructor; David Jinks, ODVTE state program administrator; Jo Ann Hunt, Oklahoma Insurance Department assistant commissioner; and Scott Juergenson, State Farm Insurance Education Division.

Expressions!

Externships help instructors keep up with technology

Instructors at Canadian Valley Area Vo-Tech School, El Reno are doing their best to stay abreast with technological advancements and industrial trends by spending their summers working in area businesses.

Pat McGregor, Canadian Valley assistant superintendent, said the "externship" program has several benefits.

McGregor said Canadian Valley started several years ago after noticing some instructors were having difficulty keeping up with the rapid advances of technology.

Externships benefit both instructors and students, McGregor said. Teachers who participate in externships usually return to the classroom and update their curriculum. They are also able to use equipment that may not be available in the classroom.

Externships promote good relationships between the vo-tech school and industry, McGregor said.

Debbie White, an occupational services instructor, said working in industry helped her learn what business expects of her students. White did an externship at Myriad Gardens, a greenhouse facility,

a few years ago. She said she chose the horticulture field because it was an area in which she needed to gain more experience.

Colleen Dill, health science technology instructor, has been working at Integris Baptist Medical Center in Oklahoma City and teaching at Canadian Valley for the last four years. Dill, a medical technologist in the chemistry lab, works full-time during the summer and one day every month during the school year. She said working at Integris allows her to maintain contacts which have helped obtain internships and jobs for her students.

Dill said she recently became aware of a new cholesterol screening machine which she intends to have her students use when they do health screening at the school.

Budget constraints have caused Canadian Valley to limit the paid externships, but the school plans to return to the program in the near future. Now teachers seek out externships on their own, McGregor said. Other Canadian Valley instructors who have participated in the externship program in recent years include Dill, White, Ken Outhier, diesel mechanic instructor, and Linda Laverty, daycare director.

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