

## 2023-24 Newsletter e-Blasts

October 7, 2023

### **President's Message**

It is a pleasure and privilege to serve as President of the Association for Career and Technical Education of Nebraska (ACTEN) this year. This will be my 34th year as a Business and Technology Instructor at Mid-Plains Community College. My experience as an ACTEN member includes attending many national ACTE conferences, serving as a voting Business Division representative, attending many Nebraska Career Education conferences, serving as Division Chair of the Business and Technology Division at Mid-Plains Community College and teaching experience at two Nebraska high schools and two community colleges. I received the ACTEN Outstanding Post-Secondary Teacher of the Year in 2015.

As we begin the 2023-24 school year, on behalf of the ACTEN Executive Board and myself, I want to thank each and every one of you for your commitment to excellence in Career and Technical Education (CTE), and for choosing ACTEN as your professional association. Our mission is to provide educational leadership in developing a competitive workforce and our vision is empowering educators to deliver high quality CTE programs that ensure all students are positioned for career success. You are a vital and integral part of keeping career and technical education current and at the forefront of maintaining a competitive workforce in Nebraska. YOU are educating our students with the skills and the knowledge for success in their chosen career path. Take pride in the incredible work you do for your students, partners, and future employers of your students.

One of my priorities is to recognize the excellence work our career educators are doing in their classrooms, schools, and communities. There are eight Member Awards to present—Teacher of the Year, Outstanding Teacher by Division, Postsecondary Teacher of the Year, New Teacher of the Year, Administrator of the Year, Counselor of the Year, Teacher Educator of the Year, and Carl Perkins Community Service. Please go to this website to nominate a colleague or yourself for an award--[Nebraska Awards - ACTEN \(acteonline.org\)](https://www.acteonline.org/advocacy/).

Another priority this year is to make CTE educators aware of ACTE advocacy for career and technical education funding to their schools. ACTE has great resources and information at the following website <https://www.acteonline.org/advocacy/>. Please share this information with non-association members to encourage them to join ACTEN/ACTE which advocates and supports their school program funding through Carl Perkins and congressional education funding.

I am excited to be a part of this professional association and look forward to leading this great organization this year. If you have any questions or need assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you and have a great year!  
Jean Condon, 2023-2024 President

October 6, 2023

**Upcoming free ACTE webinars on CTE Learn**

- Integrating Pharmacy Technician Education in High School CTE Programs, Oct. 10, 3 p.m. ET
- I Need Help! Seeking Support from a Mentor and a Sponsor, Oct. 12 at 1 p.m. ET
- Navigating Issues of WBL Safety and Insurance, Oct. 26 at 3 p.m. ET

Reminder: If you missed the recent ACTE CareerTech Town Hall, a back-to-school kickoff webinar on featured member benefits, you can [watch the recording](#) on CTE Learn. [View on CTE Learn.](#)

October 9, 2023

**Meet the 2023-24 officers for ACTEN**

Jean Condon is your president-elect. Jean is a business and office technology professor at Mid-Plains Community College in North Platte. (Email— [condonj@mpcc.edu](mailto:condonj@mpcc.edu))

Rick Painter is the newly elected president-elect of ACTEN. Rick is the District Coordinator of Secondary Counseling at Westside Public Schools. (Email— [painter.richard@westside66.net](mailto:painter.richard@westside66.net))

Jon Cerny is the ACTEN past president. Jon is the superintendent at Bancroft-Rosalie Public Schools (Email— [jcerny@esu2.org](mailto:jcerny@esu2.org))

Ronda Ras is your ACTEN secretary. Ronda is the Cultural Connections 2 Success Manager at ESU #2 in Fremont. (Email— [rras@esu2.org](mailto:rras@esu2.org))

DeLayne Havlovic is the treasurer of our organization. DeLayne is the Coordinator for Career Education and Programming at Omaha Public Schools. ([Email—delayne.havlovic@ops.org](mailto:delayne.havlovic@ops.org))

The officers are serving for your organization. If you have any questions for them, please don't hesitate to reach out to them.

October 11, 2023

**New Online Course! Learning Through Student Based Enterprise**

We have recently launched a new course in your Online Learning Center: EC111 – Learning Through Student Based Enterprises.

This course covers the basics of starting a school-based enterprise. As school-based enterprises can be started in any career area, the course content has an application for all CTE instructors. Course topics start with defining what a school-based enterprise is and then proceed to give step-by-step content on how to implement and grow a school-based enterprise. Contained in this course are an array of reference materials and resources that will help instructors to start a school-based enterprise in their own career and technical area, as well as help them understand how to work with their school administration and CTE advisory council.

Here is a direct link to the course: <https://ne.ctelearn.org/EC111>

Yours in Learning,  
Tarlon

October 17, 2023

### **Contact Your Senator Today!**

#### **[Ask your members of Congress to support more investments in CTE](#)**

Congress temporarily averted a government shutdown, but there is still much more work to be done to complete the appropriations process for Fiscal Year 2024. Congress has just over six weeks to complete this work or face another potential shutdown. [Read more.](#)

### **NDE Tours Scottsbluff CTE Program**

#### **[Neb. education board tours local CTE program](#)**

Members of the Nebraska State Board of Education traveled to the Scottsbluff Gering region of the state's panhandle recently to hear from school leaders, educators and students. The visit included a stop at the Aulick Industries facility at Scottsbluff High School, where students can enroll in diesel tech and electrician training programs, with officials praising the program and emphasizing the importance of expanding opportunities for career and technical education statewide.

October 18, 2023

### **New Online Course! Enhancing Career Development for CTE Students**

A new course has been launched in the Nebraska Online Learning Center: EC117 – Enhancing Career Development for CTE Students.

Career development and management is an ongoing process that occurs over one's life span. Instructors can assist students in understanding the process by explaining that the process involves self-development through the integration of career goals, workplace settings, and events in one's personal life and work experiences. This developmental process can be addressed based on career stages. According to the National Career Development Association

(NCDA), the six stages of modern career development that students will experience include assessment, investigation, preparation, commitment, retention, and transition. This course provides an overview of the various stages and how to implement them. The course also provides information on career development inventories, the job search process, and continuing career opportunities.

Here is a direct link to the course: <https://ne.ctelearn.org/EC117>

October 20, 2023

### **CTE Member Awards!**

Good Morning!

Please consider nominating an educator, administrator, or counselor, or *yourself* for one of ACTE's Member Awards! The ACTE Member Awards recognize excellence and dedication within the field of career and technical education among ACTE members. Recipients of these awards are exceptional individuals who have contributed to the success of CTE through the quality of their work and their involvement in the CTE community.

There are eight Member Awards presented:

- [ACTEN Teacher of the Year](#)
- ACTEN Outstanding Teacher by Division
- [ACTEN Postsecondary Teacher of the Year](#)
- [ACTEN Teacher Educator of the Year](#)
- [ACTEN New Teacher of the Year](#)
- [ACTEN Administrator of the Year](#)
- [ACTEN Counselor of the Year](#)
- [ACTEN Carl Perkins Community Service Award](#)

For more information, [visit this link](#).

October 30, 2023

### **New Online Course: ChatGPT and Educational Uses**

A new course has been launched in the Nebraska Online Learning Center: ED148 – ChatGPT and Educational Uses.

This course will provide an overview of ChatGPT and how it might impact education. With an artificial intelligence (AI) language processing tool, there could be endless possibilities. However, like any other technology, its use in education is to be considered carefully, because learning will be affected. The course begins with an overview of the history of chatbots and artificial intelligence and goes on to discuss how to use ChatGPT, how teachers and students may use it, and the advantages and disadvantages of its use.

Here is a direct link to the course: <https://ne.ctelearn.org/ED148>



Yours in Learning,  
Tarlon

October 31, 2023

### **Representatives on the 2023-24 ACTEN Board**

Please welcome the CTE educators who represent your specific discipline. These representatives are your voice for CTE in Nebraska. Please don't hesitate to contact them should you have questions, concerns, or comments on how the Association for Career and Technical Education of Nebraska can better serve you and your program.

Jennifer McConville serves as the Administration Division representative. Jennifer is the Associate Dean for Finance, Operations, and Student Services at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis. (Email—[jmconville2@unl.edu](mailto:jmconville2@unl.edu))

Chrisinda Ritz and Justin Nollette serve as the Agriculture Education Division representatives. Chrisinda is the Ag instructor at Ord High School. (Email—[critz@ordps.org](mailto:critz@ordps.org)) Justin is the Ag instructor at Cody-Kilgore High Schools. (Email—[justin.nollette@cody-kilgore.com](mailto:justin.nollette@cody-kilgore.com))

Angie Chittick is the division representative for Business Education. Angie is a Business and Technology Instructor at Mid-Plains Community College in North Platte. (Email— [chitticka@mpcc.edu](mailto:chitticka@mpcc.edu))

Miranda Bright and Michelle Paxton serve as the Family and Consumer Sciences Division representatives. Miranda is the Human Sciences and Education Career Field Specialist for the Nebraska Department of Education. (Email—[miranda.bright@nebraska.gov](mailto:miranda.bright@nebraska.gov)) Michelle is the FCS teacher at Palmyra High School. (Email—[paxton.mic@districtor1.net](mailto:paxton.mic@districtor1.net))

Crystal Feik serves as the Health Science Technology Education division representative. Crystal is the FCS instructor at Loup City Public Schools. (Email – [crystal.feik@lcpublic.org](mailto:crystal.feik@lcpublic.org))

Adam Whitmore serves as the Engineering and Technology Education Division Representative. Adam is a teacher at Columbus High School. (Email-- [whitmorea@discoverers.org](mailto:whitmorea@discoverers.org))

Shauna Paolini is the representative for New and Related Services division. Shauna serves as the director for JAG Nebraska. (Email—[spaolini@jagnebraska.org](mailto:spaolini@jagnebraska.org))

Carol Erwin is our Postsecondary, Adult and Career Education Division representative. Carol is an Associate Professor for Family and Consumer Sciences at Wayne State College. (Email— [caerwin1@wsc.edu](mailto:caerwin1@wsc.edu))

Stan Haas is the division representative for Trade and Industrial Education. Stan serves as the Curriculum Specialist for Skilled and Technical Sciences at Lincoln Public Schools. (Email— [shaas@lps.org](mailto:shaas@lps.org))

Ex-officio members include:

Deb Wolken serves as our web master. Deb is a retired educator for Lincoln Public Schools. (Email— [debwolken@gmail.com](mailto:debwolken@gmail.com))

Katie Graham and Sydney Kobza are the Nebraska Department of Education representatives to the ACTEN board. (Email—[katie.graham@nebraska.gov](mailto:katie.graham@nebraska.gov) and [Sydney.kobza@nebraska.gov](mailto:Sydney.kobza@nebraska.gov))

## **In Case You Missed It: Video Contest, NPS, and Employability Skills**

### **New student video contest**

ACTE -- the host of CTE Month -- and NASA HUNCH are excited to announce the 2023-24 student video challenge, which offers students the opportunity to showcase the application of CTE and project-based learning programs in high-demand career fields on Earth as well as in space. This year's theme: "Why Go to the Moon?" The contest is open to students of all ages, including elementary-, middle- and high-schoolers and postsecondary students in any school or who is homeschooled. Submit a two-minute video by April 1. [Learn more.](#)

### **Save the date for ACTE's National Policy Seminar**

*With a featured event from the CTE Research Network*

Join CTE professionals from across the nation to voice your vision on CTE policy and programming relevant to your school's needs at ACTE's National Policy Seminar, happening March 17 to 20 in Arlington, Va. Featured sessions will cover best practices for influencing federal policy and CTE advocacy and messaging. And on the last day of the event, March 20, the CTE Research Network will address topics that will help expand the evidence base for CTE. [Learn more.](#)

### **Teaching employability skills**

Technical skills are unique to a specific occupation and often require specialized training and practice for proficiency. Employability skills are a cluster of essential non-technical skills and

attributes that include work habits, attitudes, competencies and character traits. These skills shape how employees work both on their own and with others. [Read more.](#)

November 6, 2023

If you have 100% of your CTE staff belonging to ACTE or you can encourage all of your CTE teachers to become members, apply for the Achieve 100 Award.

Here is more information and a link to apply--

*CTE staff and faculty must be a member by December 31. Application is available in the ACTE Awards portal. Application deadline is February 1.*

[ACTE Achieve 100 Award](#) for schools and institutions that have 100% ACTE membership among their career and technical education staff.

November 9, 2023

## 2024 ACTE Featured Events

Check out the events and conferences that might be important to your area. Find out more information at [acteonline.org](https://acteonline.org).

November 11, 2023

## Online Learning Center: Special Thanksgiving Offer for Members

While you're preparing for the holiday, be sure to take a moment between today and November 30th to enjoy 20% off on continuing education by using the VIP code **THANKFUL**.

ACTEN CTE Learn offers over 180 self-paced credit courses for CTE professionals.

Each course provides 4 hours of continuing education credits. Participants can enroll in any course at any time to meet their individual learning needs.

Completion of NEACTE CTE Learn credit courses provides participants with a professional development recognition badge, a certificate of completion, and eligibility to apply for both undergraduate and graduate college credit.

Purchase à <https://secure.maxknowledge.com/purchase/?portal=NEACTE>

Yours in Learning,  
Tarlon

November 29, 2023

### **Stay Connected with ACTE/ACTEN**

Do you have questions about ACTEN? Want to know more about ACTE/ACTEN? Want to stay connected?

There are several ways to learn more about ACTE/ACTEN or get your questions answered.

Our website is <https://www.acteonline.org/actenebraska/>.

The ACTE website has a plethora of content to help you ranging from information about conferences, awards, ideas for CTE Month®, an advocacy toolbox, etc. at <https://www.acteonline.org/>.

Follow us through our Facebook page (ActeNebraska) and on Twitter (@ACTENebraska).

Please reach out to any of our board members or myself if you have questions.

### **In Case You Missed It: Maybe an Econ Lesson for Your Classroom**

#### **Taylor Swift inspires high-school teacher's econ lessons**



Swift (Marcelo  
Endelli/TAS23/Getty  
Images)

"Swiftonomics" lessons leverage Taylor Swift's impact on the economy through instruction about concepts like supply and demand, says Kelsey Halfen, a high-school economics teacher in Texas. In this video, Halfen describes her love of the recording artist and economics and the fun she has putting the two things together in class to engage students -- even the non-Swifties -- in economic principles.

December 5, 2023

### **Congratulations to Your ACTEN Organization**

The Association for Career and Technical Education of Nebraska was honored to receive the Quality Association Standard award during the CareerTech VISION convention in Phoenix. The purpose of the Quality Association Standards (QAS) is to provide benchmarks for state associations to determine levels of performance and satisfactory service to their members and prospective members. QAS should be useful to states in evaluating their basic organization and whether their leadership is providing minimum, average or superior programs for the membership.



It's not intended to be a competition between states and/or to establish a "class system" of state associations, nor is it a system for rating the performance of a state's executive director or volunteer leaders.

The hope of the QAS is to prompt states to challenge themselves to improve and maintain the very best possible organization and leadership for their members within the association's means. ACTE is committed to assisting state leadership in reaching Association goals.

Accepting our award was Angie Chittick, Rick Painter, Jean Condon, and Michelle Paxton.

December 6, 2023

### **New Course in Your Online Learning Center!**

A new course has been launched in the Nebraska Online Learning Center: CS124 – Resilience Building Strategies for Career Support Professionals.

As a career support professional, you're well aware of the diverse challenges individuals face on their career journeys, from choosing the right path to navigating the job market. Understanding resilience and knowing how to cultivate it in those you assist is key to their success.

In this course, we'll delve into the science and art of resilience, equipping you with practical strategies to guide learners effectively. We'll explore the core elements of resilience, offering evidence-backed approaches to help individuals persist in the face of adversity. In today's dynamic professional landscape, resilience isn't a nice-to-have—it's a must-have competitive advantage. Enroll now and chart a course to mastery in resilience.

Here is a direct link to the course: <https://ne.ctelearn.org/CS124>

Yours in Learning,  
Tarlon

December 12, 2023

### **ACTEN Awards Portal Now Open**

Please consider applying or nominating someone for any of our CTE Awards. Just a reminder that you no longer need to be a member of ACTEN to receive a state CTE Award. The best way for members to apply for the award is through the awards portal on the [ACTE website](#). For individuals that are not members, there is a written application. Written applications are available on our [ACTEN website](#).

Again, I encourage you to apply for the award now. The deadline is March 1, 2024. Over the holiday break is a great time to fill out the award.

December 13, 2023

### **Student Video Challenge: Why Go to the Moon?**

ACTE -- the host of CTE Month -- and NASA HUNCH are excited to host the 2023-24 student video challenge, which offers students the opportunity to showcase the application of CTE and project-based learning programs in high-demand career fields on Earth as well as in space. This year's theme: "Why Go to the Moon?" The contest is open to students of all ages, including elementary, middle school, high school and postsecondary students in any school or who is homeschooled. Submit a two-minute video by **April 1**. [Learn more](#).

### **Advocate for CTE at the National Policy Seminar in DC**

If you think this is something you would like to do, please let me know. It is a great experience and, of course, always fun to tour our nation's Capitol. One day of NPS is devoted entirely to visiting the offices of our five members of Congress.

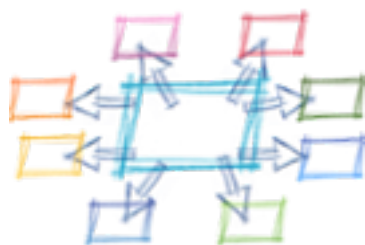
### **Advocate for CTE at NPS**

**With a featured event from the CTE Research Network** Join CTE professionals from across the nation to voice your vision on CTE policy and programming relevant to your school's needs at ACTE's National Policy Seminar, happening **March 17 to 20** in Arlington, Va. Featured sessions

will cover best practices for influencing federal policy and CTE advocacy and messaging. And on the last day of the event, **March 20**, the CTE Research Network will address topics that will help expand the evidence base for CTE

## Strategies to Elevate Your CTE Programs—Take a Look

### Strategies to elevate CTE programs



(Pixabay)

Career and technical education programs can be enhanced by creating advisory councils, attending community events, collaborating with career and technical student organizations and involving HR professionals in classrooms, writes Amy Heflin, senior manager of curriculum development for FlexPoint Education Cloud. In this blog post, Heflin writes that strengthening these connections ensures the development of relevant courses, empowers students with employability skills and prepares them for diverse career paths.

December 14, 2023

Greetings,

As we gear up for the holiday season, the Association for Career and Technical Education of Nebraska (ACTEN) wants to ensure you're prepared to kick off February, Career and Technical Education Month®, in style! To guarantee your items arrive on time, order your long or short sleeve shirt, polo, cardigan, or quarter zip by Sunday, January 7 through the Middle Creek Printing store link: <https://stores.middlecreekprinting.com/acten/>

You can ship your items or pick them up from me, Miranda Bright at the Nebraska Department of Education. (If you choose the option of "Customer Pickup - From Miranda Bright at NDE" please be sure that you live or work in the Lincoln area or will be attending the ACTEN board meeting or CTSO legislative day!) The apparel is scheduled to be done Monday, January 22.

Wishing you a joyful holiday season,  
Miranda Bright  
ACTEN Public Relations Chair

December 15, 2023

### **In Case You Missed It: Lux Middle Schoolers Build Solar Model Cars**

#### **Neb. middle-schoolers build, race solar model cars**

Sixth-grade students from Lux Middle School in Lincoln, Neb., built and raced battery-powered and solar-powered model cars during a challenge hosted by power company Lincoln Electric System. The event provided a hands-on component to a new science curriculum focusing on electricity and solar energy created by Lincoln Public Schools in partnership with the power company.



December 18, 2023

### **NCE Conference Session Proposals**

Greetings! The NCE (Nebraska Career Education) Conference is the premier professional development event for CTE teachers in Nebraska! The focus of the conference will be to address current and ongoing themes in Career & Technical Education and support administrators and teachers throughout the state in learning new pedagogical skills and technical content, while expanding their professional network. The 2024 NCE Conference will take place June 3-5 at Younes Conference Center South in Kearney, Nebraska. This year, the NCE Conference will be themed: Tradition to Transformation.

The NCE Conference is sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education - Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education and in cooperation with the Association for Career and Technical Education of Nebraska (ACTEN).

Session Proposals will be accepted until **January 15, 2024, at 11:59pm CST**. The session planning committee will review and consider all proposals and accept those which align with the NCE programming and identified needs. Lead Presenters will be notified of session acceptance in January 2024.

Each Session will be 45 minutes in length. **All presenters are required to present in-person.** Sessions may be recorded and accessible to attendees for up to six months following the conference.

The link to submit a proposal can be found here!  
<https://forms.gle/TDZZ8VYa7cBvSEBE8>

Thanks,  
Mary

December 23, 2023

### **State Career and Technical Education Funding**

Greetings,

Katie Graham, State Director for the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education at the Department of Education, has shared that the requests for funding from the passage of LB814 is now open. Allocations were determined based on the formula used for federal Perkins funds, except each school district will receive no less than \$7,500.

This budget, with anticipated costs for which State CTE funds will be used, should support the activities and strategies proposed throughout the reVISION comprehensive local needs assessment. Contact your school superintendent if you have questions about the funding requests for your school district.

Many of you know that ACTEN was instrumental in getting this bill passed. Our advocacy for your programs is only successful because of our membership numbers. The same is true on the national level when our ACTE reps advocate for CTE on The Hill. Please encourage others in your school to join [ACTE/ACTEN](#) in an effort to continue supporting CTE in our schools. Ask your administrators about using these funds to support the professional development of your CTE teachers by paying your memberships in ACTEN. I have attached a membership form that you may use to present to your administrator. They may send the school check directly to me.

December 27, 2023

#### **ACTEN's CTE Apparel Store Closes on Sunday, January 7**

This is just a friendly reminder that to guarantee your items arrive for CTE Month, order your apparel by Sunday, January 7 through the Middle Creek Printing store  
link: <https://stores.middlecreekprinting.com/acten/>

You can ship your items or pick them up from me! If you choose the option of "Customer Pickup - From Miranda Bright at NDE" please be sure that you live or work in the Lincoln area or will be attending the ACTEN board meeting, CTSO or FCSTN legislative day, etc. The apparel is scheduled to be done Monday, January 22.