

# CTE Monthly

May 2012

## CTE Quick Facts

### Did you know?

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, of the 20 fastest growing occupations, 10 require an associate degree or less. Furthermore, of the 20 occupations with the largest numbers of new jobs projected for 2018, 13 require on-the-job training or an associate degree.
- According to the state of Washington, for every dollar spent on secondary CTE students, federal and state governments will receive seven dollars back in social security, Medicare, and federal and state taxes.

## Career Spotlight

### Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources



Photo courtesy of the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education

Pathways in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources prepare students for challenging careers that require various levels of educational attainment. Students on these pathways are being educated for jobs that are vital to sustaining life for people and animals such as farmers, petroleum technicians, veterinarians, surveyors and conservation scientists.

While less than half of those pursuing jobs in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources will need a postsecondary degree, many occupations such as cartographers and foresters require a license, certificate or additional job training.

Output in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources will continue to grow, but jobs in this area are expected to decline because of advances in technology that reduce the number of employees needed. Overall job openings in this area are not projected to increase by 2018; however, specific occupations such as veterinarians and animal technicians will see greater job growth.

The automation of some jobs requires workers to have sophisticated technology skills to operate machines. High-quality CTE programs are especially necessary to prepare students with these skills so they are qualified, competitive candidates for jobs in the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources industry.

One example of a thriving school focused on Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources is the Regional Agricultural Science Technology School in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Students at the school have access to specialized laboratories to study marine-related content and hands-on opportunities to conduct marine biology, chemistry and ecology experiments on the Long Island Sound. The school also runs a retail fish market that is open to the public and managed and operated by students. Students also benefit from articulated degree programs with two- and four-year colleges to get a head start on postsecondary education. In 2009-2010, the school ranked first on the state CTE assessment, with 29 of 31 concentrator students meeting the state goal.

## CTE Leaders Respond to Perkins Blueprint

The U.S. Department of Education recently released a [Blueprint](#) for future reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (Perkins) Act. The Blueprint includes four key principles: alignment, collaboration, accountability and innovation.

The Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) and the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc) support the themes encompassed in the Perkins Blueprint and want to strengthen the quality of the entire CTE system, but have serious concerns about the details of the proposal and the specific changes proposed by the Department. The details in the Blueprint could have an adverse affect on CTE programs and result in decreased, inequitable student access to high-quality CTE programs. Some of our concerns relate to competitive funding, mandatory consortia, mechanisms that will redirect existing state funding to federal innovation grants, private sector matching requirements, and only funding a few specific program areas identified as high-growth by states.

We believe it is critical that the new law focus on improving program quality by building the capacity of secondary and postsecondary educational institutions to prepare all students for success in current and emerging in-demand career pathways, and look forward to working with Congress to meet this goal. ACTE has released a set of initial [guiding principles](#) to shape Perkins reauthorization, and NASDCTEc will be releasing an initial white paper in June. Both organizations will follow these documents with more detailed recommendations later this year.

## TIME Magazine Article Recognizes CTE

In the TIME Magazine article "[Learning That Works](#)," Joe Klein, TIME Magazine's political columnist, presents us with a compelling snapshot of CTE today, highlighting much of CTE's strongest evidence of the positive impacts for students, businesses and communities. Mr. Klein contacted ACTE after his visit to Arizona where he met ACTE members Clyde McBride and Sally Downey and toured programs in Kayenta and Mesa, Arizona. ACTE staff spoke with him as he worked on completing his story, providing him with the national data and context to round out his experiences visiting the different CTE programs. The article will print in the May 21 edition of TIME Magazine.

## School Spotlight

### A.W. Beattie Career Center

Offering 16 professional programs to high school and adult students from nine local school districts, A.W. Beattie Career Center in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania has a program to match nearly every career and educational goal.

Robotics is one particularly compelling program offered at A.W. Beattie. Through a partnership with the Technology Collaborative and California University of Pennsylvania, along with guidance and support from Carnegie Mellon University, students study robotics using curriculum developed through the National Robotics Engineering Center.

Students move through a series of introductory activities into more advanced design and control challenges, using the same state-of-the-art equipment as California University. They can earn up to 17 college credits for use in continuing their education at California University. In addition, A.W. Beattie students participate in the FIRST Robotics competition.

A.W. Beattie was recently named a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School. Green Ribbon Schools exercise a comprehensive approach to creating “green” environments through reducing environmental impact, promoting health and ensuring a high-quality environmental and outdoor education. A.W. Beattie Career Center has succeeded in reducing its carbon footprint and energy costs, even as the school’s square footage, resources and technology have increased to meet and exceed industry standards for career programs. The facility achieved Gold LEED Certification in 2011.

Career technical student organizations such as FCCLA and SkillsUSA are an important part of the A.W. Beattie experience. Dan Ostronic, A.W. Beattie valedictorian, recently won first place in the Pennsylvania SkillsUSA Sheet Metal Fabrication Contest and will compete at the national level. He is pictured with second-place winner Nathan Lish (r), also of A.W. Beattie.



*Photo courtesy of A.W. Beattie Career Center*

*Profile information provided by Eric Heasley, A.W. Beattie Career Center*

## Student Spotlight



An Ivy League graduate, Megan Robblee is an example of career and technical education preparation for a successful future. Her background in National FFA, a career technical student organization (CTSO), gave her an excellent foundation for majoring in animal science at Cornell University.

Among the many awards she has received, Megan was a Rawlings Cornell Presidential Research Scholar, a Merrill Presidential Scholar and the recipient of the Cornell Undergraduate Livestock Prize.

Megan’s first experience with CTE was in an introductory animal science class she took in high school. Megan says that her active participation in FFA and her CTE animal science classes prepared her well both academically and personally for the challenges of higher education: “My animal science classes in high school gave me a head start in studying the same subjects in college, as well as confidence and interpersonal skills.”

CTE greatly enriched Megan’s time in high school. “My involvement in a CTSO allowed me to apply what I was learning by competing in career development events,” she says. Megan’s application of her CTE knowledge proved beneficial, as she was the FFA Agriscience Student Recognition Program national runner-up.

## Online Tools Measure Postsecondary ROI

Recently two new online tools for measuring postsecondary attainment were released: the Completion Arch, from the College Board Advocacy and Policy Center and MPR Associates, which measures community college success, and a Return on Investment (ROI) Dashboard from the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.

The [Completion Arch](#) functions as a gathering place for publicly available data drawn from various federal and state sources and initiatives such as Complete College America and used to measure progress and success for community college students. Within five headings—enrollment, developmental education placement, progress, transfer and completion, and workforce preparation and employment outcomes—users can dig deeper into a number of indicators such as fall enrollments, college persistence, number of credentials attained and licensure exam pass rates. Indicators can be saved to a list and downloaded in spreadsheet format.

CLASP’s [Return on Investment Dashboard](#) allows users to measure the personal, state and federal revenue returns of increasing the number of adults with postsecondary credentials by 2025. By manipulating sliders, users such as state and federal policymakers can adjust a number of factors, including high school graduation rate, college credentials by school type and enrollment patterns by age group. Changing the sliders changes the projections of short- and long-term revenue.

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*This newsletter is a collaborative publication of the Association for Career and Technical Education and the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium. It aims to keep Congress informed about CTE events, data, best practices and student success stories.*