

# Communicator

An Honor Society in Workforce Development

VOLUME 12. ISSUE 1

MARCH 2010



## ***Iota Lambda Sigma Annual Meeting Held in Nashville, TN November 19-21, 2009***

The Annual Meeting of the Grand Chapter was held April 21, 2009 in Nashville, TN in accordance with the Iota Lambda Sigma Constitution. The following business was recommended by the National Advisory Council and approved by the Grand Chapter:

- #1 The purchase of an inexpensive portable photocopy/printer machine for the Grand Chapter Secretary-Treasurer to use.
- #2 The appointment of someone to do a marketing study to increase membership.
- #3 To find out the cost of digitizing our ILS documents and to find a place to store the documents.
- #4 Accepted the nomination of Rhonda Hoyman from Nu Chapter to be the next appointee to the ILS Executive board.

After business was conducted a Memorial service of members who have passed on was conducted Grand Chapter Vice President Sue Anthony.

Rhonda Hoyman gave a report on the National Policy Seminar.

Next, the Grand Chapter Awards were announced by Tommy Mosley and Gary Theil.

Finally, the slate of officers nominated by the National Advisory Council were approved by the Grand Chapter: Past President George Haber then installed the new officers for the Grand Chapter.

President	Sue Anthony	Sigma Chapter
Vice President	Tommy Mosley	Epsilon Chapter
Secretary/Treasurer	Anna Skinner	Alpha Theta Chapter
Past President	Gary Theil	Alpha Gamma Chapter
NAC Chair	Tony Mileca	Theta Chapter
NAC Vice Chair	Rhonda Hoyman	Nu Chapter

The gavel was then passed from Gary Theil to our new president, Sue Anthony who closed the meeting.



# News from ILS Leaders

## Awards Given at Annual Meeting

### Raymond Christensen Distinguished Service Award

Holly Resmondo, Epsilon Chapter

**Teacher of the Year** - Larry Kuretsch, Sigma Chapter

**Gold Key Award - Alpha Rho Chapter**, 34 new members initiated

**Red Key Award – Epsilon Chapter**, 14 new members initiated

### Chapter Workforce Developer of the Year

**Alpha Gamma Chapter** - Chris Carter, Columbus City Schools

Jack Lowe , Columbus City Forester

### Epsilon Chapter

Larry Baggett, Technical Training Aids

Bobby Conrad, Technical Training Aids

### Chapter Outstanding Member of the Year

Tommy Glascock , Epsilon Chapter

Chris Johnson, Epsilon Chapter

**Scholar of the Year** - Joanna Gembe, ——

## Remembering ...

The following members were reported to have passed away: We remember them with respect.

### Delta Chapter

Walter Hamrick

### Epsilon Chapter

Milt Mulder

Charles Gilliland

Louie Madison

Donnie Pinkard

### Epsilon Chapter

M.E. Blake

Ronald Cooper

Charles Gilliland

### Sigma Chapter

Louis Maneely

### Theta Chapter

William Slampak

Don H. Bailey

Mike Stupor

Henry Mancini



**Financial Report**  
**Grand Chapter Meeting**  
Nashville, Tennessee  
November 21, 2009

**Huntington Bank, Oregon, Ohio**

\$3,622.76 Savings Account balance as of 11/18/09

\$3,830.76 Checking Account balance as of 11/18/09

Deposits to Checking Account since 12/01/08 to 11/18/09

12/22/08 \$5,624.50 (5,000.00 Ed Jones, 553.00 dues, 71.50 sales GC mtg)

3/18/09 \$ 738.50 (728.50 dues, 10.00 certificates)

6/8/09 \$ 509.25 (60.00 jewelry, 125.00dues,106.25dues,218.00 invoices ARho)

11/2/09 \$4,019.50 (3934.50 dues,45.00 cert,40.00 pins, )

**Checks written**

12/3/08 \$265.00 Alpha Gamma Dues

\$702.00 Sigma Chapter dues

\$145.00 Alpha Rho dues

\$100.00 Charlotte Heatherly Stipend

12/4/09 \$109.85 Reimb Kim Theil Board dinner

12/8/08 \$442.00 Reimb expenses for Charlotte Mtg.

12/22/08 \$3000.00 Anna Skinner ½ Honorarium

1/28/09 \$3441.37 American Express Mtg. Expenses

3/10/09 \$427.72 Tommy Rhodes Mtg reimb

\$165.78 Dave Netherton Bal of honorarium after room chg.

\$286.57 Philip Reed Reimb Expenses

\$631.35 Sue Anthony reimb expenses

\$392.58 Gary Theil reimb mtg expenses

\$110.00 Renewal & late fee to American Express

11/2/09 \$3,000.00 Second half honorarium

**Edward Jones**

Balance as of 11/18/09

Money Market \$2,654.08

Checks written on Money Market account

6/22/09 \$500.00 ACTE Affiliation fee

10/24/09 \$206.58 OfficeMax New Fax Machine

11/2/09 \$1419.13 Am Express Hotel Deposit

11/9/09 \$96.36 Mailing fee for billing

**Corporate Bond Value \$32,016.00**

AT&T Inc. Global Note (4.95% interest rate)

## The First Issue of Iota Lambda Sigma's *Journal for Workforce Education* will published in the fall.

Approved by the Executive Council about five years ago, this journal will finally begin to be published twice a year. Those interested in publishing scholarly work should follow the editorial policy outlined below..)



### Iota Lambda Sigma Journal for Workforce Education

#### EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Iota Lambda Sigma Journal for Workforce Education* (JWEd) publishes refereed articles that examine research and research-related topics in human resource development, vocational education, career and technical education, preparation for work, and the workplace. The JWEd Editorial Board is committed to publishing scholarly work that represents a variety of conceptual and methodological bases. Submission of manuscripts representing one of the following styles is encouraged: (a) empirically-based manuscripts that report results of original research, either quantitative or qualitative, (b) reviews or synthesis of empirical or theoretical literature, (c) editorials and essays derived from original historical or philosophical research, (d) reviews of recently published books, and (e) rejoinders to articles recently published in the JWEd. Page costs are not assessed. However, if a manuscript is accepted, authors will be asked either to supply camera-ready tables and figures, or pay for the costs incurred in preparing complex tables and figures for publication.

**MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION.** One (1) electronic copy (on floppy disk, CD, or email) of the manuscript should be submitted to the Editor. The electronic version must be in MS Word version 6 or higher. Manuscripts typically range in length from 20 to 30 double-spaced pages including references, tables, and figures (12,000-36,000 characters in length with 36,000 characters as an absolute maximum). Book reviews, editorials, and rejoinders should be approximately 4-8 pages (approximately 6,000 to 12,000 characters). Text, references, and tables must be prepared according to the guidelines detailed in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (latest edition). The title page should include the title of the article, and the name, affiliation, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number for each author. Each manuscript must be accompanied by an abstract of no more than 150 words. The receipt of all manuscripts will be acknowledged within one week of receipt. Manuscripts are subjected to a double-blind refereed review process. Typically, three individuals, including the Editor, review each manuscript. Reviewers' comments and a letter indicating the publication decision will be sent to the primary author approximately 3-4 months following receipt. Manuscripts accepted for publication are usually published within one year of formal acceptance. Since the articles will be published on line, there will be no copies furnished to authors.

Send manuscripts to:

**Dave Netherton, Editor, JWEd**  
Department of Occupational and Technical Studies, ED 228  
Old Dominion University  
Norfolk, VA 23529  
E-mail: dnethert@odu.edu  
FAX: 757.683.5227

## Agriculture is a growing field at city and suburban schools in Texas

Downloaded 7:24 AM CST on Monday, November 9, 2009 from www.dallasnews.com

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"Our program is probably going stronger in the urban areas than it is in the rural areas," said Gerald Young, executive director of the Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas.

Much of that trend marks a population shift from rural areas, Young said. But agricultural education has also broadened to encompass a wide range of city-based careers from veterinary science to biomedical research.

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Such applied learning is invaluable to students, and that's why certification and licensure programs are being emphasized like never before, said Ron Whitson, director of agriculture, food and natural resources for the Texas Education Agency.

"It's a lot easier for them to understand things like biology or chemistry as they're putting those into practice," said Whitson, who taught in the Mansfield school district. Whitson said the state's career and technical curriculum is constantly being rewritten, and a new set of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills will take effect next fall.

### New standards

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With many of those careers in plant science, horticulture programs are exploding in popularity, and schools such as Skyline High in Dallas and Naaman Forest in Garland are on the cutting edge, said Young, head of the teachers association. Pursuits range from floral design and indoor cultivation to biotechnology and genetic engineering.

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"Probably 80 percent of the real jobs in agricultural processing and products and research and development ... are actually found in our urban and suburban communities," he said. "For that reason I think these courses are very relevant to our young people."

### Agricultural science certification programs in Texas

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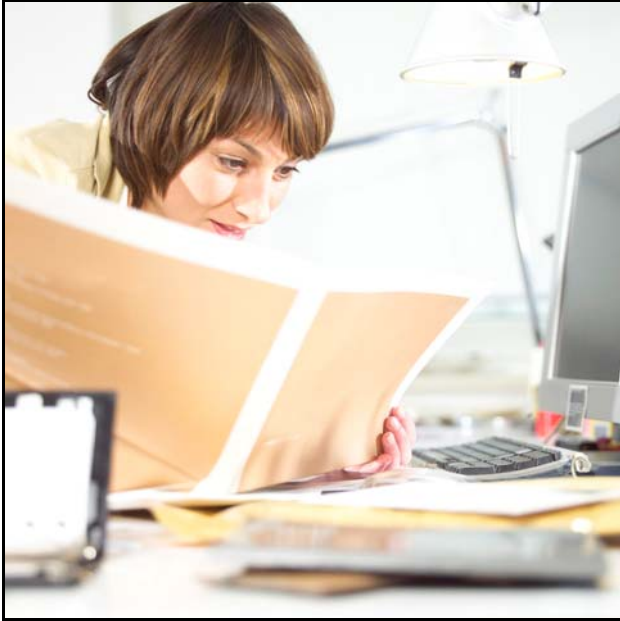
dents:

- Certified veterinary assistant: Training to assist doctors and technicians in all aspects of a clinic
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- OSHA 10-hour safety certification: Affirms a student has completed a general industry advanced safety-training program approved by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration .

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency

## *New Workers Sorely Lacking Reading, Writing Skills, Report Finds*

Down loaded on November 24, 2009 from <http://www.workforce.com/archive/article/25/27/49.php>



***There is a glaring deficiency in reading and writing among new entrants in the American workforce, and that is troubling employers who are being forced to invest in additional training—or simply look for skilled workers offshore—for one of the most fundamental job skills in the 21st century economy.***

The latest report to sound this alarm was published last month by the National Endowment for the Arts, which concluded that employers ranked reading and writing as the top deficiency in new hires. The study, "To Read or Not to Read," was based on a variety of data sources including a 2006 report by the Conference Board titled "Are They Really Ready to Work?" which concluded that today's American workforce is "woefully ill-prepared" for the demands of the workplace.

However disparate the sources of the data, the picture presented is one that NEA Chairman Dana Gioia described in the report's preface as "simple, consistent and alarming." The decline in Americans' reading and writing skills has "demonstrable social, economic, cultural, and civic implications." Workers who cannot read and write well earn less and have higher unemployment rates. Employers, meanwhile, must spend more time and money on what is considered a basic skill.

Linda Barrington, research director for the Conference Board and an author of its report, says that even among recent graduates of four-year colleges, new hires were unable to write effective business communication, read analytically or

solve problems.

"It's nice that they are reading e-mail and reading comics," Barrington says, "but if they can't turn it into a communication tool, that is where the breakdown happens on the employer side."

The Conference Board study was prompted by a closed-door meeting two years ago with Fortune 100 CEOs who worried that the skills gap would only quicken the offshoring of American jobs.

Literacy levels today are similar to those in 1970, according to the Nation's Report Card, the federal government's annual assessment of literacy levels. But the economy has changed drastically since then. Workers today need to be able to read and analyze complex, often very technical material, like manuals for car mechanics, to succeed in most jobs.

"Jobs that don't have much in the way of skills have moved out of the United States or are not living-wage jobs," says Timothy Shanahan, past president of the International Reading Association and a professor of urban education and reading at the University of Illinois at Chicago. That means even jobs that are considered low skill require workers to read at an eighth-grade level, he says.

"Schools are not demanding students to read what the workforce is demanding them to read," Shanahan says.

Bill Kozell, who runs Dr. Goodwrite, a Wayne, Pennsylvania-based company that helps workers improve their writing, says the problems come down to basic errors in grammar, spelling and tone that can nonetheless be disastrous for a company and its image.

"If you can't make sure an e-mail is grammatically correct, what else are you cutting corners on?" says Kozell of the message a poorly written e-mail can send to a client. "Companies invest millions of dollars in their image and it can be undone in a matter of minutes by one sloppy e-mail."

Financial services company Capital One, Kozell says, is one employer that offers remedial English courses to employees. But the skills gap has become a national issue that has prompted federal legislation—the Striving Readers Act of 2007—calling for greater investment in basic reading and writing skills training for high school students.

Barrington says employers should develop a more unified approach toward improving the skills of American students rather than funding a hodgepodge of programs meant to address the problem. Just what that approach should be, however, has not yet been determined by researchers.

"It's where we are looking next," Barrington says.

## Report Finds "Alarming" Lack Of Progress For Weatherization Program.

Downloaded February 25, 2010 from [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)

Citing a report released by the Department of Energy's inspector general Gregory H. Friedman Tuesday, the [New York Times](http://www.nytimes.com) (2/24, Wald, Kaufman) reports, "President Obama's plan to create jobs and rein in energy costs through a steep increase in money for weatherizing the homes of low-income Americans has so far borne little fruit, with many of the biggest states meeting less than 2 percent of their three-year goals to date." Friedman "called the lack of progress 'alarming,'" noting that "far into the nation's winter heating season, the program for the most part has neither saved energy nor put people to work." Cathy Zoi, the DOE's assistant secretary for energy efficiency and renewable energy "acknowledged Tuesday that the weatherization program could have gotten off to a faster start but said that it was gaining momentum quickly." Friedman's report found that "action was hobbled by bureaucratic delays and by the recession itself, as spending cuts resulting from the economic downturn forced states to trim personnel expenses."

The [Wall Street Journal](http://www.wallstreetjournal.com) (2/24, Radnofsky) reports that the bulk of the blame is placed on the states, according to the report, but the DOE acknowledges that cutbacks hampered their ability to handle the administrative requirements for the program. Zoi said that the DOE was grateful for the report, and decided Tuesday to redeploy staff from other agencies to address oversight. She also indicated that Energy Secretary Steven Chu as well as other senior DOE officials will address the states "that are lagging behind."

## Analysts Foresee Rebound Of Technology Jobs.

Downloaded January 7 from [www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org)

According to NPR (1/7, Kaufman), while "the past two years have been tough on...technology workers," and "not many new tech jobs are likely to emerge" this year, analysts anticipate "a rebound by the middle of the decade." NPR notes that "Google and Microsoft aren't the only companies with technology jobs. Any company that manages lots of data, including hospitals, banks, insurance firms and retailers, needs technology workers." On the other hand, "many technology jobs drive innovation. Some create new industries or different approaches to old ones. Novel drugs will emerge because of the Human Genome Project," while "music and movies are in our hands because of mobile technology." Additionally, technology is "changing education," with SynapticMash, for instance, "creating software that helps educators see where kids are struggling in the classroom and which teaching strategies make a difference."

## Arkansas Cooperative Brings Online Simulations to Middle Schoolers

Downloaded on January 12, 2010 from <http://thejournal.com>

By Dan Thompson 01/11/10

The Northwest Arkansas Educational Cooperative is bringing online simulation tools, called "Gizmos," to middle schoolers as part of an effort to increase student proficiency in the areas of math and science.

The Gizmos, provided as a service by ExploreLearning, offer visual, interactive representations of specific STEM concepts (water displacement, Newton's laws of motion, the angles of polygons, etc.) and are designed to align with state math and science curriculum standards. Funding for the implementation was provided by the Arkansas Department of Education through the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program.

"This is another valuable resource that supports the Total Instructional Alignment Resource Project (TIARP), a joint project of all Arkansas Education Service Cooperatives. Gizmos will give grade 6-8 students across Arkansas the ability to explore, experiment with and visualize math and science concepts as they learn," said Teresa Chance, an assistant director for the Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative and project director for the EETT grant's Gizmo implementation, in a prepared statement.

The Northwest Arkansas Educational Cooperative is made of 16 individual school districts, including Decatur Public Schools, Farmington Public Schools, Bentonville Public Schools, Greenland School District, Gentry Public Schools, Gravette Public Schools, Fayetteville Public Schools, Huntsville School District, Prairie Grove School District, Pea Ridge School District, Lincoln Consolidated School District, Rogers Public Schools, Siloam Springs School District, Elkins Public Schools, Springdale Public Schools, and West Fork Public Schools, along with the Benton County School of Arts.



## Teenagers Find success, future in robotics competitions

by Hatcher Hurd

Downloaded from [www.northfulton.com/Articles-c-2009-12-07-181050.114126-sub\\_Teenagers\\_find\\_success\\_future\\_in\\_robotics\\_competitions.html#print](http://www.northfulton.com/Articles-c-2009-12-07-181050.114126-sub_Teenagers_find_success_future_in_robotics_competitions.html#print) December 08, 2009

FORSYTH COUNTY – Come to Room 2234 most days after school at West Forsyth High School and you will find students working in twos, threes and fours around computers, drills and a boxy little robot named H2-Otto.

They are group of budding engineers, scientists and programmers who make up the robotics club at West Forsyth and are getting a good deal of attention for their work. Already this year teams from West Forsyth won a 1st and second place at a VEX robotic tournament as well as the Best Creative Design. These guys have already qualified for national competition in March.

But there are nine competitions available to the team in a variety of robotic organizations. Next weekend around two dozen of the more than 35 “committed” members will take little Otto in the BEST (Boosting Engineering Science and Technology) Robotics Championships regional competition to try to earn a trip to Dallas, Texas, and the nationals there.

It is all part of a pre-engineering pathway Forsyth County Board of Education has begun. It is a three-year course that prepares students to go on to college or straight into the workforce. David Johnson is the program’s teacher and advisor to the robotics club. He said engineering is one of the hot skills to have for the coming years. Engineering technology will be the basis of manufacturing. “We will need people to design this equipment, will need people to service and keep the equipment running. This is how manufacturing will be done in the future. Robotics will be a big part of this,” Johnson said.

Senior Elise Williard is CEO of the robotics team headed to Auburn Dec. 12. It is her second year in the program. In her first engineering class, Johnson told the students about the robotics class, and Elise was interested. “It was not what I expected. It was more fun really. You get real close to a lot of kids you didn’t know,” she said.

As CEO of their project, she has many of the duties of a corporate CEO, and that is no accident. BEST competitions are not just about the robots. The team must create a company, a marketing plan and design a logo and a T-shirt. They are required to keep a notebook of what they did and someone makes an oral presentation. They also create a Web site.

“It’s my job to see that all of that gets planned and done,” Elise said. “I started on this last summer. Our robot had some problems at the state competition, but we still came in third overall because of all the other stuff that we did.”

Johnson said the students learn other important skills, such as problem-solving, working cooperatively within a group and thinking creatively. In the competition, each team is presented with a box of materials – a box of junk, Johnson calls it – from which they must create a robot that must perform certain tasks to accomplish the goal of the problem. “It contains some small motors and a programmable brain. But a BEST competition is

box of junk you turn into a machine,” Johnson said.

Other competitions are different. Since two teams from the club placed first, second and won for best overall design, West Forsyth students will participate in national VEX finals. “That is a souped-up Erector Set,” Johnson said. “You don’t have to start so much from scratch.”

A big part of the program has been the support of a local electronics company, Automation Direct, a manufacturer and distributor of electronic sensors, motors, programmable circuits and more. The company has contributed \$50,000 annually to county school robotics programs, plus product donations.

“We realized early on what a perfect fit this was for our company,” said Chip McDaniels of Automation Direct. “Over the years the robotics program has really taken off. We’re very pleased to see how much traction [Forsyth County schools] are getting. “All we do is give them money. The kids, the mentors and the teachers are doing all the work.”

McDaniel said the robotics program is really starting to take off now that the school system has introduced the pre-engineering track in schools. “Now in addition to the after-school stuff these kids might be doing with their robotics club, they can start working with some of it during actual classroom time. We think that is a very positive step also,” McDaniel said.

Another benefit for Automation Direct is the clubs become a feeder system for their summer internships. “We already know where to go to find the best and brightest candidates,” he said. The students in the pre-engineering program reap other benefits in the classroom, Johnson said. When they see the real-world applications of what they learn in class, information they can use in their robotics competitions, it sharpens them in a number of ways.

“I have had other teachers tell me many students who were low-performers in their classes have made huge gains after coming into the pre-engineering program. And some of the work they are doing in here is just phenomenal, like 3-D modeling [on computer]. They are doing things I can’t.”

He also noted students graduating from such engineering programs in high school have higher graduation rates in college, where most perform with academic distinction. The robotics clubs just reinforce all of that.

“These kids are at school early waiting for me to open the door. They stay late to work on projects, and all of our meets are on weekends. This is school and they don’t even know it,” Johnson said.

“The value of this to overall education is beyond measure.”

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SOURCE: Texas Education Agency



# MANAGING HOT MOMENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

Downloaded November 18, 2009 from <http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/html>

by Lee Warren, Derek Bok Cente

*Sometimes things seem to explode in the classroom, and what do we do then? Knowing strategies for turning difficult encounters into learning opportunities enables us to address important, but hot, topics -- religion, politics, race, class, gender -- in our classroom discussions.*

Hot moments occur when people's feelings -- often conflictual -- rise to a point that threatens teaching and learning. They can occur during the discussion of issues people feel deeply about, or as a result of classroom dynamics in any field.

For some instructors, hot moments are the very stuff of classroom life. They thrive on such moments, encourage them, and use them for pointed learning. Others abhor hot moments and do everything possible to prevent or stifle them. For them, conflict prevents learning.

Fortunately all of us can develop techniques to handle the unavoidable difficult moments. Using them can open doors to topics formerly avoided and classroom dynamics formerly neglected. Most importantly, exploring these tensions can lead to deep learning.

The challenges of dealing with hot moments are 1) to manage ourselves so as to make them useful and 2) to find the teaching opportunities to help students learn in and from the moment.

Strategies suggested here rest upon the assumption that it is the teacher's responsibility both to help students learn something from the moment and to care for and protect all the participants, perhaps particularly the student(s) who has generated the hot moment. This does not mean that discomfort can be avoided: sometimes learning about hot topics is difficult and uncomfortable. But no one should be scapegoated. Everyone should be protected so that learning can happen.

## A TRUE STORY

"We were ten weeks into Introduction to Afro-Am and were discussing Louis Farrakhan," a young instructor told me. "Near the end of section, a very smart Jewish woman said, 'Only uneducated black men would believe in Farrakhan.' Six black men in the class turned on her and attacked. "Class ended, and she ran out of the room, down the hall, in tears."

"I went after her and told her that if she was ever going to understand this stuff she had to go back the next time and listen very hard to what those guys, highly educated, say about why they might believe in Farrakhan.

"I then went back into the classroom. Luckily the men were still there, still talking about the incident. I told them that if

they were ever going to get it, they had to listen very hard to why a Jewish woman might think that only the uneducated would believe in Farrakhan."

This young man was able to turn a hot moment into a profound learning opportunity for his students. He did it by keeping his head, not taking sides, and letting both groups know that they would gain immeasurably by understanding the arguments of the other side.

## FINDING TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MOMENT

It's not easy to see the teaching opportunity when a student says she doesn't think the U.S. should have gone to war to prevent the Holocaust "because they weren't Christians" -- or when a male student makes a joke about irrational numbers being female -- or when one student heatedly says, "The trouble with you is you talk all the time and never listen!" -- or when the Jewish student says that only uneducated black men would believe Louis Farrakhan.

### How we think about the moment

- The first route to making such unanticipated and difficult occurrences productive lies in how we think about the moment -- as instructors. If we can get out of our own emotional confusion, we can begin to see the heat as an opportunity to explore different views about the topic. In the case above, for example, it could be helpful to students to examine why someone might think that religious affiliation was a reason to go or not to go to war.
- We can also use the image of leaving the dance floor of the discussion and our emotions and going up to the balcony. From there we can look for a relevant meta-level issue that the hot moment raises. Often the difficult statement illustrates the complexity of questions being discussed, as in the instance of the Jewish student's remarks about Farrakhan. Such a comment presents an immediate example of Jewish/African-American political difficulties.
- It helps sometimes to think about listening for "the song beneath the words" of the student. What is the sub-text? What is the student really saying? Why is this coming up at all, and why at this time? Often students can't articulate clearly what they are thinking. After double-checking our impressions with the student, we can use this information to further the conversation.
- For example, the student in the holocaust story was African-American. Her sub-text might have been that we needed to deal with the United States' own race issues before taking on those of other nations. That idea is certainly a valid one for discussion in contemporary international politics. Had the instructor been able to bring this to the surface, rather than avoiding her remarks altogether, the class would have come away with enriched understanding.

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### Helping the students think about it

- To help students think productively about issues raised during hot moments, establish discussion norms early in the term, or at the moment if necessary. Don't permit personal attacks. Model norms that encourage an open discussion of difficult material -- by being open to multiple perspectives and by asking all students to argue their point responsibly.
- We can take the issue off the student who has made the offensive remark and put it on the table as a topic for general discussion. Say something like: "Many people think this way. Why do they hold such views? What are their reasons?" and then, "Why do those who disagree hold other views?" This protects the student while also encouraging others who disagree to understand a view they dislike and then to argue their position later.
- Another strategy is to require that all students seek to understand each other's perspectives, as a prerequisite to understanding the subject at all. Ask them to listen carefully to the other point of view, to ask questions, and then to be able to restate or argue for that position. This can work for the hottest of subjects.
- Ask students to write about the issue, either in class, as a reflective and hopefully calming exercise followed by discussion, or outside of class. You can ask them to do some research on the subject and write a more balanced essay. You might require them to argue the position they most disagreed with.
- Sometimes it is important to talk with students outside of class, particularly those who have been most embroiled in the hot moment. Help them to learn something substantive from the experience -- about themselves, about others, about possible positions, about the topic as a whole, and about how to voice their thoughts so that they can be heard, even by those who disagree. These conversations can save a student and keep them coming to class with an open and learning mind.
- If a student breaks down as a result of the original outburst, acknowledge it, and ask them if they would like to remain in the classroom or leave for a while. At the end of class, find the student and ask if you can be of any assistance. In extreme cases, urge them to see a counselor.

### Getting the students to do the work

- Ask students, when things get hot, to step back and reflect upon what they might learn from this moment. This can move the discussion to a level that helps everyone see what issues have been at stake and what the clash itself might mean.

I've seen this work in a class in which a white student and an African-American student were wrangling at length and without apparent movement toward any understanding. When the teacher asked all students to explore what they might learn from this, the discussion shifted gears quickly. They began to think about the difficulties in black-white communications when different belief systems were

at work, the reasons for those difficulties, and possible ways to bridge the gaps.

- Another strategy is to ask students to think about how their reactions mirror the subject at hand and what they might learn from their own behavior. Often groups act out in their own discussion the topic under discussion. For example, when discussing how women's remarks are often ignored in business settings, the class or the instructor may be ignoring the remarks of women in the class. Seeing this and talking about it in the moment can enhance people's understanding of the issue.

### Don't avoid the issue

- When hot moments occur because of inter-student dynamics, in ways not related to the subject matter, it can still be important to address the issue, even in a math or physics class.
- For example, if a student complains about another's speaking behavior, it is tempting to go on as if the outburst hadn't occurred. However, a discussion about who speaks and who doesn't and why, and how to enable the quiet ones to make room for themselves and the talkative ones to listen, could help every student in the room and make room for a greater diversity of ideas in the class.
- Or if a student makes a joke like the one about irrational numbers being female, it could be useful to stop to examine why and how men make such jokes and how they affect women's experience in math and science classes. It might be helpful to the men to understand why the women get upset by their good-humored jokes and to the women to understand how to counter them. A discussion of this sort could open the classroom to far greater collaboration the rest of the term.
- To ignore such remarks has its own consequences. Students learn that such behavior is OK and that they are not protected from it. They miss the opportunity to learn about their own behavior and its consequences. And they miss the opportunity to have a more open classroom in which a wider range of ideas can be explored.
- It is, of course, almost always useful to talk about the moment outside of class with the individuals involved, to give them support, and help them to learn from the experience.

### Having a fallback position

If you are unable to find a workable position in the moment, defer. Tell students that this is an important issue and that you will take it up at a later time. You then have time to plan strategies. This approach lets all the students in the room know that you take such occurrences seriously.

## MANAGING OURSELVES

We often forget that a primary task is to find ways to manage ourselves in the midst of confusion.

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## Continued from page 10.

*Hold Steady.* If you can hold steady and not be visibly rattled by the hot moment, the students will be better able to steady themselves as well and even learn something from the moment. Your behavior provides a holding environment for the students. They can feel safe when you appear to be in control; this enables them to explore the issues. Your behavior also provides a model for the students.

*Breathe deeply.* Take a moment. Collect yourself. Take time if you need it. Silence is useful -- if you can show that you are comfortable with it. A pause will also permit students to reflect on the issues raised. Deep breathing is an ancient and highly effective technique for calming adrenaline rushes and restoring one's capacity to think.

*Don't personalize remarks.* Don't take remarks personally, even when they come as personal attacks. Such attacks are most likely made against you in your role as teacher or authority figure. Remembering to separate self from role can enable you to see what a student is saying more clearly and to actually discuss the issue. It's not about you. It's about the student and his or her feelings and thoughts, though often articulated clumsily and from an as yet unthought through position.

Don't take remarks personally when they are about issues that you feel strongly about, or even about groups of which you are a part. Again, remember that both you and the group will be better served if you can keep some distance from the comments and find ways to use them to enhance people's understanding.

Don't let yourself get caught up in a personal reaction to the individual who has made some unpleasant remark. It's easy to want to tear into a student who is personally offensive to you. To do so is to fail to see what that student and his or her ideas represent in the classroom and in the larger world. If you take the remarks personally, chances are you will not be able to find what there is to learn from them.

*Know yourself.* Know your biases, know what will push your buttons and what will cause your mind to stop. Every one of us has areas in which we are vulnerable to strong feelings. Knowing what those areas are in advance can diminish the element of surprise. This self-knowledge can enable you to devise in advance strategies for managing yourself and the class when such a moment arises. You will have thought about what you need to do in order to enable your mind to work again.



## Report Calls For Better Training, Education To Meet Workforce Needs.

Workforce Management (12/9, Schoeff) reported, "Companies are having a hard time finding qualified people for job openings -- a situation that requires fundamental changes in U.S. education and training systems," according to "Getting Ahead-Staying Ahead," a report of the Business Roundtable's Springboard Project. The report cites "a mismatch between the skills and experience of job applicants and those in demand by employers." It also "calls for increasing incentives for post-high school education and training; developing national skill credentials that can be carried from job to job; making education more widely available in part by delivering it online and in customized ways; utilizing community colleges to a greater extent; and inculcating the notion of lifelong learning." Members of the commission note the importance of working with both businesses and educational institutions in order to reach these goals.

## Billboards Urge Hampton, Virginia, Students To Choose Career Pathways.

The Newport News (VA) Daily Press (12/10, Shalash) reports, "The faces of high school students are popping up on billboards that urge their peers to choose career pathways. Each carries the message of 'Do you have a plan?' and 'See your school counselor today!' next to the photo of a current Hampton student who is working toward a career such as teaching." Jesse White, career and technical education supervisor, explained that "the district wants students to start thinking early about what field they want to go into." The effort is "in part because of a state requirement next year that all seventh-graders are on a career and academic plan." Under the plan, "there are 16 'industry clusters' suggested by the state department of education, followed by 79 total 'career pathways.'" White noted that "the district paid \$5,400 for" nine total posters on three billboards "using money from a federal grant."

## Girls Less Engaged, More Stressed During Science Classes, Study Finds.

The Chicago Tribune (1/20, Sutschek) reports a Northern Illinois University study found "high school girls are bored, disengaged and stressed in science classes when compared with boys." Jennifer Schmidt, co-principal investigator, said, "It seems that boys and girls are investing the same amount into it, but for whatever reason the engagement switch is not being flipped for the girls, in spite of the fact that they get similar grades." The Tribune noted, "There could be multiple causes for the gender differences, including societal expectations and the role of the teacher." Among other things, "the preliminary results show that the teachers, who were a mix of men and women...tended to direct more of their comments in the classroom to males." Such tendencies were "all subconscious."

## Narrow Skills Training Won't Prepare Students for Jobs in Global Economy, Liberal-Arts Group Says

By Goldie Blumenstyk, Downloaded from <http://chronicle.com/> on January 22, 2010

An organization that advocates for "practical liberal education" for undergraduates says the push to increase America's college-going rate, now being championed by President Obama and others, is too limited and could leave too many students with narrow training that fails to equip them for jobs — and for lives — in the global economy.

The current focus on college going and college access is important but "short-circuits the core issue of educational quality," says a statement issued on Wednesday by the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

"A great democracy cannot be content to provide a horizon-expanding education for some, and work skills, taught in isolation from the larger societal context, for everyone else," the statement says. "Access and completion are necessary but far from sufficient."

The association, which counts 1,200 colleges as members, is holding its annual meeting here this week. The group promotes curricula that consciously give students both a broad grounding in the arts and sciences and a set of intellectual and practical skills, such as information literacy and proficiency in oral and written communication.

Carol Geary Schneider, the group's president, said the statement was prompted by the economic climate and the Obama administration's plans to pour billions of dollars into programs to help more students graduate from college (especially community college).

"It would be a tragedy," the statement says, "and a massive failure of vision for our future" if the new investments in education flow mainly to programs that provide narrow training or short-term credentials that don't incorporate the skills and knowledge that today's society and economy demand.

"We need an ambitious vision for learning to match the ambitious agenda on access," Ms. Schneider said in an interview. "Students are not hearing what they should learn in college."

### MIXED VIEWS FROM EMPLOYERS

The association coupled its statement on "The Quality Imperative" with the release of the results of a new poll of employers. Only 26 percent of respondents said two-year colleges were "doing a good job" of preparing students effectively for the challenges of today's global economy. Twenty percent said "significant improvement" was needed. The employers' perception of four-year colleges was only slightly better: 28 percent said the colleges were doing a good job, while 19 percent said significant improvements were needed.

Ms. Schneider said the findings bolstered the argument for the kind of liberal education the association promotes.

What's needed, said Ms. Schneider, is a national dialogue to help students understand the value of a broader education and ways to distinguish it from a narrow one.

"No one tells them, Don't just spend your time installing solar panels; you want to learn about energy," she said. "No one gives first-

generation students this advice."

She said the problem lay with many kinds of institutions, not simply with certain community colleges or career colleges. Plenty of traditional four-year colleges "are not doing what they need to do" to prepare their students for 21st-century opportunities," she said. Such colleges fall short, she said, because they don't require senior projects in which students integrate course work from various classes, don't require substantial amounts of writing, or don't require students to do much problem solving or learn much about the rest of the world.

### CREATING A 'BIFURCATION'

Mary Spilde, president of Lane Community College, in Oregon, and a member of the association's Board of Directors, said liberal education was often easier to achieve at four-year liberal-arts colleges, where students typically enter with better academic preparation, enjoy small classes, and have fewer outside obligations such as full-time jobs.

But the difficulties faced by other students — obstacles the statement describes as "systemic arrangements that now impede access" to liberal education — are no excuse for institutions like hers and others to avoid the challenge of thinking critically about the curricula they offer.

"It's hard to do it when there has been such disinvestment," she said. "But if we don't do it, then we're creating this bifurcation, and that is not moving the country forward."

At her institution, for example, students who earn associate degrees get a good grounding in general education and many of the critical-thinking skills the association endorses, she said. But the skills taught in the college's one-year certificate programs, such as computation, communication, and human relations, may not be broad enough. "I think employers are saying they want more," she said.

The employer survey, conducted by Hart Research Associates, asked 302 employers about specific emerging educational practices and their value in helping prepare college students for success. Three practices drew particularly strong support: expecting students to complete a significant project to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of their major and acquire a range of analytical, problem-solving, and communication skills; expecting students to complete an internship or other experience that would expose them to real-world issues; and ensuring that students had the skills to conduct research on questions in their field.

In contrast, the employers surveyed were relatively less enthusiastic about practices such as expecting students to acquire hands-on skills in the methods of science, expecting students to learn about cultural and ethnic diversity in the United States, expecting students to learn about the point of view of non-Western societies, and expecting students to take courses exploring such big societal challenges as environmental sustainability, public health, or human rights. Still, at least 50 percent said each of those practices would help prepare students a lot or a fair amount.

## Federal Funding Issues

August 3, 2009

On July 24, the House of Representatives passed its version of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill by a vote of 264-153. Only a few minor changes were made to the House bill during the final discussion. You can read more about the bill in ACTE's July 20 Legislative Update. The House was able to pass all 12 of its annual appropriations bills before adjourning for the August recess.

The appropriations process is also moving forward in the Senate. On July 30, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved its FY 2010 spending bill for programs housed under the departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education. In this bill, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act is funded at FY 2009 levels.

The Senate Appropriations Committee had a much tighter spending cap to work with than the House; therefore, increases are not as prevalent in the Senate's version of the FY 2010 spending bill. Highlights of the Senate's bill include:

- \$2.97 billion for state grants for job training
- \$105 million for YouthBuild, which is \$35 million above FY 2009
- \$13.8 billion for Title I Grants for low-income children, restoring \$800 million of the president's recommended \$1.5 billion cut
- \$12.6 billion for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- \$700 million for a new school-renovation program

The Senate appropriations bill is expected to go before the entire Senate when Congress reconvenes in September. While there is still quite a bit of work to be done, it seems that House and Senate appropriators are dedicated to completing and passing all spending bills by the September 30 end-of-the-fiscal-year deadline (a feat that has not occurred in a number of years). If appropriations bills are not finalized by the end of the fiscal year, Congress must pass a continuing resolution, which allows programs to continue to be funded at the previous year's levels until work can be completed.



## ACTE Publishes A New Issue Brief on STEM Challenges

This new Issue Brief explores the integral role CTE programs and initiatives play in addressing the STEM challenge and securing America's leadership in innovation. CTE programs offer students a deeper understanding of STEM career pathways, build interest in STEM-related careers by making math and science content more relevant and tangible to students and help grow the STEM workforce pipeline by encouraging more students from under-represented populations to enter these career fields.

Download it at

[www.acteonline.org/uploadedFiles/Publications\\_and\\_Online\\_Media/files/STEM\\_Issue\\_Brief.pdf](http://www.acteonline.org/uploadedFiles/Publications_and_Online_Media/files/STEM_Issue_Brief.pdf)



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## *Livermore High School Wins State Grant to Start Green Engineering Academy*

Downloaded on February 26, 2010 from [www.independentnews.com](http://www.independentnews.com)

By Patricia Koning

At a time when education news centers around budget reductions and program cuts, Livermore High School (LHS) in Livermore, CA is preparing to add an ambitious new program — the “Engineering Green Solutions” Academy, starting in the fall of 2010. The approximately 90 students in the academy will enjoy smaller class sizes, fewer teachers, hands-on projects, and mentorship and internship opportunities with local businesses.

The academy will be funded with up to \$224,000 in grants from the California Department of Education’s California Partnership Academies (CPA) program. LHS learned recently that it won a CPA planning grant of \$29,000 to develop and implement the program. Over the next three years, starting in the 2010/11 school year, the school will receive implementation grants of up to \$195,000 depending on the number of students enrolled in the program.

“This is an exciting, untapped area for LHS and we are absolutely thrilled to be able to make our teachers’ and students’ academy vision a reality,” says Kelly Bowers, assistant superintendent of educational services. “The added bonus of a ‘green’ focus is particularly attractive to students and potential industry employers.”

Sue Johnston, an LHS math and science teacher who served on the planning committee, describes green engineering as the engineering of the future. “Modern engineering is about making things more efficient and environmentally friendly,” she explains. “When you are looking forward, green is the only way to go.”

CPA represents a high school reform movement focused on smaller learning communities with a career theme, green engineering in this case. Academy components include rigorous academics and career technical education (CTE) with a career focus, a committed team of teachers, and active business and post-secondary partnerships.

Approximately 30 tenth grade students will start the LHS program next fall, with an additional 30 students added each year. The students will take four academy classes together: English, social science, science, and CTE.

They will have the same teachers for the academy classes from year to year, with exceptions for specialty subjects such as environmental science. They will also deal with scheduling conflicts. The academy teachers will have a common planning period to enable collaboration, linked curriculum, and projects that span multiple classes.

“This will be an opportunity for students to build close relationships with a few teachers,” says LHS CTE teacher Mike Waltz, another member of the planning committee. “This has proven successful for improving academic achievement.”

The academy classes, even English and social science, will have an engineering slant. Johnston explains that the classes will have the same basic descriptions as non-academy classes in the same subjects and meet all standards. “Where there is flexibility, we will focus on green engineering. For example, world history would cover the indus-

trial revolution in depth. English will cover technical writing principles,” she adds.

The CTE sequence will cover Principles of Engineering, Architecture, and Design. Waltz recommends that students interested in the academy take Introduction to Computer Aided Design as freshmen. He plans to use Project Lead the Way (PLTW) [[www.pltw.org](http://www.pltw.org)] engineering curriculum as the basis for the technical sequence. PLTW is the largest nonprofit provider of innovative and rigorous Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education programs. “These will be top-notch classes, with the best equipment and curriculum,” says Waltz.

By junior year, students could be building an electric car, modernizing campus buildings to be more energy efficient, or designing windmills. One goal is to do projects that will benefit the entire school. “We are like a little city here. We have everything going on,” says Johnston. “Projects could be as simple as re-designing recycling containers or making the football snack shack more comfortable and energy efficient.”

One tenet of the program is that 50% of the students must be at-risk. Students can be identified as at-risk in a number of ways: if they belong to an under-achieving subgroup, have a low grade point average, or have scored low on standardized tests, to name a few criteria.

“The goal is to interest all levels of students. This program will serve college bound students interested in engineering, vocational students who plan to earn an associate’s degree or certificate, and students who will enter the workforce directly from high school,” says Johnston.

An important part of the program is collaboration with the local business community. Business partners will provide matching funding or in-kind donations, mentors, and internship opportunities. Students will be matched with a business mentor in their junior year and can be placed in internship positions in their senior year.

The identified community partner agencies are Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory; Chevron Corporation; the Alameda County Office of Education; ConnectEd: The California Center for College and Career; Project Lead the Way; Las Positas College; Contra Costa Economic Partnership; Workforce Incubator; and the Tri-Valley Community Foundation.

“I’m very proud of the work of this planning team,” says Avilla. “These folks are 100% committed to challenging and engaging students in active career exploration and helping them acquire transferable workplace skills in today’s global marketplace.”

In the coming weeks, Waltz and Johnston plan to meet with freshman classes to tell students about the academy. “We want every interested student to apply,” says Johnston. “The academy will have great engineering curriculum, exciting projects, mentorships and internships, smaller class sizes, and the opportunity for closer relationships with teachers. If students feel lost at a school with 2,000 people, the academy might be the place for them.”

For more information on CPA, visit [www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/cpagen.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/cpagen.asp).

# The Green Jobs Myth

Downloaded on February 26, 2010 from [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

By Sunil Sharan

"Green jobs" have become a central underpinning of the Obama administration's rationale to promote clean energy. But how valid is the assumption that a "clean-energy" economy will generate enough jobs to mitigate today's high level of unemployment -- new [jobless claims were up 22,000 this week](#) -- and to meet the needs of future generations? A green economy would have to spout jobs in the millions to do both. The facts challenge the prevailing thinking among some policymakers and officials that green jobs are a principal reason for transforming the economy.

Let's consider just one clean-energy sector, the smart grid, for its job-creation potential. The Obama administration allocated a little more than \$4 billion in funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to the smart grid, an unprecedented amount for a hitherto-neglected but critical piece of our national infrastructure. Much of this is to be spent installing close to 20 million "smart meters" over the next five years. Smart meters are digital versions of the spinning electric meters that are omnipresent nationwide. Whereas spinning meters have changed little in more than a century and must be read by workers, smart meters automatically transmit electricity consumption data to a utility. Virtually eliminating human intervention, smart meters promise more accurate measurement of electricity usage as well as increasingly efficient management of energy production resources.

Nearly 40 million smart meters have been deployed worldwide, mostly in Europe. Jobs created in this industry can be broadly classified into four categories: installation, manufacturing, research and development, and IT services.

First, installation: It typically takes a team of two certified electricians half an hour to replace the old, spinning meter. In one day, two people can install about 15 new meters, or about 5,000 in a year. Were a million smart meters to be installed in a year, 400 installation jobs would be created. It follows that the planned U. S. deployment of 20 million smart meters over five years, or 4 million per year, should create 1,600 installation jobs. Unless more meters are added to the annual deployment schedule, this workforce of 1,600 should cover installation needs for the next five years.

Although a surge of new digital meters will be produced, the manufacturing process is highly automated. And with much of it

accomplished overseas, net creation in domestic manufacturing jobs is expected to be only in the hundreds. In R&D and IT services, high-paying white-collar jobs are on the horizon, but as with manufacturing, the number of jobs created is forecast to be in the hundreds or low thousands.

Now let's consider job losses. It takes one worker today roughly 15 minutes to read a single meter. So in a day, a meter reader can scan about 30 meters, or about 700 meters a month. Meters are typically read once a month, making it the base period to calculate meter-reading jobs. Reading a million meters every month engages about 1,400 personnel. In five years, 20 million manually read meters are expected to disappear, taking with them some 28,000 meter-reading jobs.

In other words, instead of creating jobs, smart metering will probably result in net job destruction. This should not be surprising because the main method of making the electrical grid "smart" is by automating its functions. Automation by definition obviates the need for people.

In other "clean-energy" sectors such as solar and wind energy, jobs are predicted to emerge in the same broad categories of installation, manufacturing, R&D and IT services, but the near-term expected levels of investment in and adoption of these renewable sources of energy mean that net job creation should top out in the tens of thousands, as opposed to the desired hundreds of thousands or more. Electric vehicles represent another promising green sector, but even if the vehicles were rolled out in substantive quantities, jobs would be created mainly in research and development and infrastructure support, and there, too, only in the hundreds or maybe even thousands. Manufacturing jobs would grow only incrementally since electric vehicle production will for the most part cannibalize that of gasoline-powered cars.

For the purpose of creating jobs, then, a "clean-energy economy" will not offer a panacea. This does not necessarily mean that America should not become green to alleviate climate change, to kick its addiction to foreign oil or to use energy sources more efficiently. But those who take great pains to tout the "job-creation potential" of the green space might just end up inducing labor pains all around.



## A Push for Better Workforce Training

Downloaded from [www.philly.com/philly/business/85751942.html](http://www.philly.com/philly/business/85751942.html) on March 1, 2010.

By Diane Mastrull

Alarms have been sounding for decades, but lately with an escalating sense of urgency from the White House and local companies alike:

This nation could well find itself with a workforce lacking the skills needed for the jobs of the future.

Those jobs, labor researchers say, will be science- and math-intensive - to meet a demand for more health-information technology, clean-energy alternatives, and "the discovery of services, products, and industries we have yet to imagine," as President Obama put it last week in a speech to the Business Roundtable, a pro-business policy-advocacy group in Washington.

"We need to invest and nurture the industries of the future, and we need to train our workers to compete for those jobs," Obama said. "Nations around the world, from Asia to Europe, have already realized this."

As the president presses a national agenda for education and training initiatives, a call to action will go out soon for a similar workforce-development commitment from leaders of industry, academia, and government in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware.

"Innovation in STEM" (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) is a mobilizing conference set for March 15 at Lincoln Financial Field, sponsored by the Delaware Valley Industrial Resource Center, an economic-development agency.

"At the conclusion, we expect a more collaborative effort and commitment at educating our youth by all the stakeholders," said Mark Basla, director of marketing and business development for the DVIRC.

He has no illusions that developing a workforce proficient in fields of study many avoid will be an easy task.

"It's kind of like solving world hunger," Basla said.

America's labor-aptitude deficiencies have gotten considerable attention since at least 1983, when the National Commission on Excellence in Education issued the report, *A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*.

For student shortcomings in science and math, the report spread the blame, from teachers not qualified to teach the subjects to school days deemed too short. It also cited a "cafeteria-style curriculum in which the appetizers and desserts can easily be mistaken for the main courses," and allowed students to migrate away from vocational and college-preparatory programs.

In calling for reform, the report concluded: "It is by our willingness to take up the challenge and our resolve to see it through that America's place in the world will be either secured or forfeited."

Carl Van Horn, director of Rutgers University's John J. Heldrich

Center for Workforce Development in New Brunswick, called the report "one of the first national alarm bells rung about the fact we, as a country, were falling behind other nations in our preparation, in high school especially. The record since then has been a lot of effort toward this, but we still are behind many other countries."

That's despite increased standards in almost every state, requiring more math and science curriculum, Van Horn said. The problem remains "a paucity of teachers certified in math and science . . . at high school levels."

George Cornelius, secretary of Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development, blamed a societal shift placing greater value on Wall Street jobs. "The reality is, in our society, the money is not usually in math and science, it's in the financial-service industries or sales and marketing," Cornelius said. That's a significant change from the 1960s, he said, when getting to the moon was President John F. Kennedy's priority, and "math and science enjoyed a higher status."

At Delaware County Community College, president Jerry Parker chuckled when asked about all the attention the need for a better-trained workforce is getting now. "We've been at this . . . for a decade or more," Parker said. The college's efforts came in response to pleas from local manufacturers, who, he said, were "desperate" for skilled workers and foresaw an even greater shortage on the horizon once baby boomers started to retire.

Resulting applied-engineering programs produced graduates with the skills those companies, including Exelon and Sunoco, needed, Parker said.

Much of today's workforce-development challenge is getting students interested in jobs they have little chance to know much about, he said.

TV could be a big help, he half-joked, noting that shows such as *Grey's Anatomy* have "glamorized" health-care jobs. "I wish we could find a way to glamorize a process-control technician."

Until then, the college intends to generate interest the old-fashioned way - in the classroom. Last month, it opened the STEM Center, 105,000 square feet of science, engineering, and math laboratories and classrooms. Part of a \$60 million complex, the facility joined the Advanced Technology Center, which opened in September to accommodate the training requirements of business and industry.

DVIRC's Basla has this hope for the mid-March conference: that it results in a commitment to establish a STEM learning and activity center at the Navy Yard, one of Philadelphia's leading high-tech addresses. He also would like companies to support new high-tech programs in schools, and to open their doors to students so they can see how products "get developed, engineered, created."

Ensuring a capable and competitive workforce depends on educators, business leaders, and government officials all accepting a degree of responsibility, said Cyndi Gaudet, director of the Jack and Patti Phillips Workplace Learning and Performance Institute at the University of Southern Mississippi. "Most often," she said, "different stakeholders want to point the finger at the other stakeholders."

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Iota Lambda Sigma recognizes individuals for excellence in their various endeavors in workforce education and development.

Persons invited into this professional society come from the fields of education, business, and industry.

We are dedicated to scholarship and excellence in education, business, and industry workforce development. The Our Society as a community of professionals dedicated to worthy ideals:

- Recognizes scholarship and excellence in workforce development.
- Promotes the development and dissemination of worthy educational ideals and practices in workforce development.
- Enhances the continuous professional growth and leadership of its diverse membership.
- Fosters inquiry and reflection on significant educational and training issues.
- Maintains a high degree of professional fellowship.



## *The Emblem of the Society*

The emblem of the Society shall be a key in the form of a keystone with indented top, bearing on the face the Greek letters Iota Lambda Sigma, surmounting a torch over which is crossed a rule and a hammer.

The original design of the emblem is in the keeping of the Executive Secretary-Treasurer, and all emblems worn by members of the Society shall be true copies of the same. Only authentic copies of these in such size or sizes as shall be authorized by the Executive Board shall be used or recognized by the Society or its members.

**We are on the web!**  
[www.iotalambdasigma.com](http://www.iotalambdasigma.com)