

Newsletter

Guenthner Scholarship Reminder

- Michael Netzloff, Special Populations, Private Career Schools, Standards & Curriculum Administrator and MOA State Coordinator

The Reuben T. Guenthner Scholarship is given in memory of Reuben T. Guenthner, a leader in Career and Technical Education (CTE) in both the state and nation. Mr. Guenthner was first a CTE student, then a secondary CTE instructor, a local administrator supportive of CTE programs, and finally a member of the North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education from 1968 to 1995. Mr. Guenthner was also appointed to the National Advisory Council on Career Education by President Reagan in 1982. At the time of his retirement in 1995, Mr. Guenthner was the North Dakota State Director of Career and Technical Education. One scholarship in the amount of \$600 will be awarded in May 2026, to be used for the 2025-2026 school year. Eligible applicants must meet all the following requirements:

- Be a graduating senior from a North Dakota high school in 2026.
- Have completed one or more career and technical education courses between grades 9 and 12; (Career and Technical Education courses may be in any of the following programs: Agriculture Education; Business Education; Family and Consumer Sciences; Information Technology; Marketing Education; Technology and Engineering Education; or any of the programs in Trade, Industry, Technical and Health Education).
- Enroll in a two-year North Dakota public, postsecondary institution.
- Enroll as a full-time student in a career and technical education program of two years or less.

Please watch the ND CTE website under Students/Family and Scholarship Opportunities for this year's link to the application material to appear here: <https://www.cte.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/Students/GuenthnerScholarship.pdf>

The application portal will open January 15, 2026, and close April 1, 2026. Please encourage all eligible CTE students to apply!

Dates of Interest

February 2026
CTE Month

February 9-10, 2026
DECA Collegiate State Conference

February 22-23, 2026
FBLA Collegiate State Conference

March 1-3, 2026
DECA State Conference

March 29-31, 2026
FBLA State Conference

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Health Science is in the News:

-Shila Leno, Health Science and Public Safety Education Supervisor

Health Science and Public Safety programs continue to grow across North Dakota, and that's a great thing—healthcare remains the largest industry in the United States. Rural areas, including many in North Dakota, face ongoing workforce shortages that make these programs even more important. On December 29th, Governor Armstrong announced that North Dakota has been awarded \$199 million to support the first year of a statewide program to support this effort.

The Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) focuses on four main goals: rebuilding and retaining a rural health workforce, preventing chronic disease, improving health outcomes and reducing costs by bringing high-quality care closer to home, and increasing efficiency using modern technology and data. Before this federal funding can be accepted, the legislature must hold a special session to appropriate the funds. This session has been scheduled for Jan. 21st.

A portion of the plan put forth in the request was dedicated to expanding opportunities for high school students. This includes funding for additional Scrubs Camps and Scrubs Academies, start-up funds to launch new HOSA chapters, and an online HOSA chapter for students completing diplomas virtually.

“A portion of the plan’s request was dedicated to expanding opportunities for high school students.”

“Early exposure to healthcare careers is central to the effort... hands-on experience can spark a lifelong career.”

Early exposure to healthcare careers is central to the effort. The program includes a two-year tuition waiver and admissions agreements to encourage students to stay in-state, along with programs connecting students to rural placements, pre-hiring opportunities, and local mentors. A robust shadowing and mentoring initiative will allow students to gain peer mentoring from health

professions students and hands-on experience with practitioners. Through the Multi Partner Health Collaborative, agencies such as HHS, AHEC and NDCTE as well as others are working together to pool resources, avoid duplication, and better assist rural areas previously underserved.

CTE Health Science and Public Safety programs also have several Emergency Medical Services (EMS) students that may be excited to hear about new opportunities on the horizon, including community paramedicine, where EMTs and paramedics provide non-emergency care in rural areas under telehealth supervision. Combined with support for rural centers facing expiring ACA tax credits and the new online Community Health Worker Certification, these initiatives strengthen the state's health workforce while expanding student opportunities.

Hands-on experiences matter. Holding a stethoscope, performing an assessment, or seeing oneself in a healthcare role can spark a lifelong career, while also allowing students to learn what isn't right for them before investing in post-secondary education. Many students discover alternative healthcare paths they hadn't considered, helping them find careers suited to their interests and personalities.

These programs help ensure students don't have to leave their communities to find rewarding careers, highlighting local opportunities in high-demand fields. Reflecting on past generations, it's clear how important early exposure is: students today have far more opportunities than decades ago and our teachers are helping them explore their options.

Thank you for supporting these efforts to grow our healthcare workforce and provide meaningful experiences for students. Together, we can make 2026 a year to remember! To read more about the RHTP, visit: hhs.nd.gov/rural-health-transformation.

NDACTE Updates

-Carla Hixson, NDACTE Director

North Dakota ACTE - Award Winner Spotlight - Innovative Program Award

- How long have you been teaching in CTE?
 - ◇ David Leier: Year 10
 - ◇ Erik Johnson: Year 5
- Can you talk a bit about your Agriculture program ?
 - ◇ The growth of the program. When I started 10 years ago it was a single teacher program. In three years, the enrollment had increased to add a second teacher. Since then, we have been a two-teacher program. This allowed us to offer more specialized pathway elective courses to the juniors and seniors. Another part we are most proud of is our facility. Killdeer built a new 7-12 building that opened in the 2022-23 school year. Our facility is truly state-of-the-art and allows us to do many project and provide meaningful hands-on learning experiences
- Why did you join NDACTE?
 - ◇ I joined NDACTE for the connections and benefits that come with being part of a professional organization. Being able to collaborate and create relationships among my fellow CTE instructors has been beneficial and keeps the fire going. In addition, the liability insurance coverage is always a perk in the back of my mind if I ever needed to use it.
- What advice do you have for new CTE teachers or NDACTE members?
 - ◇ Become involved. I know it seems like there is never enough time, but involvement in professional organizations will renew your energy. Every year after PDC, I feel reenergized and ready to take on the next school year. Don't be afraid to serve on committees, present workshops, and attend the National ACTE Vision Conference.



NDACTE receives Quality Association Standards Award

ND Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) was recognized with the Quality Association Standards (QAS) Award at the **State Association Leadership Breakfast** at ACTE **CareerTech VI-SION**, on **Friday, December 12, 2025**. The purpose of the QAS is to provide benchmarks for state associations to determine levels of performance and satisfactory service to their members and prospective members. QAS recognized states for implementing policies, procedures and structures that demonstrate a high level of service and attention to member value. For the first time, recognition is based on three levels. NDACTE received the Gold status award.

Recognition Levels:

- **Gold** – 100% of criteria met
- **Silver** – Up to 2 items in process, 2 not met (88%)
- **Bronze** – Up to 3 items in process, 4 not met (78%)

Randal Brockman, NDACTE President, said "We are honored to receive the Quality Association Standards Award for the eighth consecutive year and are especially proud to be recognized at the Gold level. This achievement reflects our ongoing commitment to serving our members with excellence and ensuring that career and technical education in North Dakota continues to thrive. We are grateful for the dedication of all our leaders, educators, and partners who make this recognition possible."

NDACTE Updates

-Carla Hixson, NDACTE Director

STUDENT VIDEO CONTEST: GATEWAY TO THE COSMOS — NASA'S LUNAR OUTPOST

ACTE and NASA HUNCH invite students of all ages to enter the eighth annual Student Video Challenge: *Gateway to the Cosmos — NASA's Lunar Outpost*. This year's theme explores NASA's Gateway as a vital stepping stone for humankind's return to the moon and exploration of deep space. Students are challenged to imagine its impact on science, technology and humanity — while showcasing the CTE courses and careers that make it possible. Together, let's celebrate a century of CTE excellence while inspiring the next generation of innovators who will lead us into the cosmos. Open to individuals or teams. Submit a two-minute video by **April 1**. [Learn more](#)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CTE PROFESSIONALS:

ACTE's National Policy Seminar: Celebrating 100 Years of CTE Advocacy

March 22-25 - National Policy Summit, Crystal Gateway Marriott Arlington, Virginia [NPS 2026 - ACTE Online](#)

Join career and technical education (CTE) professionals from across the nation at ACTE's National Policy Seminar (NPS), March 22–25, in Arlington, Virginia. Together, we'll shape the future of CTE, advocate for strong programs and celebrate a century of CTE advocacy. At NPS, you will:

- Hear directly from policy experts and national education leaders on emerging issues.
- Work with your peers to influence federal CTE priorities and funding initiatives.
- Strengthen your advocacy toolkit with practical strategies you can take back to your home communities.
- Participate in Capitol Hill visits to elevate the voices of your students and programs.
- Honor 100 years of ACTE with special events and commemorations.
- Secure your spot and take advantage of early bird rates when you register by Feb. 18. [Learn more](#).

ACET's Work Based Learning Conference, April 29-May 1, 2026 - ACET's Work Based Learning Conference, Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, Rhode Island [ACTE's Work-based Learning Conference - ACTE Online](#) - February 13 – Early bird rates end



ACTE Region V Conference, April 8–11, 2026 in Salt Lake City, Utah

Hotel Location: [Little American Hotel](#)

[Region V Early Bird Registration Rates \(through Feb. 15\)](#)

Member: \$450 and Nonmember: \$500

North Dakota ACTE - Online Learning Center

NDACTE provides CTE professionals with continuing education opportunities. Whether you are looking for engaging professional development or a more convenient way to obtain continuing education credits and advance your career, CTE Learn online learning center courses are designed for you. This online professional development tool offers over 190 self-paced courses for CTE professionals that have the potential to earn college credit. CTE Learn was created by CTE Professionals for the CTE community. CTE Learn is open to all ND CTE professionals and the CTE Learn's suite of free professional development resources are available to all NDACTE members with no charge.

To learn more about CTE Learn go to North Dakota ACTE - Online Learning Center. <https://nd.ctelearn.org/> Then **log into the ND's specific CTE Learn Portal each time you take a** course for the potential of also generating revenue for our state organization based on paid subscriptions from North Dakota users through our customized portal. Your support in logging into the ND portal each time makes a difference!

Registration to the North Dakota CTE Learn portal is free and easy to set up! Just visit North Dakota ACTE - Online Learning Center <https://nd.ctelearn.org/> and click on the Login Button on the top right of the screen. After entering your email address and creating a password, you'll be able to access the free resources and if interested, in subscribing to credit courses.

The ND CTE Learn Portal is available to all ND CTE professionals even if you are not an NDACTE member, however, members will have access to free resources and course discounts.

North Dakota University System Receives Grant to Fund Compass Statewide

-Laura Glasser, Career Resource Manager

The [North Dakota University System](#) (NDUS) has received a \$250,000 Strategic Impact and Innovation Grant from the [Midwestern Higher Education Compact](#) (MHEC) to provide all 11 state institutions access to [Compass](#).

All North Dakota middle and high school students currently have access to Compass through [RUReady.ND.gov](#). This new initiative will enable Compass to bridge the longstanding gap between K-12, postsecondary institutions, and the workforce by providing a unified, data-driven system that follows students through every stage of their educational journey from middle school to college graduation.



All 11 institutions will be able to highlight their programs and employer partnerships to high school students, helping students make better decisions about their post-graduation plans while also helping colleges with enrollment activities. [Read the press release for more details.](#)

Watch for more updates from Golden Path Solutions about how this initiative will benefit your students.

Compass Expands Electronic Agreement Process to All Schools

-Laura Glasser, Career Resource Manager

The electronic agreement process in Compass is now available to all participating schools.

Designed to streamline the agreement process for work-based learning (WBL), the feature enables school professionals, students, and employers to conduct all of their document workflow and signatures online, replacing the need for paper copies.

Grand Forks (ND) Public Schools partnered with Golden Path Solutions for the initial release of this feature and for fine-tuning the process.

The electronic agreement process enables school professionals, students, and employers to conduct all of their document workflow and signatures online, replacing the need for paper copies. Agreement templates are available from Golden Path, otherwise you can create your own. That PDF agreement is then uploaded to Compass, associated with a specific WBL student application, and moved through the agreement workflow to track all of the required signatures. Each person will receive an email from Compass when it is their time to sign the document.

A screenshot of the Golden Path Solutions Compass interface. The top navigation bar is orange with white text: HOME, EMPLOYERS, WORK-BASED LEARNING, CAREER EXPLORATION, MY STUDENTS, RESOURCES. Below this is a 'Student Agreement' window. It shows 'Agreement Name: Work-based Learning Agreement', 'Description: Application for Internship', 'WBL: Internship', and 'Status: In Progress'. There are buttons for 'SEND REMINDER' and 'CANCEL AGREEMENT'. Below this is an 'Agreement Workflow' section showing a list of signers: Sally Jones (Student, Signed 8/12/2025), Sally Parent (Parent, Invited to sign 8/12/2025), Roy Hale (Organization, Waiting for others to sign first), and Scott Walker (SchoolAdmin, Waiting for others to sign first). To the right is an 'Agreement File' section showing a document titled 'Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan' with fields for participant information, job title, and a table for 'EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS' with columns for SKILL, PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS, REVIEWS, and COMMENTS.

Instructions are available in the [Compass School Professional Guide](#) starting on page 23.

As a reminder, school professionals in North Dakota access Compass through the [RUReady.ND.gov Professional Center](#). If you need assistance accessing or creating a professional account, contact Laura Glasser, career resource manager at NDCTE at leglasser@nd.gov. You can also reach [Golden Path Solutions](#) at info@goldenpath.net.

Free Resources for North Dakota Teachers Using MBA Research & Curriculum Center

-Jessica DeVaal, Business Education Supervisor

North Dakota CTE is an enhanced member of the MBA Research Consortium and that means that ND teachers get access to lots of materials at no cost AND a deep discount on other materials. The enhanced membership includes free instructor access to the MBA Learning Center and all of the LAPs and other curriculum materials it contains.

During the 2025 PDC, we were able to host multiple sessions with Tammy Cyrus, MBA Research's Vice President of Professional Learning. She presented on their Ethics and Project Management resources and spent time with Business & Marketing teachers doing hands-on training using State's Connection and the Learning Center.

Resources for CTSOs

Career technical student organizations (CTSOs) serve a critical role in preparing students for leadership roles in business. MBA Research fully supports CTSOs as a co-curricular component of a CTE program of study. Crosswalks, workbooks, how-tos and tips make it easy for teachers (and students) to use our resources to excel in their CTSO competitions, exams, and activities.

FOR BPA ADVISORS

FOR DECA ADVISORS

FOR FBLA ADVISERS

FOR FCCLA ADVISERS

MBA Research is also a partner to multiple CTSOs and has resources available for competitive event preparation.

<https://www.mbaresearch.org/state-administrators/how-we-help/student-organizations/>

Want to get started in the MBA Learning Center?

Step 1: Sign up for an account in State's Connection - <https://mbastatesconnection.mbaresearch.org/>

Step 2: In the ND Portal – click North Dakota Teachers for MBA Learning Center access instructions, a Quick Start guide, and tutorial video.

Step 3: Explore the rest of State's Connection including Action Briefs, The Gray Zone (ethics scenarios), School-Based Enterprise, and Work-Based learning resources.

Or...skip my steps and use this flyer instead: <https://mbaresearch.info/download/2024%20States%20Connection%20Flyer.pdf>

Want more training on MBA Research materials or the MBA Learning Center? Need a refresher from PDC? Let Jessica or Dustin know! We can set up custom training sessions for our state with MBA Research staff!

February Is CTE Month—Let's Level Up With CTE!

-Dawn Ulmer, Strategic Projects Manager

February is Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month, and it's our opportunity to celebrate the incredible impact CTE has on students, educators, employers, and communities across North Dakota. CTE Month is more than a celebration—it's a chance to showcase how hands-on learning, industry connections, and real-world experiences prepare students with **skills that pay off**.

As CTE educators you help students discover purpose, build confidence, and explore high-demand career pathways. From earning industry credentials to participating in work-based learning experiences, students are gaining practical skills that lead to success in both college and careers. At the same time, CTE strengthens North Dakota's workforce by connecting education with local industry needs.

To keep CTE Month **simple and fun**, we encourage everyone to use the printable "**Level Up With CTE**" graphic that will be sent out very soon as a prop for photos throughout February. Snap pictures with students, employer partners,

fellow educators, administrators, school board members, and state representatives. Whether it's in a classroom, lab, shop, or workplace—every photo helps tell the CTE story. Watch for the NDCTE Month printable graphics, backgrounds and social media toolkit - coming soon!

Send in your photos - **the more, the better!** We want to highlight the many accomplishments happening across the state and celebrate the people who make CTE successful. Your photos help showcase the reach, creativity, and impact of CTE programs statewide.

Throughout CTE Month, remember to share the message:

"Level Up with CTE—Skills That Pay Off!"

Post on social media, include the message in newsletters, display it in your classrooms, and use it as a conversation starter with parents, community members, and policymakers.

Thank you for the passion, dedication, and innovation you bring to your programs every day. Let's make February a month where we proudly share our stories, celebrate our students, and show North Dakota what it means to **Level Up with CTE**.

#NDCTELevelUp



State Director's Column

-Wayde Sick, Director, North Dakota Career and Technical Education



A Year in Review

A new year brings change and here at the Department of Career and Technical Education, we are in the midst of a lot of change. This month's article, and those in the months to follow, are to provide updates and keep everyone informed.

Secondary Programs Funding Policy

As I reported in my November 2025 Newsletter article, the State Board for Career and Technical Education approved a new Secondary Programs Funding Policy. This policy moves the Department away from an input-based funding policy to an outcome-based funding policy. The Department is in the process of finalizing 2025-26 school year payments. With that information, we will be able to determine payments for the 2026-27 school year. Our policy states this will be finalized by March 2026, but the plan is to complete this in January 2026.

Fluxx Grant Management System

The Department has contracted a new grant management system. This was out of necessity as the platform that housed the Budget Reimbursement Process (BRP) has been retired. We utilized WebGrants but discovered it did not have the capabilities the Department needed.

We are currently working with our vendor in building our system. The plan is to launch Fluxx in early March, to allow local recipients to complete their Perkins V Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment and Local Application in the new system. State programs will launch in Fluxx in the spring of 2026. Training materials will be developed in conjunction with the launch.

Please remember all payments for the 2025-26 school year will be managed in BRP.

Modernized Career Clusters

The Department continues down the road of adopting the Modernized Career Clusters. Draft programs of study have been developed and will be reviewed and edited by the State Program Supervisors in early 2026. They will then be released to the field in the spring of 2026 for feedback. All feedback will need to be received by the end of the 2025-26 school year, which will allow Department staff time to finalize, with a planned launch at the 2026 Professional Development Conference.

Infinite Campus

Finally, like many of you, the Department is working on the transition from Power School to Infinite Campus. We are optimistic this transition will allow for more comprehensive and accurate data collection of CTE data, which will enable us to tell the story of the true impact of Career and Technical Education.

Please contact me wasick@nd.gov if you have any questions.

Wayde Sick

State CTE Director

Assistant Director's Corner

-John Gruenberg, Assistant State Director, North Dakota Career and Technical Education

Human Intelligence. Artificial Tools. Future-Ready CTE

Ok, honesty time. When writing for the ND CTE newsletter over the last few months, I've definitely had my assistant help me out with summarizing my thoughts. Who is my assistant, you may ask? ChatGPT of course! Over the last two years, AI has exploded exponentially in terms of use throughout education, business, social media, information technology, etc. Where would we be without it?

As technology advances and AI becomes more and more a daily reality within education, where does CTE fit into that advancement? What can you do to advance your CTE classes, curriculum, and students with AI?

Let's find out:

ChatGPT prompts:

Agriculture Education: <https://tinyurl.com/AI-in-Agriculture-Education>

What in-demand jobs for Agriculture Education are being overlooked over the past two years with the advancement of Artificial Intelligence?

Business Education: <https://tinyurl.com/AI-in-Business-Education>

In Business Education, what jobs will be obsolete because of the Artificial Intelligence explosion over the last two years and what can be areas of re-focus?

Career Development: <https://tinyurl.com/AI-in-Career-Development>

With school counselors and career development, how can AI help with student educational planning?

Family and Consumer Science Education: <https://tinyurl.com/AI-in-FACS>

Family and Consumer Science, like other CTE areas, is very kinesthetic with its learning, relying on hands-on learning. How can artificial intelligence help?

Health Sciences Education: <https://tinyurl.com/AI-in-Health-Sciences>

Within Health Sciences, how does AI help in classes such as Biotechnology, CNA, Firefighting, EMS, and Medical Terminology?

Information Technology Education: <https://tinyurl.com/AI-in-Information-Technology>

Information Technology may seem like a "no brainer" when it comes to Artificial Intelligence. What is being overlooked with AI and Information Technology? How can instructors be on the cutting edge instead of out of date and antiquated?

Marketing Education: <https://tinyurl.com/AI-in-Marketing-Education>

Marketing Education is about promotion, consumer need, sales, data analysis, and human-centered design. AI isn't human centered and isn't the consumer. How does it reach our target audience?

Technology and Engineering Education: <https://tinyurl.com/AI-in-Tech-and-Engineering>

Technology and Engineering has obvious classes including Robotics, Applying Technology, PLTW, Invention and Innovations, and Engineering Design. AI should fit into all of these classes. Where doesn't it fit?

Trade, Industry, and Technical Education: <https://tinyurl.com/AI-in-Trade-and-Industry-Ed>

Ok. I'm a Welding instructor at my local school district under ND CTE Trade, Industry, and Technical Education. How does AI impact my daily classroom? How does it impact others like Automotive Technology, Building Trades, the Energy industry, and Aviation? Why does it matter for us since I've been teaching the same way for decades? And how do I incorporate AI into my shop?

ND CTE is Career and Technical Education. We prepare students for tomorrow's workforce today. In order to be globally competitive, we have to put our students in the forefront of technological innovation and evolution. Intelligence isn't only artificial. Intelligence is the acquisition of knowledge and skill. Using our human intelligence, use AI as a tool to Level Up your CTE instruction!

John

