

New Face at Career and Technical Education



The Department of Career and Technical Education would like to welcome John Gruenberg as the new Assistant Director for the Department of Career and Technical Education. John started his role on August 1st, immediately jumping into by participating in the 2025 CTE Professional Development Conference.

John Gruenberg is a dedicated education leader with over 20 years of experience spanning classroom teaching, school administration, and workforce development. He began his career as a teacher before serving as both a principal and superintendent in small schools across North Dakota, where he developed a reputation for strengthening student achievement and building strong community partnerships.

Most recently, John served as the Career Development Services System (CDSS) Director at Quentin N. Burdick Job Corps. In this role, he oversaw student engagement, compliance, and career readiness initiatives, with a strong emphasis on aligning education with workforce opportunities. His leadership focused on increasing credential attainment, expanding apprenticeship pathways, and ensuring compliance with federal performance standards.

A lifelong learner and servant leader, John integrates perseverance, collaboration, and honesty into his professional philosophy. He is passionate about helping young people build the skills, confidence, and opportunities needed to thrive in their chosen careers.

The Department looks forward to John's leadership and experience to further enhance Career and Technical Education in North Dakota.

Dates of Interest

September 27-28, 2025
FFA Fall Conference

September 29 - October 2, 2025
Fargo and Cass County Vision Visit

October 5-6, 2025
FBLA Fall Conference

October 7-8, 2025
Turtle Mountain Vision Visit

October 9, 2025
Four Winds Vision Visit

October 13-15, 2025
NDSCS Vision Visit

October 26-27, 2025
DECA Fall Conference

October 28-29, 2025
DECA Collegiate Fall Conference

October 30, 2025
Minot Public Schools & Workforce Academy Vision Visit

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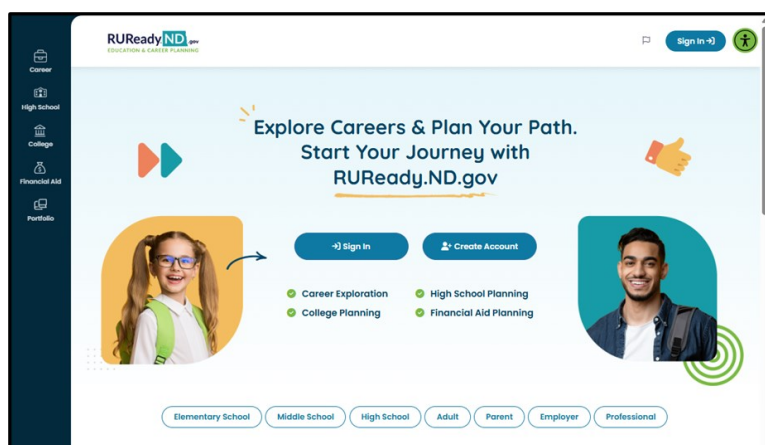
RUReady.ND.gov – Smarter Navigation, Same Powerful Tools

-Laura Glasser, Career Resource Manager

RUReady.ND.gov has a refreshed look designed to make navigating the platform quicker and more intuitive for students

Key updates

- **Simplified Navigation Layout:** The new left-side menu keeps key tools in one consistent place, making it faster and easier for students to find what they need.
- **Expandable Drop-Down Menus:** Grouped options and collapsible menus reduce clutter and help students focused. Essential areas are accessible with a single click from anywhere on the platform.
- **Faster Access to Assigned Activities:** Assigned activities are always just a click away – always accessible in the left-side menu.
- **Improved User Drop-Down Menu:** The expanded menu in the upper-right corner lets students quickly access account info like This is Me, Communication Log, and Account Activity.



Improved Display of Work-Based Learning Opportunities

To create a clearer, less cluttered experience, expired opportunities are now hidden from the Work-Based Learning landing page and default All Opportunities view. A new filter lets students see past-due opportunities if needed. Sorting has also been improved so newer opportunities appear first, helping students focus on current, active options and avoid confusion from outdated listings.

New Badges and Redesigned Activities in “Learn About Yourself”

Two updates boost student engagement and ease of use in this section:

- **New Badges for Quick Access:** Dedicated badges for **Career Cluster Map** and **Directions After High School** make these key activities easier to find.
- **Updated Look & Feel:** Both activities feature a cleaner design and improved navigation to help students stay focused and move smoothly through the content.

New North Dakota In-Demand Careers List Added

RUReady.ND.gov now includes a list of North Dakota’s **In-Demand Careers**. This helps students connect career exploration to real local opportunities. Find the list in the **Explore Careers** section of RUReady.ND.gov.

Improved WBL Tools: Upload Files to Organizations

Educators can now upload files directly from their computer or Google Drive to organizations within the Work-Based Learning management tools. This makes it easy to store and access important documents like partnership agreements, safety forms, and promotional flyers all in one centralized location.

Fresh Career Data Now Live! The national employment, job openings, and outlook data in the Career Profiles has been updated with the latest available figures. Students can now explore up-to-date career trends in the Money & Outlook section of each Career Profile.

For additional details on the enhancements to RUReady.ND.gov, see the [August 7, 2025, RUReady.ND.gov Release Notes](#).

For more information about RUReady.ND.gov, contact Laura Glasser, Career Resource Manager, North Dakota Career and Technical Education, leglasser@nd.gov or 701-328-9733.

RUReady.ND.gov Essentials Workshop

In-Person Training for Education Professionals

Are you new to RUReady.ND.gov or need a quick refresher? Join us this September for a free, in-person workshop designed specifically for professionals who support students with education and career planning.



Whether you're a counselor, career advisor, teacher, work-based learning coordinator, administrator, or any other professional guiding students through their education and career planning, this beginner-level workshop will equip you with the essential knowledge and tools to begin using RUReady.ND.gov effectively with your students.

BISMARCK: September 4, 2025 – 9 am to 3 pm

DICKINSON: September 25, 2025 – 9 am to 3 pm (MDT)

FARGO: September 10, 2025 – 9 am to 3 pm

GRAND FORKS: September 9, 2025 – 9 am to 3 pm

MINOT: September 17, 2025 – 9 am to 3 pm

WILLISTON: September 16, 2025 – 9 am to 3 pm

[VIEW DETAILS AND REGISTER HERE](#)

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CTSO Perspective

Thanks to FFA, I've grown from a shy, insecure student into a confident leader within my state. My agricultural education classes gave me practical skills for the future while FFA gave that future purpose. Through this organization, I found my voice, discovered a passion for public speaking, and learned what it means to be a leader. I'm incredibly grateful to represent an organization that has shaped me into a stronger person and empowered me to make a difference in the lives of others.

Kristyn was a member of the Beulah FFA Chapter for 4 years and is currently serving as the ND FFA State Secretary. Kristyn will be attending Valley City State University in the fall majoring in Agribusiness.



Kristyn Bauer
FFA State Secretary

NDACTE Award Winners

-Carla Hixson, NDACTE Director

Administrator of the Year, Eric Ripley currently serves as the Executive Director of Career and Technical Education for Grand Forks Public Schools, a position he has held since 2009 and as Director of CTE for the Grand Forks Area Career & Technology Center since 2012. In this role, he has demonstrated a remarkable ability to foster collaboration among stakeholders, and advocate for increased funding and resources. He has consistently gone above and beyond to ensure that students have access to high-quality CTE programs that prepare them for success in both their chosen careers and in life.



Lifetime Achievement, Mark Wagner has made significant and lasting contributions to the implementation of high-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, always with a central focus on student success. His impact spans classroom instruction, administrative leadership, statewide policy development, and systems reform, making him a driving force behind transformative change in CTE. He has been a CTE instructor in two program areas, worked at a Class B and A school, was an adjunct instructor for North Dakota State University and North Dakota State College of Science, taught adult courses, and has been an administrator at a comprehensive high school and director at an area CTE center.

Teacher of the Year, Cameron Young was raised on a small, diversified farm on the edge of the Nebraska Sandhills, where we produced corn, oats, alfalfa, and raised cattle, hogs, and horses, along with an ample crop of sandburs during the dry years. True to his independent nature, he chose a path less traveled by pursuing a degree in Agricultural Education rather than a more traditional, high-paying career. Cameron attended North Dakota State University, earning a degree in Agricultural Education with minors in Animal Science and General Science.



Post-Secondary Professional of the Year, Benjamin Whitmore is an Associate Professor of Culinary Arts at North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS). Benjamin has held this position since August 2019. This year he has moved into the Chair of the Culinary Program at NDSCS. Benjamin has implemented many innovations in his teaching for NDSCS. One of the many is providing his students with hands-on opportunities to display their skills for the community by hosting community and school dinners. He also displayed his students' work at the CTE in the Great Hall for the State of North Dakota Legislature.

NDACTE Award Winners

-Carla Hixson, NDACTE Director

Counseling and Career Development Professional Award, Danielle Luebke's path into education wasn't a traditional one. Transitioning from mental health counseling into school counseling came with a huge learning curve, but Danielle embraced it and found her passion working with students. Danielle earned her Master of Education in Counseling with specializations in Community Mental Health and School Counseling from North Dakota State University. She also holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology with a minor in Child Development. She maintains active licensure as a school counselor, career development counselor along with being a Licensed Professional Counselor.



New Teacher of the Year - Cara Davis is completing her third year working as a Career Advisor for the Grand Forks Public Schools, specifically serving as the High School Career Advisor at Red River High School. With a proven work history of providing student services, relationship building, and coordination skills, Cara brought many years of work experience into her current Career Advisor role.

Innovative Program Award, David Leier and Erik Johnson, The Killdeer Agricultural Education Program is part of the Killdeer Public School District located in west-central North Dakota. Killdeer is a rural community with a population of approximately 1,000 people. Killdeer is an agriculturally based community with strong influences from the oil industry. The Agricultural Education Program is not only beneficial to the community but is also of great importance to the stakeholders of the program. The businesses, community, school, and stakeholders all support and provide opportunities for the students to engage in work-based experiences, community service, and unique supervised agricultural experiences. Killdeer is a growing community and school and one in which the Agricultural Education Program and FFA Chapter will continue to prosper and find success.



NDACTE Updates

-Carla Hixson, NDACTE Director

ND PDC PARTICIPANTS RAISE FUNDS FOR THE RUEBEN T. GUENTHNER SCHOLARSHIP

Each year NDACTE does a fundraiser for the Reuben T. Guenthner Scholarship to help a CTE Student entering a technical college in the fall. One scholarship in the amount of \$500 is awarded each May to a CTE student entering into a post-secondary CTE Program. This year NDACTE hosted a 60 second speed dash where board members collected cash from willing participants in the PDC General session. The total funds collected this year was \$1,179.33. Your donations do make a difference!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CTE PROFESSIONALS:

2026 ACTE National Leadership Fellowship Program—APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN through September 15

The 2026 ACTE National Leadership Fellowship Application is now open. Learn more and apply here: [ACTE National Leadership Fellowship Program](#)

2026 CTE for All Mentorship Program—APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN through January 11

The 2026 CTE for All Mentorship Application is now open, both mentors and mentees are encouraged to apply. Learn more and apply here: [CTE for All Mentorship Program](#)

VISION 2025: Registration!

Join 5,000+ career and technical educators, business leaders and industry experts for an unparalleled professional development experience at ACTE's CareerTech VISION 2025. As the largest annual gathering of its kind, VISION offers:

- Hundreds of concurrent educational sessions covering instructional best practices, curriculum design, hands-on strategies for improving student outcomes and more
- Inspiring keynote speakers and thought leaders sharing insights on the latest trends and the future of CTE
- The CareerTech Expo, a dynamic space to explore the latest tools, technologies and resources that drive innovation in CTE



This year, in Nashville, Tennessee Tuesday–Friday, Dec. 9–12, at the stunning Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center — the perfect backdrop for networking, collaboration and career growth. [Register Now!](#)

New Ag Ed TIP Program Launches to Support Beginning Ag Teachers

-Nikki Fideldy-Doll, Agricultural Education Supervisor

The North Dakota Association of Agricultural Educators (NDAAE) is proud to announce the launch of the Agricultural Education Teacher Induction Program (Ag Ed TIP), a targeted mentorship initiative designed to support first- and second-year agricultural education teachers.

Developed in partnership with North Dakota State University (NDSU) Agricultural Education and ND Career and Technical Education (CTE) Agricultural Education, this program focuses on teacher retention by providing structured guidance, peer connections, and practitioner-focused resources.

Addressing a Critical Need

Agricultural education teachers face unique challenges in their first years—from managing classrooms and labs to leading FFA chapters, organizing advisory committees, and completing state CTE requirements. Many new teachers report that this steep learning curve can feel overwhelming. The Ag Ed TIP program was created to ease that transition and ensure teachers feel confident, supported, and connected during these crucial early years.

Program Design

The Ag Ed TIP course is hands-on and mentorship-driven. Participants will:

- Receive direct guidance on lesson planning, FFA Programs of Activities (POAs), and advisory boards.
- Connect with other new teachers across the state to share ideas and problem-solve.
- Get support in navigating CTE deadlines and documentation.
- Engage in monthly interactive sessions focused on real-world teacher needs, including course outlines, officer team management, event planning, and effective teaching practices.

This practitioner-focused approach ensures that teachers are not only gaining knowledge but also applying it immediately in their classrooms and FFA programs.

Building a Strong Support Network

A key component of Ag Ed TIP is mentorship. By pairing beginning teachers with experienced educators and providing opportunities for collaboration, the program creates a professional support network that can last well beyond the induction period. Teachers will leave with both practical strategies and lasting connections that strengthen their professional identity and resilience.

Strengthening Teacher Retention

Teacher retention remains a pressing concern nationwide, especially in agricultural education where teachers often take on multiple roles. The Ag Ed TIP program, backed by NDAAE and supported through collaboration between NDSU Ag Ed and ND CTE Ag Ed, directly addresses this issue by investing in new teachers' success. By providing mentorship, resources, and community, the program aims to keep passionate educators in the classroom, benefiting students, schools, and the agricultural industry across North Dakota.

"I wish we had this when I was a new teacher," shared Cora Huss, NDAAE Past President. "This program gives our beginning teachers the support system they need to thrive and stay in the profession."