

New Year Greetings to all WASTS members,

As the state president I was recently afforded the opportunity to attend the national Association of Career and Technical Educators (ACTE) conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. Being president of WASTS places me as a board member of WA-ACTE and a voting delegate. WASTS funded my travel and conference expenses and my CTE department covered my substitute teacher costs.

The conference was massive in scale providing opportunities to interact and network with administrators and educators from each of the 50 states. I attended many workshops and seminars on a wide variety of topics from assessment to special populations to project based learning and technology in the classroom. Sessions offered numbered in excess of 500 and were related to professional development, CTE implementation, STEM (science technology, engineering & mathematics), cross-curricular implementation and best practices to name but a very small few.

Sessions I attended were of a broad spectrum, some featured mentoring beginning teachers who entered into the profession through alternative routes, 21st Century Technologies in today's classroom, certificate alignment, grade level curriculum strategies, ELL (English language learners) in the CTE Classroom, and several software technical upgrade sessions.

The national ASTS board meeting focused on developing a Nationally based means of certification for CTE teachers. Although this was in the early stages of evolution, the discussion was lively with many members voicing varying points of view. This particular session held great interest for every CTE in America. It is focusing on establishing levels of certification based on college level achievement. I find this to be concerning. I am acquainted with many fine CTE instructors - non of which have college degrees. I believe that CTE was built on teaching from the trades. If this concept is accepted, I fear students will lose many excellent teachers and mentors. If this issue is of concern to you voice your opinions to me at WASTSpresident@wildblue.net, I intend to keep an eye on this issue and will voice the opinions and concerns of our constituency to the national association.

This convention is huge in scope and has something for everyone. I thank WASTS for the opportunity to attend this most informative event and look forward to sharing more information gained with WASTS members through our website www.WASTS.us

In closing I have some sad news for our association. I received notice that our WASTS Associate Director of Operations will be leaving us February 1st. April Stonebreaker has been a very valued member of our organization an executive board team. From event planning to administrative duties, she has never failed to cover each and every base. As a member I am sure you have recognized her exemplary talents under fire. During each of the last two technical upgrade conferences she not only coordinated the tours and sessions but manned the registration table handling every question and issue with calm control and a friendly smile.

I will miss April, who always had information and the answers for any question I posed to her. Her husband is returning from deployment in the Navy and their family will be relocated to Texas. Best of luck, I know you and your young boys will be glad to have Daddy around the house.

That being said, if you know of an individual who might be able to take over April's post, please forward your recommendations to me at the WASTSpresident@wildblue.net e-mail address.

Sincerely,

Ken Toney
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