



OkPACE Awards

Presented at Spring Conference
April 19, 2024

OKPACE MISSION:

**"BE ADVOCATES FOR CAREER
AND TECHNOLOGY
PROFESSIONALS, SERVING
BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY."**

National PACE: Our collective goal is to promote quality career and technical training that improves the economic success of those we serve.

THANK YOU TO THE AWARDS COMMITTEE

Lori Laufer, ODCTE

Laci McCool, Caddo Kiowa Technology Center

Tara Porter, Canadian Valley Technology Center

Carl McPherson, Francis Tuttle Technology Center

Nick Powell, Francis Tuttle Technology Center

Morgan Gould, Great Plains Technology Center

Wade Jarlsberg, Mid-America Technology Center

Joe Ely, Moore Norman Technology Center

Kayla Turner, Northwest Technology Center

Adam Honeyman, Northwest Technology Center

Jenny Cypert, Pontotoc Technology Center

Danny Britton, Western Technology Center

OkPACE Awards Chair:

Cara Jane Evans, Francis Tuttle Technology Center

Special thanks to the Professional Development Committee for promoting and organizing a live web in-person workshops.





THANK YOU TO THE NOMINATING ORGANIZATIONS



Oklahoma Department of Career Tech

Autry Technology Center

Caddo Kiowa Technology Center

Canadian Valley Technology Center

Francis Tuttle Technology Center

Gordon Cooper Technology Center

Great Plains Technology Center

Indian Capital Technology Center

Kiamichi Technology Center

Metro Technology Center

MidAmerica Technology Center

Meridian Technology Center

Dr. Dennis Portis, III Award

This award recognizes individuals who are striving to make a difference in their division and association. This individual demonstrates great leadership potential, devotion, and a strong commitment to the success of the Oklahoma CareerTech system. They are a true

RISING STAR.

Each OKACTE division nominates an individual.

All divisional nominees will be recognized at Summit by OkACTE.

OkPACE's Rising Star is selected by the President-Elect.

Congratulations to OkPACE's RISING
STAR!

Julie Griffin

Meridian Technology Center

OkPACE Economic Development Award

This award recognizes an outstanding individual or collaborative team who contributes to economic development/growth.

This award is designed to encompass a variety of work that is related to one of the following: entrepreneurship, government bid award, or expansion of a current business or partnership.

4 nominees in 2024

7 nominees in 2023

OkPACE Economic Development Award 2023 Nominees

- **Sarah Weeks, Gordon Cooper** – Developed a training program that met the combined needs of the regional electric cooperative, municipal contractors, tribal interest, fiber optic companies, and the state’s largest electrical distributor. The custom training program included lineworker training and offered completers the opportunity to obtain they Class A CDL, as well.
- **Johnny Thornburgh, Pioneer** – Introduction of cobot and/or laser welders to district manufacturers that not only bolstered use of robotics, automation and AI in local industry but increased efficiencies for clients by allowing them to try before they buy.
- **Ron DeGiacomo, KTC** – APEX Accelerator hosts the SE Oklahoma Matchmaking Procurement Event boasts more than 250 matchmaking sessions that result in relationships between small businesses and government agencies leading to APEX clients bidding and hopefully winning government contracts
- **Vincent Ward, Metro Tech** – Developed the M-D Leadership Academy through a collaborative effort that equipped employees of M-D Building Products with custom training in vital leadership skills such as emotional intelligence, interpersonal communication, accountability, and conflict resolution. The project resulted in increased employee retention and economic growth.

CONGRATULATIONS

**Johnny
Thornburgh**

Pioneer Technology Center



OkPACE Innovation Award

This award recognizes the most unique and innovative activity that served OkPACE stakeholders.

Activities may include an individual, team, program, or project which took the nominee beyond the traditional scope of business and industry service.

9 nominees in 2024

11 nominees in 2023

OkPACE Innovation Award 2023 Nominees

- **Cody Holt, Great Plains** – Launched the 580 Pitch event which included entrepreneurial training for applicants as well as a competition element. The event focused on existing businesses that showed how funding would allow their business to grow. Many community stakeholders worked with the BDC team to raise a total of \$25,000 with \$10,000 going to the winning small business.
- **Matthew Daniels, Kiamichi** – Expansion of teacher professional development courses and resources for public educators. The third iteration builds on what was developed as emergency training during the pandemic to create a quality product that meets professional requirements and saves sending schools significant time and funds by allowing teachers an on-demand option. This new format provided training for 4000+ educators last academic year.
- **Brian Moorehead, Autry** – Launched outdoor sports program that resulted in a partnership with the OK Dept. of Wildlife Conservation and Autry Tech being the first higher learning institution in the nation to be awarded the National Archery in Schools Program grant. The program targets students from 4th to 12th grade and addresses archery, aquatics, hunting, scoring, and safety in addition to providing social and survival skills that promote emotional well being and esteem. The program had more than 1,000 enrollments in the first 6 months it was offered.
- **Cody McPherson, MetroTech** – The SAFE @ 1400 program addresses safety gaps that were identified by stakeholders to create an engaging and efficient way to deliver safety education, improve culture, and increase safety awareness in the workplace via free training session offered virtually.

OkPACE Innovation Award 2023 Nominees

- **BIS Team, Caddo Kiowa** – Tackled the childcare desert in Oklahoma by developing online programming to train childcare workers. CKTC is the first technology center in the state to qualify for the State Board of Education Regents approved pathway to CDA National Credential online training and scholarships are 100% funded. CKTC is one of four tech centers to provide this type of training in the state and through this partnership more than 2000 childcare workers in 313 childcare centers have received training.
- **Cama Watts, Gordon Cooper** – Expanded 40East with nearly all offerings selling out of tickets. 40East is a partnership with First United Bank and has provided 18 leadership training courses and served more than 1000 people in the GCTC district since 2020. The increased community connection has led to new clients and customers for all stakeholders.
- **Kevin Barber, Francis Tuttle** – Collaborated with manufacturers and industry partners to develop the “Manufacturing Supervisor Primer” curriculum. The 18-hour training addresses daily decision making and problem solving to further develop knowledge of the manufacturing ecosystem. This curriculum complements existing leadership and supervisor programs while offering skills specific to manufacturing. The pilot class concluded in fall of 2023 and the program was deployed at another tech center in the spring of 2024.

OkPACE Innovation Award 2023 Nominees

- **Carla McKinley, Moore Norman** – MNTC pioneered the WED integration model that provides condensed training and blended learning formats in conjunction with traditional full-time programs. This model provides unique direct supervision in both short- and long-term training areas to streamline communication, eliminate silos, and deliver stackable credentials. The MNTC integration model allows students and existing workforce to train in the increments and pace they need at an affordable price point with proven competency and industry recognized credentials.

- **Jim Lawson, Pontotoc** – Developed a lineworker and Class A CDL training program through a partnership with People's Electric Cooperative and OG&E. Grants were identified to obtain the T&D Powerskills curriculum and incorporate broadband training into the lineworker program. The rigorous 1468-hour program is eligible for financial aid including PELL, veteran approval, and tribal scholarships.

CONGRATULATIONS

Cody Holt

Great Plains
Technology Center



OkPACE Diversity and Inclusion Award

This award recognizes an outstanding individual (or team) that promotes diversity. This OkPACE member finds ways to partner and leads by example.

3 nominees in 2024

5 nominees in 2023

OkPACE Diversity and Inclusion Award 2023 Nominees

- **Rudy Grajales, Autry** – Expanded the successful Front-Line Leadership training to include a Spanish offering to meet the training needs of Spanish speaking employees within local industries. According to the census, approximately 15% of the district is Hispanic. Rudy’s passion and talent as a bilingual trainer is pivotal to the success of this program and makes every participant feel heard, valued, and motivated. FLL en Español created a bridge in the community and promotes an inclusive learning environment.
- **Elena Troy, MetroTech** – Hosted the Annual Women’s Empowerment Symposium as a free event to individuals 12 and older to demonstrate diversity and inclusiveness. Symposium activities provide opportunities to learn and take on leadership roles.
- **Vernon Cole, Francis Tuttle** – Exhibited steadfast dedication to improving employment prospects for Veterans of the Armed Services. He has established partnerships with Veteran-serving agencies, developed job skills classes tailored to their needs, and streamlined logistical aspects to enhance student experience. His efforts have not only increased awareness of available programs among Veterans but also ensured they derive maximum benefit, underscoring his unwavering commitment to enhancing the lives of underemployed Veterans.



CONGRATULATIONS

Vernon Cole

Francis Tuttle Technology Center

OkPACE Outstanding Training Activity

This award recognizes an outstanding individual or collaborative team who developed and implemented industry-specific adult training through a public or private partnership.

9 nominees in 2024

13 nominees in 2023

OkPACE Outstanding Training Award 2023 Nominees

- **Lamont Harris, Metro Tech** – Partnered with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections to offer a welding program to incarcerated individuals, was initiated in response to a Social Need for Rehabilitation and Reintegration as well as an Economic and Industry Need for Skilled Workers: The welding industry, particularly in Oklahoma City, faced a demand for skilled workers proficient in Metal Inert Gas (MIG) and flux core welding. By training up to 52 students annually, the program sought to address this workforce demand by preparing individuals for immediate employment opportunities upon their release.
- **Kevin Barber, Francis Tuttle** – Launched a manufacturing supervisor training that allowed promoted individuals to develop a greater understanding of the manufacturing business and ecosystem. The 18-hour training enables new leaders to see how their actions affect everyone else in the plant, the supply chain, and the customer which leads to better decision making and stronger outcomes for their respective manufacturing employers.
- **Lisa White, Autry** – Created a “Healthcare Professionals Leadership Training Day” specific to expanding leaders in the healthcare field in three primary areas: leadership development, management skills, and development of cohesive teams. Autry Technology Center’s strong partnership with Vance Air Force Base has continued with the new Lt. Col. Edwards and his Squadron, all of whom are excited to continue this legacy, revamping and extending the training with the next set of classes having a scheduled target date during “National Healthcare Week” in May 2024.

OkPACE Outstanding Training Award 2023 Nominees

- **Adam Honeyman, NW Tech** – Coordinated a school bus driver training that was held in the panhandle where 11 school districts were facing school transportation disruptions. Hosting the training in their geographic proximity alleviated the cost of 32 driver candidates travel and lodging for a 5-day training that was often up to 250 miles away. Holding the training in Guymon allowed driver candidates to return to their homes at the end of each day. NW Tech coordinated in-person driver test exams to be held on location once the class was completed with a 94% pass rate resulting in 30 fully licensed school bus drivers. This training illuminated the value that Career Tech provides to residents, independent K12 districts, industry, and communities and played a critical role in Beaver County school districts voting to join High Plains Technology Center as sending schools.
- **Brook Lindsay, Pioneer** – Hosted a conference for nonprofit organizations through a partnership with the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits that reached 135 individuals from 72 unique organizations. The Northern Oklahoma Humane Society, Ponca City Main Street, Marland's Place, New Emergency Resource Agency and the Blackwell Chamber of Commerce each shared responsibility for promoting the event, acquiring donations and providing support at the event.
- **Julie Griffin, Meridian** – Expansion of Ditch Witch Academy to incorporate a customized training named "Manufacturing Math" through a partnership with a new adjunct instructor. This included topics such as manufacturing math, gauging, measuring and Blueprint reading. This customized training was formulated after conducting a listening session with the area managers and identifying the necessary skill sets and knowledge needed. A strengthened relationship with Ditch Witch was the biggest result of this Academy effort. Immediately upon graduation, leadership for Ditch Witch was inquiring about the "next" Academy and how to make the next training cycle even better. It has also led to additional custom training opportunities.

OkPACE Outstanding Training Award 2023 Nominees

- **Ryan Zaloudek, Austry** – Facilitated multiple emergency management, law enforcement, fire, medical, municipal, military, and industry stakeholders through discussions to identify the most needed trainings to develop trainings inspired by the hypotheticals of a nightmare train derailment accident. This process led to trust among multiple organizations and the development of multiple courses including Railroad 101, ICS Refreshers, Public Information Officer training, Oklahoma Medical Reserve Corp training, and Mass Casualty for Volunteer Firefighters. This effort also led to updated mutual aid agreements, updated radio frequencies, enhanced collaboration, additional HAZMAT training, and the completion of Railroad 101 by 48 emergency responders.
- **Heath Hull, Caddo Kiowa** – Created pathways and continuing education opportunities for farmers to attain a chemical applicators license. In the last two years, Heath has coordinated 14 CEU meetings with attendance spanning more than 200 miles. Knowing the seasonal busy seasons farmers face, these meetings are well planned to maximize attendance and to help keep our farmers in the field and operational. By hosting and collaborating with various entities, more than 350 agriculturists have obtained the required training hours legally needed. Heath coordinates these sessions to expose farmers to various other entities learning about specific crops, goals, chemicals and application, as well as exposure to new technology through partnerships like John Deer, ODAFF, and other ABMs.
- **Heather Smith, Pioneer** – Addressed a critical gap in accessing expert training in specialized beauty treatments without incurring exorbitant expenses and extensive travel. At the time, the average cost of lash extension training for local beauticians was as high as \$1600, coupled with the additional burden of travel expenses for out-of-state training sessions. Recognizing the urgent need, Heather bridged this gap by bringing expert trainers in to train locally. The program was offered at a significantly reduced cost of \$665 per participant, empowering participants to begin their lash extension practice immediately after completing the training.

CONGRATULATIONS

**Adam
Honeymen**

Northwest Technology Center



OkPACE Ambassador of the Year

This award recognizes an outstanding individual who is an advocate and promoter of OkPACE for three or more consecutive years as an OkPACE/ACTE member.

Nominees:

Lori Laufer

Oklahoma Department of CareerTech

Charlotte Hadwiger

Northwest Technology Center

CONGRATULATIONS

Charlotte Hadwiger

Northwest Technology Center



OkPACE Award of Excellence

This award recognizes the year's outstanding OkPACE member.

Nominees are scored on involvement, leadership, achievement, and customer service.

Nominees:

Janet Schwabe

Pioneer Technology Center

Sharon Mitchell

Canadian Valley Technology Center

Jerry Hooper

Indian Capital Technology Center

CONGRATULATIONS

Sharon Mitchell

Canadian Valley Technology Center



LEGACY: Karl Scifres Leadership Award

This award was created to honor Mr. Karl Scifres (1952-2020) and his legacy of Leadership.

Karl served as Small Business Coordinator at Kiamichi Technology Center in McAlester for 31 years. His leadership is the reason OkPACE (CBITS at the time) was able to petition and become a stand-alone division of OKACTE.

The recipient of this award is chosen by the OkPACE President. The winner is someone who has made significant contributions to our division through their many years of service and dedication to the OkPACE mission.



**Congratulations to OkPACE LEGACY
LEADER**

Shawn Freie

Canadian Valley Technology Center



As a committee, we have a goal to get at least one nomination from each of the **29** technology centers – with your help and willingness to celebrate the achievements and best practices occurring in your districts, we believe we can get there.

Help us get 100% participation in 2025.

Thank you to all the OkPACE members who do so many awesome and award-worthy things! Keep up the good work!

AND...

Congrats to our national winners who were recognized at VISION 2023!

Lauren Wren, KTC – Outstanding Training

Jona Kay Squires, MATC – Excellence

Shawn Freie, CV Tech – Ambassador

ALL OkPACE nominees will be automatically forwarded on this year. There is a chance you might win nationally even if you did not win today. The national portal is open now and will close this fall, so you can still submit if today inspired you to remember something cool your team did this past year. It is the same questions and rubric.

