

# VTECS Vision

A Consortium for Innovative Career and Workforce Development Resources

*Eighth Edition*

April/May 2005

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VTECS Vision puts this year's Technical Coordinator Inservice in the spotlight for the eighth edition of our online newsletter.



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### *Front Features*

#### **Nothing but Nashville for the Technical Coordinator Inservice**

*Click on the picture to see the slide show!*

We had a wonderful turnout at this year's inservice. In fact, every state was represented and some by two people. All the VTECS staff were present but we missed Robyn Marshall. She had to stay home to do her civic duty and serve on the jury!

It was held in fabulous Nashville, Tennessee on February 23-25, 2005. We thank Dr. John Townsend, Executive Director for Tech Prep Tennessee Board of Regents, for hosting us in the great state of Tennessee. John was gracious enough to invite Mr. Dan Covington from the Tennessee DOE and Ms. Becky Griffith from the Tennessee Board of Regents. Another special guest from Tennessee was Mr. Ralph Barnett, Assistant Commissioner Vocational and Technical Education Tennessee DOE. We thank them for their attendance and participation and look forward to our future relations.



Thanks to all of the attendees for truly making this a wonderful conference. The staff all agreed that this group was especially cohesive and energetic. Hope you enjoyed and learned as much as we did.

As a super bonus, [click here](#) to see a short slideshow of this year's inservice.

#### **Don't Miss the Third Annual Career Cluster Institute**



That's right, come June 12-14, VTECS will be at large again in Phoenix, Arizona for this year's Career Cluster Institute. Once again, VTECS will feature two sessions and the super post-session on **VTECS DIRECT** where two courtesy CDs will be provided. Registration is required for the DIRECT post-session training. Please contact Brenda Hattaway if you have interest: [hattaway@vtecs.org](mailto:hattaway@vtecs.org)

## Star State - Voracious Vermont



# Voracious



VTECS is happy to welcome Vermont as our Star State. Take it

away Doug . . .

Vermont has been a fine member of VTECS since 1999. The impetus for Vermont to join VTECS came from VTECS's involvement with the Building Linkages Among Academic and Occupational Skill Standards Project in 1997. The project greatly influenced the creation of the National Career Clusters Initiative. Unlike the National Career Clusters Initiative, the Building Linkages Project produced performance type skill assessments for use by secondary and postsecondary career and technical education students. Vermont was one of the original skill assessment pilot sites and is still using these assessments today. Involvement with VTECS has greatly influenced Vermont's student assessment strategies and how education interacts with the business community.

In addition to skill assessment, VTECS has offered Vermont opportunities for networking and several products and services not available elsewhere.

Over 18 regional career and technical center schools that cover the entire state of Vermont have been trained in the use of VTECS Connect and DIRECT. Brenda Hattaway and Robyn Marshall first trained a group of Coop/Apprenticeship Coordinators on the Fox Pro based Connect and DIRECT in 1999. Since then, Brenda and Robyn have conducted several workshops on the new version of Connect and DIRECT—all of which have been well received by Vermont users. The Coop/Apprenticeship Coordinators find the new version much more user friendly, versatile and capable than the FoxPro version.

Last January, VTECS held one of the first of its kind (in Vermont anyway). We had VTECS Connect training where instead of a computer lab setting, users were asked to bring their own laptop computers. This approach was very useful since people were utilizing the software on the actual machine they work with everyday. Since then, VTECS and the Vermont Department of Education are planning on-line technical assistance user workshops – 2 hour conference calls with live demos and Q & A opportunities for users. The new software has been seen as very effective and capable, however, learning this software to maximize full benefit requires continued dialogue.

Other VTECS products and services Vermont will take advantage of include: 1) VTECS OnlineExpert – in fact several key Vermont workforce development staff have been trained on the product and the Vermont Department of Education is considering it for training and certifying it's own employees to strengthen IT and computer application skills; 2) review of INTERS, the information management system set up through the

Indiana Office of Workforce Development; and 3) utilizing VTECS established and credible industry validation services to validate our state competencies and assessments.

Douglas Webster has played a lead role as the State's Technical Coordinator and Board representative. Last year he was elected by peers to represent all the State Technical Coordinator's on the VTECS Executive Board. Doug works as the State Industry Skill Standards Coordinator and has worked for the state of Vermont for 13 years. Prior to that, Doug worked in the aerospace industry where he established employee certifications in manufacturing that resulted in increased product quality and lower production costs. He holds an MBA and a Bachelors in Industrial Engineering.



VTECS wishes to thank Doug for his continued dedication to VTECS and education in the state of Vermont.

Discover more about Career & Technical Education in Vermont by visiting, [http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/pgm\\_teched.html](http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/pgm_teched.html)

### Training Tracker - Traveling Show Hits the Road

Brenda Hattaway and Shellie were seldom seen around the VTECS office in January, 2005!! They were on the "training & demo trail" with stops in Maryland, Georgia, Vermont, Louisiana, and Washington, DC.

On January 5, Brenda visited with CTE staff of the Washington DC Public Schools and introduced them to VTECS and both our software systems. This was just a stop on the way to the annual VTECS workshops in Baltimore on January 6 and 7. This year Lisa Donoho, Maryland Tech Coordinator, offered Maryland educators a choice of two levels of workshops: Beginner & Intermediate. The Intermediate workshop focused on topics like Question Catalogs, Data Import/Export, and Customizing Labels, as well as specific questions from participants who are experienced users.

On January 13 & 14, Tim Withee joined Brenda and Shellie to lead workshops on VTECS Connect in Macon, Georgia. Mamie Hanson (GA) sets up these activities annually for work-based learning coordinators. Both beginning and intermediate topics were offered.

Brenda left the south Georgia weather and headed for Vermont! There was snow on the ground and the temperatures were cold, but she received a warm welcome from some experienced VTECS Connect users. They brought their laptops to the meeting and were able to ask questions specific to their use of the software. This workshop was coordinated by Doug Webster. Doug also arranged a meeting with several state agency staff. (Don't feel too bad about Brenda's being in Vermont in winter, she stayed at the beautiful Three Stallion Inn which featured warm wood fires in the common rooms and great food! Plus no phone and no TV in the guest rooms!!)

On January 31, Brenda traveled to Baton Rouge for a VTECS Connect "show & tell" on February 1 for a group of local cooperative education coordinators.

March and April have been quieter for Brenda and Shellie as far as workshops go although Brenda has participated in other activities representing VTECS. Shellie doesn't care much for these since she is not the star so she stays home and charms the neighbors and her "critter sitter". Time at home won't last long, however, as Brenda and Shellie begin their summer tour with training stops in Arkansas and Georgia in June.



## Developments in New Jersey

In August of 2004, Tim Withee displayed and presented at the New Jersey Generation Next Conference. At the Generation Next Conference, VTECS products were on display for over 600 CTE representatives from the state of New Jersey. VTECS has since been back to New Jersey several times for trainings and demonstrations around the state. We owe our success in large part to Roger McCloughan who is technical coordinator for New Jersey. With his guidance, the word about VTECS is spreading all across New Jersey.

We will again be presenting at the 2005 Generation Next Conference this summer hoping to bring in more potential software users. <http://www.state.nj.us/njded/gennext/>

## 2005 South Carolina Education & Business Summit

Thanks to Amy McCaskill's coordination, VTECS will provide training at the South Carolina Education & Business Summit on June 26-29 in Greenville, SC. Click this link to learn more about this summit: <http://www.myscschools.com/offices/cate/Summit2005.html>

## Show-Me State Breakthrough

Missouri finally had a breakthrough this year in utilizing VTECS software and most specifically, Connect. Ken Potthoff demonstrated VTECS Connect to a group of Marketing and Cooperative Education teachers at the Missouri ACTE (MOACTE) summer conference. The software was very well received by those in attendance to the point that several teachers stood-up and asked where we had been in that they were tired of pushing pencil and paper.

Tim Withee came and conducted an extremely successful inservice on VTECS Connect at a fall workshop for Cooperative Education Coordinators. During the session, five individuals were trained who agreed to serve as regional facilitators at the Marketing Education fall regional workshops. These five individuals then demonstrated the software at the regional workshops. As a result, 165 Missouri teachers are now utilizing Connect.

Dennis Harden (MO) is doing a splendid job of coordinating training and demonstrations with work-based learning leaders in their state. VTECS will be back at MOACTE for the third straight year this July to recruit more users by doing pre-conference Connect workshops. <http://www.mo-acte.org/>

## Louisiana Line

VTECS will be participating in Louisiana's Super Summer Institute in July. Ken Potthoff will be training pilot site school participants on using Connect and DIRECT. Stay tuned for more details on Louisiana's involvement with VTECS. Look at what Louisiana is doing in Career and Technical Education: <http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/family/510.html>

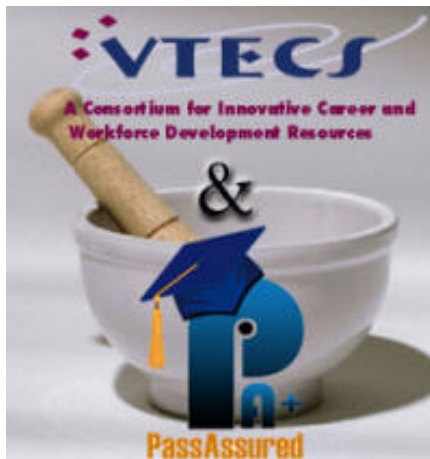
## Software Scene - Data Conversion Comes Through



Want to get your state's standards, competencies, or duty task lists into VTECS software products? Well, come on board...because now is the time to use our new data conversion tool developed by programmer, Steve Scherb. This conversion tool, based in Microsoft Excel<sup>®</sup>, allows users to take existing information and format it to work with **VTECS Connect™** and **DIRECT™**. With a small amount of formatting, large data sets, including competency lists, standards, and duty task lists can be quickly converted directly into our software. To date, Vermont, Missouri, New Jersey, and Illinois have used the conversion tool to transfer their data into VTECS software. In fact, we're getting ready to convert more data for Missouri. So what are you waiting for—learn more about the conversion tool by contacting the VTECS office.

### Don't Pass on PassAssured's PTP

Dear Board Members and Technical Coordinators,



VTECS is asking for your support with the PassAssured Pharmacy Technician Training Program (PTTP) software that VTECS can offer at an excellent price to your in-state health education programs. As you know, VTECS has become a software distributor for this product and we net 30% of any sales made through our career and technical education contacts. The passing rate for the pharmacy technician certification board exam is 98% for students who use the PTP. With you at the helm in your respective states, we hope you will help encourage the use of the PTP for your state's health education programs with pharmacy technician curricula. We will be happy to offer a statewide license for all schools and programs at a very affordable rate.

Courtesy training and technical support can be provided directly by the experts at PassAssured when a statewide license is purchased. Hence this is really a win-win situation for VTECS so we look to you for your support.

If you have interest in seeing a generic example of a statewide contract, a list of pharmacy technician programs in your state, or any other materials on the product, please contact our office. More information will be provided at the VTECS State Director's Board Meeting later this month. Thank you for your support. [www.passassured.com](http://www.passassured.com)

### DIRECT Dazzles!



**VTECS DIRECT™ 5**, the exciting upgrade of VTECS' classic occupational analysis information management software system, continues to receive rave reviews. Users in several locations have employed the Career Cluster management capabilities to customize the information to fit their implementation of the clusters. Others are enjoying the expanded capabilities for developing curriculum from occupational analysis data as well as the powerful new test generator. And the number of requests for training on DIRECT continues to climb.

Following the 3rd Annual Career Cluster Institute in June, VTECS reprises the VTECS DIRECT workshop post session. Two people from each state are invited to register for the post session and will receive a full day of training as well as the VTECS DIRECT software.

VTECS staff members are working on a **Quick Reference Manual** which will be available early this summer. In the meantime, visit the VTECS website for *Release Notes* and other valuable information about **VTECS DIRECT™ 5**.

### National Nexus - VTECS Executive Committee Meeting at PITSCO

On March 17-18, 2005, the Executive Committee of the National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc) Board of Directors and the Executive Committee of the VTECS Board of Directors held a joint meeting at the Headquarters Building of Pitsco Incorporated, which is located in Pittsburg Kansas. The main purpose of the meeting was to gain a better understanding about how the two organizations could work together to and to improve career and technical using career clusters as the framework. Dr. Harvey Dean, Founder and CEO of Pitsco and Dr. Mike Robinson, President of Technical Fluency Institute, a subsidiary of Pitsco, hosted the meeting because of his undying dedication to improving secondary education using career and technical education as the vehicle. A possible partnership between Pitsco, NASDCTEc and VTECS was discussed. Another meeting scheduled for May 17, 2005 has been scheduled to discuss this issue in more detail. An update on the progress of this joint venture will be shared with the VTECS Board of Directors during its 66th meeting in Atlanta, Georgia on May 24 & 25, 2005.

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### VTECS Wins in Vegas at ACTE!!

In December, 2004, VTECS staff members, Ron McCage, Brenda Hattaway, Robyn Marshall, and Charles Losh represented VTECS at the annual ACTE convention in Las Vegas. At the booth, VTECS software products were highlighted.



Working in the booth gives staff the opportunity to visit with old friends and to make new ones. Brenda and Robyn also presented an extended demonstration of both VTECS Connect and VTECS DIRECT during the trade show.



Robyn & Brenda Visit Santa,  
but did Santa Visit Them??

Old Saint Nick put in an appearance at the ACTE trade show in Las Vegas in December, and the ladies from VTECS wasted no time in filling him in on their wish lists! Only Santa knows what they asked for, but odds are they mentioned sapphires, rubies, and any other precious stones Santa might have in his sleigh.

It's a safe bet that neither VTECS Connect nor VTECS DIRECT were on the wish lists – they already have all they could ever want.

Thinking of attending the ACTE 2005 Convention and Career Tech Expo in New Orleans:  
<http://www.acteonline.org/convention/index.cfm>

### **Illinois Technical Education Leadership Institute**

On March 22, 2005, Ron McCage, VTECS Executive Director, was invited back to Illinois to address the Illinois Technical Education Leadership Institute Scholars concerning the importance of being aware of and involved in the national scene. Ron retraced some of the things that have impacted on Career and Technical Education since "A Nation at Risk" was released in 1983 as well as some of the major trends that create the operational context for Career and Technical Education Leaders today. The experience was both professional and personally rewarding since Dr. John Washburn was also on the program.



John and Ron worked together from September 16, 1970 until August 31, 1990 as members of the Research and Development Section staff of the Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Illinois Office of Education. John was named as Manager of the unit when Ron left in 1980 to become Executive Director of VTECS. Interestingly enough, John and Ron had breakfast with Bob Gray who hired both John and Ron to work for him in 1970.

Also present was Dr. Fran Beauman who followed John in the same position and Dr.

Rebecca Woodhull, Director of the Illinois Office of Educational Services that staffs as well as hosts the Institute. Rebecca is the current VTECS Board Member for Illinois. In addition, both John and Fran have served as members and Chairs of the VTECS Board of Directors as has Sandy Dunkel with whom Ron and Fran met with during the trip. Visit the IOES website: <http://www.ioes.org/icteli.cfm>

### **Other Key Events/Meetings During the Past Quarter**

Ron McCage and staff participated in several other important activities in recent months.

In March, Ron and Brenda attended the ACTE Policy Seminar and the ACTE Business and Education Partners meeting at the Capital Hilton in Washington, D.C. This meeting is very vital to us in our efforts to stay abreast of legislation and appropriations.

Another very important meeting in this same vein is the Spring Conference of NASDCTEC which was held in D.C. in April. During this meeting VTECS received its 2nd All Star Sponsor Award and Ron McCage was given a plaque honoring his service on the National Career and Technical Education Foundation Board of Directors.

VTECS also participated as a presenter and an exhibitor at the Annual ATEA Conference in New Orleans in mid-March. Ron also serves on the ATEA Executive Committee and Board of Trustees.

Finally, Ron just returned from San Diego where he participated in the NAWI Annual Conference.

### **ISPI in Vancouver**

Vancouver, B.C., Tim Withee and Ken Potthoff have gone international. They attended and presented a concurrent session at the 43rd International Society for Performance Improvement in April. To learn more about the conference, the organization, and their presentation, click on the link, <http://www.ispi.org/ac2005/>.

### **VTECS Attends 2005 Annual Careers Conference**

VTECS exhibited and presented at this 19th annual conference held in Madison, Wisconsin

in February of this year. Ken Potthoff held a roundtable session on the Career Clusters and did software demonstrations on Connect. The conference is put on by the [Center on Education and Work](#) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

### Agenda Access - In the Next Issue



[www.vtecs.org](http://www.vtecs.org)

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- ◆ Post-Career Clusters Institute Report
- ◆ Summer Planner News
- ◆ Louisiana Update
- ◆ Project Plus News



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