



Learning & Leading with CTE

August 2026 Newsletter

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Welcome Back, Arizona CTE Family: Together, We're Building the Future

Jennifer Kaufman-Fourness, ACTEAZ President

As a new academic year kicks off across Arizona, we extend a warm welcome back to YOU - all of our dedicated CTE professionals! Your work provides the bridge between classroom learning and real-world impact, connecting students to meaningful career exploration and high-demand job opportunities.

You Ignite Ambition!

Because of your dedication, Arizona students aren't just dreaming about their futures; they are actively building them. You give them the tools to discover their passions, earn industry-recognized credentials and degrees, and step confidently into college and workforce pathways that strengthen our local communities and statewide economy.

The work we do is vital, but it was never meant to be done in isolation. As our state grows and industry demands evolve, collaboration becomes our greatest advantage. When secondary and postsecondary institutions partner, when districts share best practices, and when educators lean on one another for fresh ideas and support, our collective impact multiplies.

As you navigate this school year, remember that you don't have to do it alone. You have the entire ACTEAZ network in your corner.

Lean In!

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to Arizona's students and our collective CTE mission. Here's to a collaborative, impactful, and inspiring year ahead!





Welcome Back CTE Professionals – You Drive Arizona Forward

As a new school year begins across Arizona, ACTEAZ extends its best wishes to all of our CTE professionals for a successful, inspiring, and rewarding year ahead.

Whether you're in your second or third week—or just welcoming students this week—we're so grateful for your passion, energy, and dedication to driving CTE forward across Arizona!

The beginning of the school year is filled with possibility and purpose. It's a time to discover your students' passions, help them explore career paths, and build the foundation for their future success. And through it all, we want to remind you: your work matters.

We're here to help you have a smooth and successful year! Check out these essential ACTEAZ and ACTE resources to support your work:

CTE Advocacy Hub



ACTEAZ Advocacy Hub

Access high-impact classroom materials along with state and national data handouts.

[Learn More](#)

acteaz.org/resources/



CTE 101 Toolkit

Share this specialized microsite with counselors and admin to keep them informed.

[Learn More](#)

acteonline.org/cte-101/

You are the heart of everything we do at the Association. Stay connected this year and mark your calendar for next year's Connection Conference: July 9–13, 2027.

Here's to a meaningful year ahead!



ACTEAZ is proud to introduce the 2026-2027 Executive Committee. These dedicated leaders and change makers will guide the direction of our association and serve as passionate advocates for Career and Technical Education in Arizona. Each board member brings valuable expertise, insight, and commitment to strengthening the impact of our work—on behalf of you, our members.

acteaz
Executive Committee



Jennifer Kaufman-Fourness
President

Maricopa County



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Patrick Clawson
President-Elect

Maricopa County



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Heather Webb
Past President

Maricopa County



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Patti Pastor
Vice President

Coconino County



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Executive Committee



Cathy Bagby
Secretary

Mohave County



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Lori Luzier
Treasurer

Maricopa County



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2026-2027
**Executive
Committee**

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Executive Committee



Michelle Crary
Member at Large

Maricopa County



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Executive Committee



Marsha Becker
Member at Large

Mohave County



Congrats to our CTE Champions!

At the 2026 Arizona CTE State Awards Ceremony, Arizona's finest educators, administrators, and partners were honored for their incredible impact on students, schools, and communities across the state. Their dedication to CTE is preparing students for successful futures—and shaping the future of our workforce.

This year's honorees included:

- CTE Teacher of the Year: Paul Getz, West-MEC
- CTE Administrator of the Year: Lindsay Duran, Gilbert Public Schools
- Counseling and Career Development: Denise Saldamando, West-MEC
- Post-Secondary Teacher of the Year: Michael Voss, Mesa CC
- New CTE Teacher of the Year: Tarnisha Tilson, Scottsdale USD
- Lifetime Achievement Award: Robert Weir, VACTE
- Outstanding Business and Industry Professionals of the Year:
Chief Tom Flanagan
Captain Brian Knarr
City of Kingman Fire Dept.
- Outstanding CTE Program: Early Childhood Education and Education Professions
Lake Havasu High School
Cathy Bagby
Marie Hendry
- Outstanding CTE Middle School Teacher of the Year: Karin Salsberry, Dysart USD
- Outstanding Non-Profit Award:
Pipeline Connects
- Executive Citation: James Grieshaber, ACTEAZ Retiree Committee Chair

To honor the impact and strengthen of our shared work, ACTEAZ is proud to announce the launch of the Quality Affiliate Award. This new statewide recognition celebrates affiliates that demonstrate strong leadership and a clear commitment to elevating CTE. This year's honorees included:



- AZ Agriculture Teachers Association (AATA)
- AZ Business Education Association (ABEA)
- AZ Council of Occupational and Vocational Administrators (ACOVA)
- AZ Health Careers Education Association (AZHCEA)
- AZ Technology and Industrial Education Association (ATIEA)

These leaders exemplify the power of CTE to inspire, innovate, and create opportunity. Their work proves that CTE is more than education—it's a movement.





Introducing the new ACTEAZ Fellows Cohort

Paige Quinn, Fellows Coordinator

We are thrilled to welcome the new Fellows cohort and begin another exciting year of leadership, learning, and connection! This year, Fellows will engage in meaningful conversations around critical issues facing CTE, learn from thought leaders in the field, expand their professional networks, and discover and

strengthen their unique leadership skills alongside other passionate CTE professionals.

Throughout the year, Fellows will collaborate to develop projects that address and advance key issues impacting CTE across Arizona, while continuing to support initiatives such as the Midwinter Auction. This experience will empower Fellows to bring new ideas forward, advocate for the continued growth of career and technical education, and make a lasting impact within their communities.

Welcome to the 2026–2028 ACTEAZ Fellows cohort:

Christie Enders	Terri Ziegler
Justin McLain	Deborah Snyder
Alexandra Helm	Shelley Alfieri-Brown
Roxane Winston	Rebecca Goetz
Twila Simmons-Walker	Nadine Soto

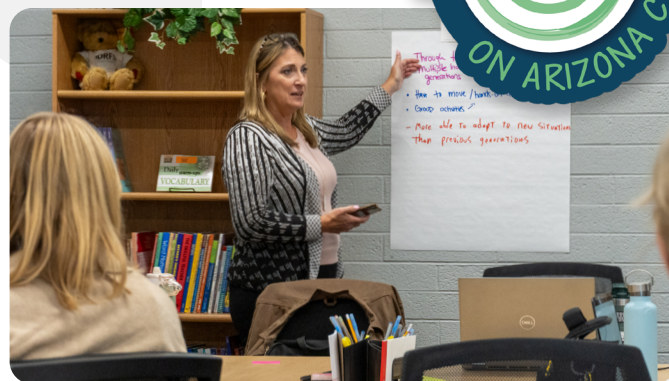
A returning welcome to our 2025–2027 Fellows cohort:

Maritza Delgado	Zoe Spaulding
Bree Michaels	Donielle Winzeler
Diana Burdzy	Tarnisha Tilson
Alexis Hastert	Heidi Resh
Deborah Abley	Krista Reiling
John Lebsock	Lauren Tessmer
Kathryn Strevell	Jennie Clausen
Tonya Rooth	



We look forward to the leadership and innovation this group will bring as they champion CTE excellence throughout Arizona. Learn more about the program at acteaz.org/fellows-program/.

Premier Series Goals for 2026-2027



As the new school year begins, CTE teachers across Arizona are heading back to the classroom—ready to inspire, lead, and guide the next generation of skilled professionals. Whether you're new to teaching or a seasoned educator, this is a great time to refresh your skills and stay current with certification requirements. The **Premier Series** offers practical, flexible courses designed specifically for CTE teachers, helping you strengthen your instruction and meet professional goals throughout the year.

Looking ahead, the Premier Series aims to expand its impact by:

- Serving a broader range of school districts across Arizona, particularly in rural and underserved communities.
- Increasing access to online and hybrid course formats to better accommodate working professionals.
- Aligning course content with evolving industry standards and educational best practices to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.

Course Title	Date of Course	Location
Instructional Best Practices	8/26 & 8/27	Yuma
Lab Safety & Management	9/17	Yuma
Empowering Students Through Professional Skills	9/21	Virtual
Formative Assessments in CTE	10/1 & 10/8	Virtual
Work-Based Learning	10/14	Chandler
Literacy for CTE	10/16	Page
Foundations of Classroom Management	10/29	Yuma
Bridging Proficiency in Classroom Management	11/5	Prescott
Serving Exceptional Students	11/19	Yuma
Lesson Plan Writing	12/3 & 12/10	Virtual

Fall Premier Series Course List

Register for Premier Series courses through our course calendar:

[Course Calendar](#)

acteaz.org/courses/

Ready to Bring the Premier Series to Your District?

Want to host a Premier Series course for your district or have questions about a specific course or its outcomes? We'd love to hear from you.

Contact Amber Gloria, our Premier Series Coordinator, at premierseries@acteaz.org to learn more about bringing this impactful professional development opportunity to your CTE educators.



ACTEAZ Save the Dates



2027
midwinter
leadership conference

3-5

February, 2027

Prescott Resort
& Conference Center

[Learn More](#)



2027
CONNECTION
CONFERENCE

JULY 9-13, 2027
TUCSON, AZ



ACTE Save the Dates



Postsecondary CTE Summit 2026

**POWERING POSSIBILITY:
ADVANCING POSTSECONDARY
CTE IMPACT**

Sept. 16-18

Arlington, Virginia

**100
ACTE**

#postsecondaryCTE26

Best Practices for CTE Administrators CONFERENCE 2026

**100
ACTE**

Oct. 6-8

Denver, Colorado

Grand Hyatt Denver



ACTE's CareerTech

VISION 2026

Ernest N. Morial Convention Center

New Orleans

DEC. 2-5



Partner Organization Updates



Proud to partner with AZCTECC

Looking for engaging resources that work across any CTE program? Explore the CTE Curriculum Connection's Universal Units, featuring 75+ ready-to-use Professional Skills and Standards lessons designed to help students build the skills employers value across every industry.

Grab the [one-pager](#) now to discover resources you can use in your classroom today!

ctecaz.org



Proud to partner with ACOVA

Join us for the ACOVA Mini Camp M&M on September 16, 2026! Lunch to be provided for all attendees.

[Register Today!](#)

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE ACOVA FALL CONFERENCE!

November 5-6, 2026

Prescott Resort and Conference Center-Prescott, AZ

Registration: \$325

Call for Presentations Now Open: [Submit Here](#)

acova.org



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STAY IN THE LOOP

Become an ACTEAZ Member — it's free!

Make sure you're subscribed to ACTEAZ Email Blasts to receive updates about the release of future newsletters. ACTEAZ members strengthen their network in Arizona CTE.

Join ACTEAZ

acteaz.org/about-us/membership/

Check out our previous newsletters

If you missed a previous issue, you can find past newsletters on our website here:

ACTEAZ Newsletters

acteaz.org/acteaz-newsletters/

Have a story idea?

Send your full story or story idea to Stephen Weltsch (stephenweltsch@acteaz.org) and Courtney Cook (brandtechnology@acteaz.org).

We're happy to help craft your idea into a finished piece for our future newsletters available to the CTE community.

