

IACTE NEWSLETTER

Summer 2026

The word "PROGRESS" in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font, centered within a dark blue rectangular box. The background of the entire graphic features a light green pattern of hexagons and circuit-like lines.

PROGRESS

What is the Progress Newsletter? For over twenty years, the IACTE Progress was the bi-annual magazine for all IACTE affiliate news. The magazine would capture our ACTE member-led conferences, awardees, and updates from affiliates from across the state of Illinois about career and technical education.

New Illinois CTE Educators Come Together for Back-to-School Conference

More than 100 Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers and administrators from across Illinois gathered at Illinois State University on July 28 and 29 for the Illinois CTE Back-to-School Conference, a professional learning opportunity focused on strengthening CTE instruction, building educator connections, and preparing teachers for the year ahead.

The two-day conference provided educators with opportunities to learn from one another, explore practical classroom strategies, and strengthen their professional networks. Participants who attended both days earned 10 professional development units.



A major focus of this year's conference was supporting novice educators, with particular attention to first-year CTE teachers. The Illinois State Board of Education implemented its mentor and mentee initiative as part of the conference, providing new educators with an opportunity to connect with more experienced CTE professionals and begin building relationships that can continue throughout the school year.

For many first-year teachers, the experience offered something especially important: a sense that they were not entering the profession alone. Participants expressed strong appreciation for having professional learning designed specifically for CTE educators and noted that the conference helped them feel supported, welcomed, and connected to a larger statewide CTE community.

Throughout the event, presenters received positive feedback for providing practical strategies, CTE resources, work-based learning information, equity practices, and authentic examples drawn from their own classrooms and professional experiences. Participants consistently emphasized that they want professional development that they can immediately put into practice with their students.

The conference feedback also highlighted several priorities for future professional learning. Teachers called for more intentional collaboration among CTE educators, stronger connections to business and industry, additional work-based learning opportunities, and professional development focused on career transitions and current technical skills.

Participants also expressed interest in structured opportunities to collaborate by pathway or content area.



Mentoring emerged as another important area for continued development. Educators indicated that mentor relationships are most valuable when they begin early and, whenever possible, connect teachers working in similar occupational areas. Program-specific examples and resources were also identified as an area where future conferences could provide additional support, recognizing the wide range of disciplines represented within Illinois CTE.

The message from educators was clear: **CTE teachers want connection, practical tools, and opportunities to learn from colleagues who understand the unique demands of career and technical education.**

The Illinois CTE Back-to-School Conference demonstrated the value of creating a statewide community where new and experienced educators can learn together. As Illinois continues to strengthen its CTE programs and expand opportunities for students, investing in the educators who make those pathways possible will remain essential.

The conference provides a strong foundation for continued collaboration throughout the school year, and a reminder that when CTE educators have the opportunity to connect, share, and learn together, students ultimately benefit.

IACTE Executive Board News

IACTE is now using a **new email address** – info@illinoisacte.org.

IACTE is now using a **new website** – illinoisacte.org. The old website (iacte.org) is now forwarding to the new site. **New usernames and passwords are required on the new site.**

The **ACTE Region III Conference** was held June 15-17, 2026, in Menomonie, Wisconsin. Dana King and Brian Rick from Illinois were presented with Awards of Merit. Nancy Coleman was awarded the Carl Perkins Community Service Award and will advance to the ACTE National Competition.

IACTE Retreat and Board Meeting, was held on July 27 at the ISU Alumni Center.

- Moving from Planning to Implementation of the approved 2026-2029 [strategic plan](#)
- Affiliate Engagement: Strengthening Partnerships & Building Sustainability
- Committee Alignment & Action Planning Launch

Back-to-School Conference was held July 28 and 29 at Illinois State University.

- Over 100 teachers and administrators participated
- ISBE implemented its mentor and mentee initiative
- Participants who attended both days earned 10 professional development units

New IACTE Board

Michael Moriarty, President

Holly Camerano, 1st Vice-President

Terry Stroh, 2nd Vice-President

Kaleb Smith, Past President

IACTE Upcoming Events



2026 IFACSTA Conference - Come to the IFACSTA Table

- IFACSTA Conference - Save The Date
- IFACSTA Conference Registration (Online with Payment)
- IFACSTA Conference Registration Form (DOC)
- IFACSTA Conference Registration Form (PDF)
- Call for Presentations
- Awards Nominations

FONA - McCormick Workshop (11/12/26)

Have you ever wondered how FONA-McCormick makes the flavors we have in our food and drink products? Do you want to learn careers your students can do related to the Food and Drink Industry? Do you want to incorporate food science in your FACS classroom? Do you want a representative to teach a lesson in your classroom? Then, this workshop is for you.

FONA-McCormick Workshop (Registration Link)Click Here!

ITEC Conference Information and Registration (2026)

- IDEA Scholarship - Apply Here!
- IDEA Awards Nomination - Apply Here
- TEAI Awards Nomination - Apply Here
- TEAI - Technology Education Association of Illinois - ITEC Home
- **ITEC- REGISTER HERE!**

IACTE Affiliate Connect

The Illinois Association of Career and Technical Education is composed of CTE professionals who are members of the following IACTE affiliate.

- Illinois Association of Vocational Agriculture - www.iavat.org
- Illinois Business Education Association - www.ibea.org
- Illinois Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers' Association - www.ifacsa.org
- Illinois Health Occupations Association
- Illinois New and Related Services - <https://illinoisnrs.org/>
- Technology Education Association of Illinois - www.teaillinois.org
- Illinois Career and Technical Education Student Support Personnel Association

- Illinois Career and Technical Administrators - www.illinoisicta.org
 - Illinois Work-Based Learning Division
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