

ACTIVE news



Vol. XI, Number 8

August 1980

THE ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN TEXAS

ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH FOLLOW-UP

Accountability is the name of the game in vocational-technical education these days. Vocational educators are intensifying their self-evaluation activities to ensure relevancy and effectiveness of their programs.

One school that has been evaluating its vo-tec programs is Brazosport College.

Jack L. Foreman, Dean of Occupational and Technical Education at Brazosport, has reported an annual follow-up survey of first-year graduates and non-returning students.

He said, "The information we get from the graduate follow-up is particularly valuable to us in determining the value of our programs to people. In addition to the responses covered in these reports, we compile a list of comments that are made in regard to ways we might improve the programs. We distribute these to our division chairmen and faculty so they can make adjustments and improvements to our instruction.

"Although we have a ways to go to fulfill 100% of our objectives, I feel the report indicates a successful program. During the next few years, we expect to spend a majority of our time on program improvement, and this includes instruction upgrading, curriculum upgrading and instructional materials development and upgrading."

Brazosport has grown from 12 occupational and technical programs in 1975 to 27 in 1980.

Dr. Foreman explains, "During the past two years we have developed industrial occupation upgrading courses in many of our existing programs. We are finding about 1/3 of those who are considered non-returning students are those who are enrolled in upgrading programs. These upgrading programs are very beneficial to the community and provide an opportunity for exposure of our programs to the industrial community."

HIGHLIGHTS OF SUMMARY OF FIRST-YEAR GRADUATE SURVEY

The data was compiled from a survey of occupational-technical students who were enrolled in the 1978-79 school year and received either an Associate of Applied Science degree or an occupational-technical certificate by the end of the spring semester 1979. Of the 193 students surveyed, 122 responded for a 73% return. Sixty percent of the respondents were male and 40% female with the average age 28. At the time of the survey, 23% of the respondents were attending school; 77% were not; and 86% were employed.

In brief, the responses:

- 76%-Of those in college considered the preparation for further education satisfactory to excellent.
- 84%-Of employed said courses were closely or directly related to their job.
- 82%-College training was good or very good in relation to its usefulness in performing jobs.
- 32%-Courses helped them obtain job; 36%-improved job performance.
- 87%-Completed courses were of immediate or long term, direct benefit in relation to career plans.
- 71%-Interested in taking other courses at Brazosport College.

Salaries: average hourly-\$7.40; average weekly-\$375.40; average monthly-\$961.67; average yearly-\$14,493.55.

NONRETURNING STUDENT SURVEY

The data was collected from a survey of occupational-technical students who attended at least one semester during the time period of summer 1978 to summer 1979, but did not re-enroll in the fall semester, 1979. Of the

1,629 students surveyed, 354 responded with a 22% rate of return. Forty-seven percent of the respondents were male and 53% female with an average age of 32. Eighty-five percent of the respondents were employed at the time of the survey.

In brief, the responses:

36%-Primary objective in attending the college was to improve existing job skills; 32%-prepare for a job to be obtained; 21%-personal interest.

23%-Fully obtained objective; 64%-planned to pursue objective further (of these, 80% said they would return to Brazosport College).

21%-Didn't re-enroll because had completed needed courses; 21%-conflicting job hours; 14%-other personal/family reasons; 11%-financial reasons.

73%-Satisfied or very satisfied with educa-

tional experience at Brazosport.

65%-Courses were directly or closely related to their job.

20%-Courses helped obtain job; 42%-helped job performance; 15%-helped with job advancement.

72%-Courses had immediate or long term direct benefits on their career plans.

25 students indicated they had no problem transferring to another college.

Salaries: average hourly-\$7.74; average weekly-\$285.64; average monthly-\$1,271.59; average yearly-\$20,388.75.

For further information on the report, contact Dean Jack L. Foreman, Occupational and Technical Education, Brazosport College, 500 College Drive, Lake Jackson, Texas 77566.

BUSINESS BACKS VOC-ED

"Vocational education merits high priority for our dollars, for our people, and for our best human development efforts. It offers a beautiful opportunity for a partnership of education, local government, and business to work together for worthwhile ends," is a statement made by W. Paul Cooper, president and chief executive officer of the Acme-Cleveland Corporation. Cooper was the guest speaker at the Fifteenth Anniversary Recognition Luncheon and Seminar of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education at The Ohio State University recently.

His speech, "Training the Nation's Workforce in the 1980s--An Employer's View," emphasized the necessity for educational institutions to provide business and industry with future employees that are competent in six basic skills, one of the most important being word skills. Cooper said that the business world must have, "people who can read and understand what they read, write and be understood, speak and be understood and listen and understand." He went on to say that lack of communication skills is one of the greatest problems plaguing employees today. Cooper also stressed the need for employees to have basic mathematical skills. An area of particular concern was the need for employees with positive people skills. Cooper noted, "Another of the big problems with our new work force is that of attitude." He stressed the need for developing skills in learning how to learn and stated that development of

this skill begins with recognizing that learning is a continuing process. He added, "Learning must be regarded as fun and gratifying." Cooper elaborated on the need for employees with technical understanding and hands on work experience. He said, "Vocational education adds to the quality and accuracy of job performance because it gives future employees the opportunity to learn the tricks of the trade." Technical understanding of a vocation, knowing the language, underlying principles, and how that vocation fits in with the scheme of things in the overall economy are advantages of vocational education that Cooper feels enhances individuals' employability.

He pointed out that business and industry view educational institutions as the source of their single most important resource: people. Cooper stated: "People are our most important resource and their training for the world of work is of great significance to those of us having stewardship responsibilities for the corporation." Rapid technological advancement, increase in years of formal education, changes in demand for human resources, decline in jobs requiring physical labor and decline in the advantage the United States has over other industrialized countries Cooper listed as significant changes that vocational education must consider in program development for the future. He emphasized the need for business/industry/labor and education to engage in more cooperative efforts in vocational education program

development. Cooper stated that business/industry/labor can assist vocational education through educational research, encouragement of management to participate on advisory boards, and CETA programs. Better trained workers will be the result. He added, "We are all in this together."

Cooper's company employs 6,000 people in thirty-nine plants, distribution centers and sales offices and has annual sales of more than a third of a billion dollars. He supports vocational education in the Cleveland area and summarizes the employer's view to-

ward vocational education in the following statement: "Each person brings to the workplace certain skills, attitudes, and effectiveness. The aggregate of these represents the most important single factor in the formula for success and even survival of an enterprise. The quality and effectiveness of our vocational education programs are important weapons in our nation's arsenal for economic competition. Vocational education gives future employees the skills, attitudes, and effectiveness necessary for the success and survival of free enterprise." (Emphasis added)

HERE AND THERE

STUDENTS PLACE IN NATIONAL COMPETITION--

Two students representing Texas State Technical Institute-Waco Campus placed in national Vocational Industrial Clubs of America competition recently. They were the only contestants from postsecondary schools in Texas to place in any of the categories.

Gary Brooking of Wichita Falls and Tom Moehnke of Thrall both placed third in the bricklaying and carpentry divisions respectively. Four students from TSTI-Waco qualified to compete in the national contest.

GUIDE TO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION--The National Urban Coalition has published a basic guide to vocational education called Job Training and the Schools.

The 32-page booklet discusses fundamental characteristics of vocational programs, growing ties between vocational education and federal employment and training programs under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), and how community-based organizations and neighborhood groups can collaborate with schools in providing productive vocational education.

To order the guide, write the Community-Wide Employment Project, the National Urban Coalition, 1201 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, D. C. 20036.

DR. DUNHAM JOINS STAFF--Dr. Daniel B. Dunham will be joining the staff of The Ohio State University as a visiting scholar on September 1. Dr. Dunham is former Deputy United States Commissioner for Occupational and Adult Education and served as acting Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education in the new Department of Education. His work with the University and the National Center will

include graduate instruction, staff development, R & D planning in the areas of energy and worker productivity as it relates to vocational education.

ADDITIONAL COPIES OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL SUPPLY-DEMAND PUBLICATION--In January, 1980, the Coordinating Board, in its capacity as the State 1202 Postsecondary Planning Commission, published a new edition of Postsecondary Educational Supply and Occupational Demand in Texas. This document is designed to assist students in making career choices and to provide a reference for counselors and educational planners. It covers approximately 100 academic degree programs and 120 vocational education programs. For each program there is an evaluation of the expected short range job opportunity and the expected five year change. Related occupations are listed for each program and information is provided as to the number of job openings expected and the number of graduates entering the job market. Initial distribution was made in the Spring. Additional copies are now available and can be obtained without cost by a request to Office of Postsecondary Educational Planning, Coordinating Board Texas College and University System, P. O. Box 12788 Capitol Station, Austin, Texas 78711.

ACTIVE FORMER STAFF WHEREABOUTS--We thought we would bring you up-to-date on where some of our former staff members are. Nell Littrell is Administrative Assistant of the Texas Vocational Technical Association. Will Reece recently became Executive Director of the Texas Vocational Consortium, and Angie Grace is Principal of the Mountainview Unit of the Windham ISD in Gatesville. Elton Thomas is Vice President of Prairie View A&M and heads a team in Liberia to improve vocational education.

THE SECRET IS OUT--Vocational education is getting the word out and hopefully will no longer be one of the best kept secrets around after the Statewide Public Information Campaign (The Secret Campaign). The secret that was revealed to over 8,000 secondary teachers, counselors and administrators at their inservice meetings is that "Vocational/Technical Education is the Secret to Success." Jeanine Hicks, program officer of ACTIVE, and Will Reece, executive director of Texas Vocational Consortium, made presentations at all eight inservice meetings in Dallas, San Antonio, Austin and Fort Worth. The presentation consisted of an introduction, slide/tape presentation, conclusion, and publications. The slide show presented the new theme and how it would be used in the campaign. In the talks the educators were asked to return home and brief their local advisory committee members about the campaign and ask them to make a donation to it. The sponsors of the campaign are considering collecting donations through a non-profit foundation, which would become a permanent entity -- a link between education and business/industry and labor -- for the development of vocational-technical education in the state. The Secret Campaign would be the first project of the foundation. Educators were also asked to in-

volve students in the project, as well as submit names of five of their most successful graduates for use in campaign publicity.

Reece and Hicks made the point in the presentations that the key to the success of the project is the educators, because they will implement the campaign at the local level.

For more information on the Secret Campaign; to check out the slide/tape presentation; or to order publications write Jeanine Hicks, ACTIVE, P. O. Box 1886, Austin, Texas 78767.

If you know of a large group of educators or business/labor people who would be interested in learning about the campaign and would like Hicks or Reece to make a presentation in person, contact Jeanine at the above address.

Jeanine Hicks, Editor
Cathy Myers, Assoc. Editor

ACTIVE--512/475-2046
S. Don Rogers, Chair
Alton D. Ice, Executive Director

**The Advisory Council for Technical-
Vocational Education in Texas**
P.O. Box 1886
Austin, Texas 78767