



NEWS RELEASE
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**WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION
2024 EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS**

The Washington Association for Career and Technical Education (WA-ACTE) is pleased to announce the recipients of the Washington ACTE 2024 Excellence Awards. The award winners were announced during the Washington ACTE Summer Conference, which was held August 4-7, 2024, at The Davenport Grand Hotel in Spokane, Washington. The Washington ACTE Awards promote merit in Career and Technical Education (CTE) by recognizing individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to CTE. Award winners serve as inspirational leaders to Washington ACTE: they embody the core values of serving students and being committed to CTE. Congratulations to all of our 2024 Excellence Award winners!

Teacher of the Year



Ed Ufford
Richland School District

The **Washington ACTE Teacher of the Year Award** recognizes the finest Career and Technical Education teachers at the middle/secondary school level who have demonstrated innovation in the classroom, commitment to their students, and dedication to the improvement of CTE in their institutions and communities.

Ed Ufford started his teaching career on a Native American Reservation in Hays, Montana, teaching woodshop in 1991. Shortly thereafter, he moved to Tri-Cities, Washington, where he was split between Richland High School and Hanford High School for two years. He taught woods at Hanford and metals at Richland High. He built up the program so much that he could choose where he wanted to go and chose Hanford teaching woods. He has taught at Hanford since then. He also started a program building guitars and ukeleles about 10 years ago. He spent his summers going to different states and teaching teachers how to implement that program in their woodshops. Just this last summer he opened up a guitar build to anyone (community or otherwise) to build their own guitar. It was mostly teachers, but also some community members who built their own guitar. Approximately two years ago, he added Core+ Metals/Aerospace to the courses he teaches.

New Teacher of the Year



Maggie Joe Uceny
Selah School District

The **Washington ACTE New Teacher of the Year Award** recognizes new CTE teachers who have made significant contributions toward innovative and unique Career and Technical Education programs and shown a professional commitment early in their careers.

Maggie Joe Uceny has always known she wanted to be a teacher, but it wasn't until she realized the impact FCCLA and Family and Consumer Sciences courses had on her life that she decided to continue her love of leadership and teaching and pursue a degree as a Family and Consumer Sciences teacher. At Selah High School she is driven in preparing students to work in a career in Early Childhood Education and fulfill their dream of becoming teachers. She graduated from Washington State University during the height of the pandemic in May of 2020 and with her Masters in Curriculum and Instruction from WGU in January 2024. In the past four years, Maggie Joe has been able to teach multiple subjects within Family and Consumer Sciences and co-advises an FCCLA chapter that makes a positive impact within the community, region, state, and nation. As a new professional, Maggie Joe has jumped into organizations that support and build Family and Consumer Sciences Education such as serving on the WA-FACSE board, the WA-FCCLA advisory board, and WA-FCCLA Board of Directors. She and her teaching partner are currently working with ESD 105 to pilot a new and innovative program that integrates Recruiting Washington Teachers and Unified Champion Schools through a Kick Start Grant. Her first four years have been amazing, and Maggie Joe is excited for her future in education.

Administrator of the Year



Michelle Lewis
Sumner-Bonney Lake School District

The **Washington ACTE Administrator of the Year Award** recognizes administrative CTE professionals at the school, district, county, or state level who have demonstrated leadership in ensuring teacher and student success and have made significant contributions toward innovative, unique, and effective Career and Technical Education programs.

Michelle Lewis is the Executive Director of Learning and Innovation at the Sumner-Bonney Lake School District in Pierce County. With a robust background in educational leadership, Michelle has significantly contributed to enhancing the educational landscape through innovative initiatives, especially around systemic support for professional learning for pre-service through in-service educators. Michelle began her career outside the field of education, similar to many Career and Technical Education educators. After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from the University of Puget Sound in 1992, she initially pursued a role in the business sector. However, feeling unfulfilled in her first job, Michelle was driven to become an educator. She was especially inspired by her brother who never learned to read. She aimed to implement changes that would support students like her brother, equipping them with essential skills and opportunities for success. She furthered her academic credentials with a Master's in Education from City University in 1998, and obtained her Administrative Certification through City University's Educational Leadership Program in 2007. Michelle's career in education spans over two decades, during which she has held several pivotal roles. She began as a Teacher and Instructional Facilitator in Federal Way Public Schools. She then expanded her influence nationally as a Consultant with the Success for All Foundation, facilitating a Leadership Academy and managing professional learning programs focused on literacy.

Community Service Award



Deborah Palaki

Sumner-Bonney Lake School District

The **Washington ACTE Community Service Award** recognizes individuals who have used CTE to make a significant impact on their community and demonstrated leadership in programs and activities that promote student involvement in community service.

Deborah Palaki has been in education for over 20 years and is currently teaching in the Health Sciences Pathway at Bonney Lake High School in the Sumner-Bonney Lake School District. She has taught throughout the state of Washington in various capacities and has also taught overseas in Portugal, Taiwan, and Mexico. Through these experiences she has learned that every child can learn with great instruction and prepare for career and/or college when graduating from high school. She holds a Bachelors of Sciences in Family Consumer Sciences with a Spanish Minor, a Masters in Administration with a K-12 grade principal certificate, and plans to start a doctoral program in the next few years. Deborah enjoys spending time with her family and supporting them in their various activities. She resides in NE Tacoma WA with her husband and children.

Lifetime Achievement and Hall of Fame Award



Kathleen Hendrix

Retired

The **Washington ACTE Lifetime Achievement and Hall of Fame Award** recognizes CTE professionals for their leadership on behalf of Washington ACTE, their innovations in CTE, and their contributions to the field over an extended period of time.

Kathi Hendrix started on her journey in educational leadership in Career and Technical Education (CTE) during the 1970s. Her dedication to shaping the future of the CTE field began during her early years as a teacher, where she exhibited a remarkable commitment to innovation and excellence. She was recognized as a trailblazer and selected at both local and state levels to positions of leadership. She was one of nine teachers in the state of Oregon to be selected to write the first state Family and Consumer Sciences (then Home Economics) curriculums for the Oregon State Department of Education. She co-wrote the first CTE Framework for Washington CTE. For as long as she can remember, Kathi wanted to be a teacher. Her positive classroom experiences and involvement in FHA in high school helped guide her into CTE. She graduated with honors with a BS in Home Economics Education from Oregon State University and MS in Adult and Continuing Education from Washington State University with a 4.0 GPA. She married Frank and moved to Weston, Oregon, where she started teaching at Athena Weston Junior High School. She taught junior and senior high school for 37 years. During retirement she worked a short time for Central Washington University as a Student Teacher Supervisor and for WA-FACSE as Executive Director. Due to recurring cancer issues, she had to fully retire. She and Frank have been married 48 years. They have two adult children who were both active in FCCLA and have occupations in CTE fields. They are extremely proud of their children and their spouses Heather (Andy) and Bif (Amanda), and their six grandchildren. Two grandchildren are FCCLA members and continue the legacy.

The **Washington ACTE Impact Awards** recognize individuals and groups from the education, business and industry communities who enhance Career and Technical Education (CTE) by contributing to the improvement, promotion, development, and progress of Career and Technical Education.

Champion for CTE Award



Superintendent Chris Reykdal

Champion for CTE Award



Angie Mason-Smith

The **Champion for CTE Award** is given to individuals who have made a significant impact on the improvement and expansion of CTE programs and/or on positively influencing policymakers and public opinion regarding CTE. These individuals have also repeatedly demonstrated their public support for CTE and who exhibit an understanding of the components of modern, high-quality CTE.

Chris Reykdal is a transformational, visionary leader with a career in public education and an unwavering commitment to doing what is right for students. First elected in 2017, Chris Reykdal is currently serving in his second term as Washington's 16th State Superintendent. Known for pushing against the status quo to meet the evolving needs of our students and our economy, Chris has spearheaded some of the most transformational changes Washington's K-12 public education system has seen in decades.

Angie Mason-Smith serves as Program Director for Career Pathways at Washington STEM where she designs and implements innovative and scalable programs to advance STEM education in Washington State. Her work focuses on excellent, equitable, and engaging K-12 STEM learning, STEM career and college pathways, and STEM literacy.

Business-Education Partnership Award



The **Business-Education Partnership Award** is given to partnerships that are designed to support high-quality CTE programs. These partnerships make a measurable and significant impact on student achievement and on the development of the local community and economy.

**Washington ACTE President's Award
Kevin Smith, WA-ACTE President 2023-2024**



Franciene Chrisman
WA-ACTE Executive Assistant
1988-Present

Tim Knue
WA-ACTE Executive Director
2009-Present

Tess Alviso
WA-ACTE Executive Assistant
1988-Present

Washington ACTE Membership Award

(recognizes the Washington ACTE section with the highest percentage increase in membership)



Washington Association for Career Counseling & Employment Readiness (WA-CCER)
is this year's recipient with a 16% increase in membership.

Washington ACTE Achieve 100% Membership Award

(recognizes schools or districts that have 100% Washington ACTE membership participation from each and every member of their CTE staff)



The 2024 recipients:

Bethel School District
Centralia High School
Clarkston School District
Clover Park School District
Fife School District
Lake Stevens School District
Mount Vernon High School
OSPI CTE Division
Rochester School District
Stanwood-Camano School District
Washougal School District
West Sound Technical Skills Center
Yelm High School

The Washington Association for Career and Technical Education is the state's largest not-for-profit association committed to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for successful careers. Washington ACTE represents the community of CTE professionals including educators, administrators, researchers, guidance counselors, and others at all levels of education. Washington ACTE is committed to excellence in providing advocacy, public awareness and access to resources, professional development, and leadership opportunities.

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