

Wisconsin Technical College System: Wisconsin technical education receives national recognition

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SILVER SPRING, MD – Two Wisconsin high schools were among eight nationally to be recognized last week for programs, delivered in partnership with Wisconsin technical colleges, that “represent the best of Career and Technical Education (CTE).”

Mishicot and Kaukauna High Schools were honored in front of state and national leaders with Excellence in Action awards at the 2019 Advance CTE spring meeting in Maryland.

Advance CTE is a national non-profit representing state leaders in secondary, postsecondary and adult CTE across all U.S. states and territories. Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Provost and Vice President Dr. Colleen McCabe, Wisconsin’s state director of CTE and a member of Advance CTE, was on-hand for the awards. Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Director of CTE Sharon Wendt also attended.

“This is what our colleges do,” said McCabe. “We work with our education and industry partners to create meaningful learning opportunities for students of all ages, including the chance for high school students to earn college credit. Importantly, both of these high schools also have an eye on assuring equitable access for all students,” McCabe said.

Mishicot High School's plant science program was developed in partnership with more than 30 local businesses and three local technical colleges: Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC), Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) and Lakeshore Technical College (LTC).

The program evolved from a single class into a full program of study, offering students the ability to earn college credits and industry certifications. Students also engage in work-based learning, assuring an understanding of industry trends and connections for future employment.

Launched in 1993 by teacher and program chair Nels Lawrence, Kaukauna High School's Manufacturing program works with FVTC to prepare students for high-demand careers with hands-on experience and rigorous coursework.

Kaukauna students, who are part of the state's Youth Apprenticeship program, have the opportunity to program state-of-the-art machining equipment that uses industry standard computer-aided design (CAD). They can earn state-recognized certifications and college credit in manufacturing, automation and electronics for a smooth transition to college or career.

"We need to help students position themselves for careers beyond high school," Wisconsin State Superintendent of Public Instruction Carolyn Stanford Taylor said. "Congratulations to Kaukauna High School, Mishicot High School, and their partners for offering opportunities of work-based learning, youth apprenticeships, and college credit while in high school. These are examples of CTE programs that prepare our students and our state for the future."

"These honorees serve as national models of what high-quality CTE looks like and can achieve," said Kimberly Green, Executive Director of Advance CTE. "This dedication to quality and equity ensures each learner has access to opportunities that prepare them for future success in their education and career."