

# Porter County Career and Technical Education News

February 19, 2009

Career and Technical Education  
*Memorial Edition Dedicated to Dr. Janice Rees*

Volume 15, Issue 8



Porter County Career  
And Technical Center



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## Dr. Rees Served Students for 38 Years

Dr. Janice Rees, Executive Director of the Porter County Education Services passed away on February 11. She was the chief administrator for all county wide educational services to include special education and career and technical education. Dr. Rees was a tireless worker who knew how to work hard and when to have fun. She treated everyone with respect and dignity. She began her career as a special education teacher, then as an administrator, and concluded her career as the executive director. The beauty of teaching is the opportunity to train one's replacement and she did that by training teachers and administrators who will strive to follow in her footsteps. Previous Executive Director, Fred McNulty, described Jan as one of the quiet, hard working volunteers who make our community great. She was active in the Community Theatre, her church, and the Valparaiso Noon Kiwanis Club. Dr. Rees left her husband of 38 years, Jon, and also her father, Calvin Willis, a retired Porter County School administrator.



Interim Executive Director Diane Massa will replace Dr. Rees. Dr. Rees will be missed by all who knew and worked with her.



## Ed Herron Announces Retirement

Ed Herron, Auto Tech teacher at the Career Center, submitted his resignation effective March 14. Ed is a cancer survivor who has battled some health complications throughout his life. He will be remembered for his colorful personality and generosity to others. Ed taught at the Career Center for 18 years and was well known for organizing the Career Center Car Shows, winter car checks for the elderly, his participation in Relay for Life, and his own yellow hot rod. Ed plans to spend his retirement working on his cars, drag racing, and enjoying his family.

Please forward this newsletter to parents, students, advisory committee members, and other interested parties.

## Counselor Appreciation Week

Indiana will join the country in celebrating National School Counseling Week, February 2-6, 2009, to recognize the unique contributions of professional school counselors in improving student achievement and preparing all K-12 students for success in the future. Just as teachers are responsible for helping students learn academic content standards, Indiana's 1,800 school counselors teach student guidance standards that help all students achieve academically, overcome obstacles to learning, and ensure that students are college and career ready. The average ratio of students to school counselors in Indiana is 533 to every one school counselor.

(Source: Indiana Department of Education)

We are blessed to have wonderful, compassionate, and professional counselors to work with in Porter County. We thank all of them for their dedication to our students and to their profession.

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Pictured above is Mrs. Doane's Dental Health class after conducting their dental hygiene classes at John Simatovich Elementary School.



Pictured above is the afternoon Medical Terminology Class who did their dental health presentations at Central Elementary School in Portage. Mrs. Doane's and Mrs. Wilson's classes have been presenting dental health lessons at area elementary schools. The presentations bring dental health awareness to students at grade school levels and have been a fun and interactive way to inform young students to care for their teeth for years to come.

#### **Our New President's Call to Action**

"For everywhere we look, there is work to be done. The state of our economy calls for action, bold and swift. And we will act, not only to create new jobs, but to lay a new foundation for growth. We will build the roads and bridges, the electric grids and digital lines that feed our commerce and bind us together. We'll restore science to its rightful place, and wield technology's wonders to raise health care's quality and lower its cost. We will harness the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories. And we will transform our schools and colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age. All this we can do. All this we will do".

(President Barack Obama)

## **Letter from the Indiana State School Superintendent**

My journey to becoming the state superintendent of public instruction was one of many stops over a 20-year span of time. I've spent time as a teacher, a coach, an elementary school principal, a high school principal, an assistant superintendent for operations, and as a superintendent. Along the way, I learned some basic truths about our educational system that I brought into this new job with me: Education only gets better when we keep discussions student-focused, not adult-focused. If local schools have more flexibility, they will come up with creative and successful solutions. Traditional public schools are no longer in a position to service the needs of every child, and we must increase, expand and diversify the learning opportunities available to our students.

It is this lesson that is of particular importance to me, and that I think is important to all of you working to offer better vocational programs. As the father of a dyslexic child, I know first-hand that the needs of every child is different, and I know that she would not be able to work through college at her own pace had she not first gone through a vocational program to become a beautician. But I also have another important perspective on our career and technical education programs because one of the stops on my journey was as principal of Prosser School of Technology in New Albany.

One of the first things I did at Prosser was to tie every single one of our programs to a state or national certification. I wanted our students to have the opportunity to walk out of the door with more than just a high school diploma and a set of skills; I wanted them to walk out with proof that they were qualified and able to compete for skilled trade jobs with anyone else in the market for their field. As the head of Indiana's Department of Education, it's a model I hope we can bring to every vocational school in the state, not just to better serve and prepare our K-12 population, but to better serve and prepare Hoosiers of all ages looking at new career paths in these tough economic times.

I realize that this goal will not happen overnight, and it will not happen without some serious investment in our existing programs. I'm writing to you today to assure you that you I am committed to helping see this vision through, and the entire Department of Education is committed along with me. In fact, I've already had some meetings to discuss our abilities to use federal stimulus money to invest in our vocational schools and programs so they meet the standards needed for state and national certification. While I can't promise today that this is how we will use a large portion of stimulus funds, I can say there is a very real possibility this goal will move faster than we could have ever imagined.

As we continue charting the course for Hoosier education over the next four years, I want to reassure you that my door is open and I am always eager to hear suggestions. I've been in your shoes before and I understand some of the challenges vocational education faces, but I need your help to understand them all. I look forward to working with you all in the future, and together we'll change the way Hoosiers educate their children.

Tony Bennett

**February is National Career and Technical Education Month!**

***The Porter County Career and Tech Center and SELF School follow the cancellation/school delay decisions of the Valparaiso Community Schools. All other CTE sites follow the school closing decisions of the host school.***

***All commuting students should drive carefully and use common sense and their parent's input when deciding if it is safe to drive to their CTE location.***

***In the event of severe or inclement weather, school may be delayed or canceled. Please use the following sources to track any weather related delays or cancellations:***

- VCS Alert (The registration procedure is available on the Valparaiso Community Schools homepage (<http://www.valpo.k12.in.us>). You can register your cell phone to receive messages.)
- Radio station 105.5
- Cancellations.com

## **It's That Time of Year Again!**

Some Student Retention/recruitment Ideas:

- Email or call parents about their student's success in your program
- Email home school principals and counselors about students' success in your program
- Write articles for district newsletters, develop a program newsletter
- Give out frequent student awards (communicate these to the media)
- Post graduate success stories on bulletin boards, in newsletters
- Have a parent/grandparent night
- Encourage/reward students to recruit other students
- Maintain an active advisory committee
- Participate (individually and with students) in community service projects
- Develop a program logo (for tee shirts, memo pads, pencils, etc.)
- Send articles to trade association newsletters
- Join state and national associations, use their resources for additional ideas
- Ask area employers to promote your program with their employees.
- Have a Grand Opening
- Continually evaluate and improve your program.

## **Calendar**

February, National CTE Month

February 2 - 6, National Counselor Appreciation Week

February 20, Student/Faculty Trip to Chicago Auto Show, leave at 3:30

February 26, CTE Open Houses

March 6, Career Center Blood Drive #3

April 9, 3:30, Spring CTE Area Advisory Committee Meeting

April 18, Valparaiso Rebuilding Together Work Day

May 13, Technology Honor Society Induction, 7 pm., Wheeler High School Auditorium

Visit the Porter County Career and Technical Education Website at:  
**The Career Center has a new website at <http://www.pccte.org>**

It is the policy of the Porter County Career and Technical Education Program to comply with all state and federal regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age or disability in

### ***Career & Technical Education: Training Tomorrow's Workforce***

#### **Our Newsletter**

*Porter County Career and Technical Education News* is a newsletter for promoting the high achievement of our staff and students. Written contributions to the newsletter are always welcome. Most articles should be written in 100 words or less. Please fax (531 - 3173), call (531-3170), or email (jgroth@mail.valpo.k12.in.us) with news to be published about you and your students.



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***[www.pccte.org](http://www.pccte.org)***

...providing the opportunity for everyone to be successful at work!

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