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September



# VIEWPOINT

Quarterly Newsletter



## Meet the SDACTE President Travis Santistevan

We're proud to introduce Travis Santistevan, president of SDACTE and a dedicated educator from the Hill City School District. Travis brings a hands-on approach to education and a deep appreciation for real-world learning.

He's currently watching Landman and rereading the CJ Box Joe Pickett series. While he humbly says he's "always learning," woodworking is the area where he's most confident sharing tips, tricks, and resources with others. His morning routine often starts with scrambled eggs and sausage, and his favorite place to hit the road? Yellowstone National Park.

What fuels his passion for teaching? Watching students get excited about a project, skill, or career path—when they connect classroom learning to their future goals. He's focused on improving differentiation in the classroom, making sure every student, from beginners to advanced, stays challenged and engaged.

As SDACTE president, Travis is committed to fostering collaboration, sharing practical resources, and creating opportunities for educators to learn from one another. "Serving as SDACTE president is an incredible honor. This role is reminding me that when educators collaborate, share ideas, and support one another, we strengthen not only our programs but also the opportunities we provide students across South Dakota."

Travis is excited to help lead SDACTE as it continues to grow, innovate, and advocate for Career and Technical Education across the state.

✉ Contact Travis at: [President@sdacteonline.org](mailto:President@sdacteonline.org)



CareerTech  
Vision Conference

December 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>  
Nashville, TN

Follow the link below or scan the QR  
code to Register:

[Vision Conference Registration](#)



Check It  
Out!



Direct Live Links Inside this Viewpoint Newsletter

\*Throughout this newsletter you will see blue bolded & underlined text. These links will direct you to important websites & opportunities available for our members!



### Meet the SDACTE President-Elect Karen Roudabush

Please welcome Karen Roudabush, your new President-Elect for SDACTE! Karen teaches at the Mitchell Career and Technical Education Academy in the Mitchell School District, where she brings energy and passion to her animal science courses every day. Karen teaches CASE Animal Science, Veterinary Science, and Companion Animals, and she loves seeing her students connect classroom content to their personal lives. “Those ‘ah ha’ moments are fantastic—especially when students get excited to take what they’ve learned home and share it with others.”

She’s currently watching Untamed on Netflix and reading The Let Them Theory by Mel Robbins. Her go-to breakfast? A granola bar or fruit—and always coffee! This summer, she took a scenic road trip through California’s Central Valley, visiting Morro Bay and driving through Sequoia National Park—a highlight for this self-proclaimed road trip fan. As her classroom becomes more diverse, Karen is committed to improving instructional strategies for English language learners, ensuring all students feel supported and engaged.

In her new leadership role, Karen is focused on fostering strong member engagement, enhancing communication across divisions, and advocating for innovative CTE programs and resources across South Dakota. “I look forward to listening, learning, and leading as we continue to grow and strengthen CTE in our communities. Together, we can make a real impact!” With Karen’s dedication and forward-thinking mindset, SDACTE is in great hands for a future of growth, collaboration, and opportunity.

✉ **Contact Karen at:** [PresidentElect@sdacteonline.org](mailto:PresidentElect@sdacteonline.org)

### Meet the SDACTE Past President Andrew Jensen



Please join us in recognizing Andy Jensen, Past President of SDACTE and Agricultural Education Instructor at the Marion School District. Andy has just completed his term as SDACTE President (2024–2025) and continues to be a passionate advocate for CTE educators across South Dakota.

Currently, Andy is enjoying a mix of shows including The Good Wife, The Paper, and Flea Market Flip. His subject matter expertise lies in Animal and Plant Sciences, where he continues to make a lasting impact on students. A fan of a hot breakfast, you’ll often find him starting the day with egg bites or a breakfast sandwich. One of his favorite teaching moments? When students get excited about something they love—regardless of what their friends think.

Andy’s dream destination is the mountains out West or Montana, where he hopes to retire someday. In the classroom, he’s focused on growing in his ability to adapt lessons for students with diverse learning needs, backgrounds, and language abilities—a challenge he’s eager to embrace. Even in his past-president role, Andy plans to continue advocating for CTE and spotlighting the incredible work of educators across the state.

“It was an honor to serve as your SDACTE President from 2024–2025. I want to thank each of you for the hard work you are doing for Career and Technical Education. I look forward to this year of service and helping along the way!” Thank you, Andy, for your continued dedication to growing, supporting, and celebrating CTE in South Dakota!

✉ **Contact Andy at:** [PastPresident@sdacteonline.org](mailto:PastPresident@sdacteonline.org)



## Meet the Administration Division President Breanne Lynch

Say hello to Breanne Lynch, your 2025 Administration Division President! Serving as the Career & Education Coordinator for the Harrisburg School District, Breanne is passionate about building strong bridges between education and industry.

Currently watching *The Summer I Turned Pretty*, Breanne jokingly asks, "Does coffee count as breakfast? Asking for a friend!"

While her mornings might be powered by caffeine, her professional focus is crystal clear: Work-Based Learning. "I'm your all-things work-based learning guru. If I can help with internships, apprenticeships, business/industry partnership development, or senior capstone projects—please reach out!" Her favorite part of the job? When former students reach out years later to share life updates—from new jobs and moves to weddings and babies. She cherishes those connections that last long after graduation.

Her ideal road trip? Any city hosting an all-star cheer competition featuring her daughter—she's a proud cheer mom traveling across the Midwest!

In terms of growth, Breanne is looking to level up in data collection and management. With new hour-tracking tools and a CRM system on the way, she's ready to streamline and improve how her program tracks student experiences and engagement.

As division president, Breanne plans to lead through listening and active service, connecting people and organizations with the resources—and each other—they need to succeed.

"Thanks for believing in me. I'm excited to learn and lead with you this year!" Let's work together to support strong administrative leadership and continue expanding impactful career and technical education across South Dakota.

✉ **Contact Breanne at:** [AdminDivision@sdacteonline.org](mailto:AdminDivision@sdacteonline.org)



## Meet the AG Division President - Sara Colombe

We're excited to introduce Sara Colombe, the new AFNR Division President and Agricultural Education Instructor at the Milbank School District. With a deep-rooted passion for ag education, Sara is ready to lead, support, and mentor others in the field.

She's currently reading *American Anthem* and feels most confident teaching Agricultural Mechanics and Agriculture Processing. Her go-to breakfast? A classic combo of milk, banana, and cold cereal to start the day right.

One of her favorite teaching moments is when students make the connection between classroom content and real-life applications—seeing how what they're learning matters beyond the school walls. Sara is working to grow in classroom management, particularly around student behaviors, and is committed to refining this area to strengthen her teaching practice even further.

As division president, she aims to lead by example and be a mentor to all, creating a welcoming and supportive environment for AFNR educators across the state.

"I am just a text, email, or phone call away :)" Sara looks forward to connecting with you and helping build a strong, supportive AFNR community!

✉ **Contact Sara at:**  
[AFNRdivision@sdacteonline.org](mailto:AFNRdivision@sdacteonline.org)

## SDACTE Online Shop!

Show your membership & support by proudly wearing SDACTE gear at your next professional event or school activity. Ten percent of our sales will go to support the scholarships intended for our students. The store is open; purchases will be sent directly to you when you submit your order. The link to the store can be found on our website: <https://sdacteonline.org/>



## Meet the BMIT Division President Amy Pierson



We're excited to introduce Amy Pierson, the new president of the BMIT Division from NSU - eLearning. With over 20 years of teaching experience, Amy brings a passion for continuous improvement and collaboration. Currently, she's reading *The Women of Arlington Hall* and watching *Blind Spot* on Netflix. A self-proclaimed Accounting I expert, Amy enjoys Greek yogurt with granola for breakfast and loves road trips that involve hiking trails.

Amy's teaching focus is on growth—she's looking to incorporate more student-centered learning strategies into her practice. She plans to continue the great work of the previous BMIT president by growing division membership and fostering collaboration among members. Her message to fellow educators: "Even with over 20 years of teaching experience, I am always looking for fresh ideas and new ways to effectively teach key concepts—and I know many of you feel the same."

If you're new to teaching in business or IT and want to connect with a mentor, past president Kristi Dancsisin has compiled a helpful list. Amy is happy to help connect you—just reach out! Let's keep the momentum going as we work together to support each other, grow professionally, and help our students succeed!

✉ **Contact Amy at:** [BMITdivision@sdacteonline.org](mailto:BMITdivision@sdacteonline.org)



## Meet the Trades & Industry/Tech Ed Division President Katrina Kruse

Introducing Katrina Kruse, your 2025 T&I Division President! Katrina teaches at Harrisburg High in the Freshman Academy in the Harrisburg School District, where she's inspiring students through PLTW Introduction to Engineering Design and more.

One of Katrina's favorite parts of teaching is when her so-called "back row" students come to life, fully engaged in projects that capture their imagination. "When a student I haven't heard a peep from all year is suddenly coming in before school and during study hall to work with classmates—that's when teaching is really fun."

Her go-to getaway is the Black Hills, a place she never tires of exploring, always discovering new corners no matter how many times she visits. She's currently watching *Grey's Anatomy* and reading *The Anxious Generation*. Her go-to breakfast? A nostalgic bowl of Golden Grahams—sweet, simple, and energizing for a day of hands-on learning.

Katrina is working on improving the way she provides feedback on student projects and is eager to collaborate with other educators who are doing this well. She envisions targeted growth opportunities for every T&I subgroup, and plans to foster industry-specific seminars, roundtables, and collaborative events to help connect teachers with job-alike peers across South Dakota.

"I really appreciate the warm welcome from my T&I educators. I'm looking forward to a year of learning and growth with SDACTE." With Katrina's leadership, the T&I Division is set to become more connected, collaborative, and tailored to the diverse needs of its educators.

✉ **Contact Katrina at:** [TradesIndustryDivision@sdacteonline.org](mailto:TradesIndustryDivision@sdacteonline.org)

## Meet the FCS Division President Brigitte Brucklacher

Please welcome Brigitte Brucklacher, your 2025 FCS Division President and long-time Family & Consumer Sciences Instructor at Philip High School. With an incredible 41 years in education, Brigitte continues to bring passion, experience, and inspiration to everything she does.

An avid reader, Brigitte is currently on book #58 for the year—well on her way to another impressive total, though she modestly admits she may not top last year's 163 books! Her areas of mastery include building strong relationships using the Dibble Curriculum and teaching Personal Finance through the SD Stock Market Game.

Her breakfast of choice? A cinnamon raisin Black Hills bagel with brown sugar cream cheese paired with an iced vanilla latte—a perfect start to any day. Brigitte finds joy in those full-circle moments when former students return to share life updates after graduation. And if you're looking for her favorite fall getaway, you'll find her soaking in the colors of Spearfish Canyon.

Despite her decades of service, she's still chasing the ever-elusive goal of keeping weekends school-free—proof that dedication to education never fades!

As FCS Division President, Brigitte is focused on mentoring and role modeling for new teachers, while also encouraging increased use of collaborative Google tools among members. "One of the inspirations from attending Vision 2024 ACTE in San Antonio... It's not 'what is your legacy,' but 'who is your legacy!'"

Brigitte is honored to serve and excited to support the next generation of FCS educators across South Dakota.

✉ **Contact Brigitte at:**  
[FCSdivision@sdacteonline.org](mailto:FCSdivision@sdacteonline.org)



## Meet the Health Science Division President - Brendan Sato

Say hello to Brendon Sato, your 2025 Health Science Division President! Brendon teaches at Central High School in Rapid City Area Schools and brings a strong background in Molecular Diagnostics (genetics) and healthcare leadership to his role.

While he's gearing up for football season, Brendon admits he's not much of a TV watcher. During the week, he keeps breakfast simple with oatmeal or cereal, but on the weekends it's all about the classic bacon and eggs.

One of Brendon's favorite classroom moments? When students challenge his line of thinking. "It means they're thinking critically and feel comfortable enough to ask hard questions."

His ideal getaway? Anywhere he can fish—a peaceful retreat that keeps him grounded. As for English class? "I have no interest in diagramming sentences or correcting dangling participles. Sorry, English teachers!"

Brendon's leadership style is rooted in availability and collaboration. He's committed to being there when Health Science educators need him and is eager to gather input on how to grow the division.

"I'm excited—and a bit nervous—to be a Division President. I'll do my best, and I'm ready to support or assist anyone who needs it. Have a great school year!" With Brendon at the helm, the Health Science Division can count on thoughtful leadership, grounded in experience and open communication.

✉ **Contact Brendon at:**  
[HealthScienceDivision@sdacteonline.org](mailto:HealthScienceDivision@sdacteonline.org)

## Google Workspace: SDACTE

SDACTE is moving to Google Workspace to create a more professional and unified system. This change includes new email addresses, eliminating the need for personal or frequently changing contact information. The shared Google Drive for members will also be discontinued. Please remember to check your spam or junk folder periodically, as all official SDACTE emails will now come from an @sdacteonline.org address. For starters, be sure to update Lenessa Keehn's contact information from her old email address to [ExecutiveDirector@sdacteonline.org](mailto:ExecutiveDirector@sdacteonline.org).



## CTE IN ACTION



South Dakota ACTE members had the opportunity to hear from the "TikTok Principal," Gerry Brooks, author of *Go See the Principal*. With his trademark humor and relatable stories, he inspired members to enhance their instruction by focusing on personal climate and culture strategies. He also encouraged administrators to lead all staff in a positive and constructive way.



### South Dakota's CTE Learn & Google Workspace By: Lenessa Keehn

Continue your Professional Development through [South Dakota's CTE Learn](https://sdacteonline.org/)! Provided as a benefit to members of ACTE/SDACTE, the online portal allows you to obtain continuing education credits and advance your career. This supports SDACTE's organization with a commission kick-back that goes directly to the professional development stipend available to SDACTE members. This link can also be found on our website: <https://sdacteonline.org/>

Google Workspace for SDACTE: SDACTE will be transitioning over to Google Workspace as a more professional, cohesive unit. This will include new email addresses, taking away the personal, ever-changing contact information. This will also affect the shared google drive for members, as that will be going away. Please be sure to check your spam/junk folder occasionally as all new SDACTE official emails will come from and @sdacteonline.org email address. For starters, be sure to update Lenessa Keehn's contact information from her old email address to [ExecutiveDirector@sdacteonline.org](mailto:ExecutiveDirector@sdacteonline.org).



### Region V Highlights By: Annika Russel Manke

In April, I had the opportunity to attend the Region V conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. The conference consisted of a keynote, breakout sessions, tours, and an awards ceremony. One of the keynote speakers was from Meow Wolf's Las Vegas exhibit, Omega Mart. Their spokesperson discussed the importance of innovative marketing and reaching target audiences through immersive, multi-sensory experiences.

I attended several great breakout sessions. One session focused on implementing "employee" reviews for students throughout the semester. We have decided to adapt this idea in the Accounting/Business Management program at Mitchell Tech to provide more structured feedback and development opportunities for our students.

The conference also offered several tours, and I chose to visit the Nellis Air Force Base. I learned about the history and operations of the base and got to see where the famous Thunderbirds demonstration squadron trains.

A highlight of the conference was the awards ceremony which was held at a local high school. It was a unique and memorable experience as the high school's culinary students prepared and served a fantastic meal for all the attendees.

### ON THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S

*Notepad:*



- Check out SDACTE's website: [Link Here - SDACTEonline.org](https://sdacteonline.org/)
- The [SDACTE calendar](#) with important dates & deadlines is up-to-date! Copy any and all items to your personal calendar for an easy reminder!



## SDACTE State Award Winners By: Bev Rieck



# Award Winners



### Breanne Lynch Administrator of the Year

Administrator of the Year recognizes administrative CTE professionals at school, district, or county level who demonstrate leadership to ensure teacher and student success and made significant contributions in CTE education programs. This year's recipient currently serves as the CTE director in their respective school district. Each year they coordinate and place approximately 60 high school interns, providing real-world experiences that bridge classroom learning with the career pathways. Recognizing the value of early career exploration, this person has expanded local elementary career learning by hosting Learner Interest Day at the elementary buildings. In collaboration with the Home Builders of the Sioux Empire and Junior Achievement of SD, she brings together industry professionals, educators, and students for hands-on demonstrations, networking, and career exploration. This is just a little what she does for CTE in the Harrisburg School District. Breanne Lynch is the recipient of the Administrator of the Year.



### Andrew Jensen Teacher of the Year

Teacher of the Year recognizes CTE teachers at the middle/high school level who have demonstrated innovation in the classroom, commitment to their students, and dedication to improvement of CTE in their institutions and communities. This year's recipient states that he looks for ways to get students out of their seats and into real, hands-on learning whether it might be identifying poultry carcass defects in a messy lab or it could be having the first ag program in our state to farrow a sow onsite. That happened with a partnership with Pipestone, who supported this with veterinary care and donated the sow. Learning about artificial insemination using a simulator obtained through a Perkins grant, students experienced every step in the process including nutrition, cleaning, farrowing, etc. The CTSO, FFA, has flourished with many awards under his leadership. Most recently from the Chester Area Schools and now this fall he started teaching in the Marion School District, ag instructor and a leader in our SDACTE organization, Andrew Jensen, is this Year's Teacher of the Year recipient.



### Tanner Peterson New Teacher of the Year

The New Teacher of the Year recognizes new teachers who have made significant contributions toward innovative and unique CTE education programs and shown a professional commitment early in their careers. In this person's application, they state that they are a passionate teacher by helping students succeed through hands-on learning, leadership development, and career preparation where the environment fosters curiosity, hard work and real-world application. This person coordinates the high school's internship program where 60 students have been placed across various CTE clusters in their three years of teaching. By incorporating Small Engine Certification and by adding AMSA Meat Evaluation Certification, students increase their engagement plus receive an advantage as they move into post-secondary programs or careers. While advising FFA, this person's students have excelled especially in the National Land Judging contest. From Tri-Valley the Agricultural Education Teacher, Tanner Peterson, is this year's New Teacher of the Year.



## Charlene Weber

### Carl Perkins Community Service Award



The Carl Perkins 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. Serving as the advisor to her CTSO, has provided her members with making an impact in her school's community. The chapter's collaboration with more than 20 district community stakeholders, including seven businesses, one restaurant, and multiple family farms reflect a network of support. A few of the student learning projects included Honoring Heroes Breakfast for veterans, Community Garden Shed project, Feed a Farmer Day, and an Interactive Farm Animal Experience. In a letter of support, it states, "This person is a genuine, sincere person who truly believes that she can make a difference in the lives of youth." From the Howard School District, the Ag teacher and FFA advisor, Charlene Weber, is this year's recipient of this award.



## Rena Oines

### Counseling & Career Development Professional Award

The Counseling & Career Development Professional Award recognizes school counselors and career development professionals who have demonstrated commitment to students with opportunities for success, shown innovation, and have advocated for CTE as a viable option for all students. This year's recipient has been a driving force behind high-quality CTE in the district she is employed. She works to connect students with real-world opportunities, bridging the gap between education and industry. As the school has expanded internships, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning programs it has offered students hands-on experiences in fields such as healthcare, technology, and construction. The district-wide implementation of Xello is overseen by this year's recipient who serves as the Career Counselor and CTE Academy Counselor for the Sioux Falls School District, Rena Oines.

## Suzanne Skinner

### Lifetime Achievement Award



The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes CTE professionals for their leadership on behalf of ACTE, their innovations in CTE, and their contributions over an extended period of time. Over the years this year's recipient, as a CTE teacher and advisor to a CTSO, has contributed much to our field. Among her many contributions and involvement, here is a list of just a few: division officer and committee fundraiser/auction member, roundtable presenter mentor to six student teachers, and involvement in various community organizations. Serving as an FCCLA adviser, she has had three national officer candidates, seven state officers, and numerous national STAR Events participants who have received many top placings. In addition to teaching middle school and high school FCS, over the years she continues to teach Introduction to Hospitality and Tourism for SD Virtual School. She has written a year-long Child Development Associate curriculum and completed her 3rd year of teaching that in SD Virtual School, too. The Middle/High School FCS teacher from the Mitchell School District, Suzanne Skinner, is this year's recipient.



## Dr. Nicole Graves Teacher Educator of the Year



The Teacher Educator of the Year recognizes those who are committed to preparing teachers to deliver high quality CTE programs, demonstrated innovation in teacher education, and leadership in improving CTE. In a letter of recommendation the writer states, "This recipient exemplifies excellence in CTE leadership, demonstrating commitment to advancing programs, teacher preparation, and professional development across SD and the nation". This person works closely with colleagues in the Agriculture Education program and Ag Ed and FCSE students who begin taking classes together in their sophomore year. She has been instrumental in working on the FCS state standards alignment, integrated curriculum, and development of new courses. Serving as the advisor for AAFCS/FCCLA alumni student organization in addition to presenting workshops/sessions here at conference are among the many roles she fulfills. The Assistant Professor of Family Consumer Sciences Education in the College of Education and Human Services, Dr. Nicole Graves, is this year's recipient.

## Dr. Sara Vande Kamp Postsecondary Professional of the Year



The Postsecondary Professional of the Year recognizes CTE professional at this level who have instructed and educated students involved in CTE pathways and exhibited dedication to the improvement of CTE in their institutions and community. This person believes that strategic storytelling integration paired with data is the tool for transforming perceptions of CTE and has the power to drive cultural change. This framework has helped schools gain greater community support, attract business partners, and encourage more students to pursue CTE pathways. One example of this is when she led efforts to bring advanced virtual reality CDL simulation technology to a rural district (Bridgewater/Emery) with no access to local training facilities. This year's recipient has played a pivotal role in expanding high-quality CTE through her leadership with Southeast Technological College and the Eastern Statewide Consortium where she serves 36 school districts. That person is Dr. Sara Vande Kamp.

## Benjamin Ringling Friend of CTE



The Friend of CTE recognizes a person, businesses, or organizations that have been identified with the work and purposes of SDACTE. This year's recipient is an individual whose local contributions have definitely supported his dedication to CTE. When one speaks of horticulture education, this person comes to mind. He has supported and assisted Harrisburg School's horticultural program, greenhouse, and apprenticeship program, supported McCrossan Boys Ranch's greenhouse development, and partnered with the Home Builder's Association for the "Frame the Future" event to include landscaping/horticulture career experiences for students. At the regional/state level this person has coordinated the SD Local Foods Conference and the annual Minnehaha Master Gardener event at STC. At the state FCCLA conference he and three students led hands-on workshops. This year's recipient is Benjamin Ringling, horticulture faculty member, from Southeast Technical College.

# Conference Highlights



## Conference Highlights

Check out the highlights from our SDACTE Conference held this summer at Mitchell Technical College! Educators and professionals from across South Dakota came together for inspiring sessions, hands-on learning, and valuable networking opportunities. It was an incredible time to grow, connect, and share ideas that strengthen career and technical education in our state!

