



NEWS RELEASE

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2026 Nebraska Career and Technical Education (CTE) Conference

More than 500 Career and Technical Education (CTE) educators, school counselors, and administrators from across the state came together for the 2026 Nebraska Career Education (NCE) Conference hosted in Kearney, Nebraska from June 8-10. The 52nd annual conference was themed "From Learning to Earning, Preparing Today's Learners for Tomorrow's Workforce." The speakers and sessions emphasized the critical role of CTE in preparing Nebraskans for emerging careers and the evolving workforce of tomorrow.

Nebraska Commissioner of Education, Dr. Brian Maher, kicked off the conference with welcoming remarks and recognized the important contributions of CTE educators, school counselors, and administrators in preparing students for continued learning and earning. Dr. Alyson Freeman, a leader at Dell Technologies, delivered the opening keynote, sharing how innovation, artificial intelligence, and emerging technologies are reshaping the workforce while emphasizing the critical role of technical education, skilled talent, and uniquely human career readiness skills in meeting future workforce demands.

The final day left the participants with an inspirational message from leadership expert Dr. Tim Elmore, who challenged educators to understand and empower the next generation of learners and leaders. His message focused on the unique strengths of Generation Z and the importance of preparing students with the leadership, adaptability, and workplace skills needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Over the course of the conference, participants selected from more than 130 breakout sessions where they had the opportunity to collaborate, engage, learn, and reconnect with CTE colleagues to enhance and advance their CTE programs. Participants heard local, state, and national leaders share best practices and strategies to provide all students with access to high-quality CTE programs.

This important collaboration helps support the NDE's Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Priority 3 which includes equipping learners for the workforce. This strategic priority focuses on increasing postsecondary access and attainment and the NCE conference highlighted those opportunities. Information on the NDE Strategic Plan can be found online at <https://www.education.ne.gov/strategic-plan/>.

The Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education honored several award recipients during the conference, recognizing Excellence in Career and Technical Education. These awards celebrated outstanding Nebraska CTE programs and exemplary business partnerships. More information about each award can be found at <https://www.education.ne.gov/nce/nebraska-career-education-conference/awards/>. The following awards were presented at this year's conference:

NCE Outstanding Business Partnership Award
Fiserv

NCE Distinguished Partner Award
Jim Townsend

Outstanding Secondary CTE Administrator Award
Dr. Delayne Havlovic, Omaha Public Schools

Outstanding Postsecondary CTE Administrator Award
Scott Broady, Metropolitan Community College

Outstanding Middle School CTE Program
Brady Public Schools

Outstanding Secondary CTE Program Award
Clarkson Public Schools

Outstanding Postsecondary CTE Program Award
Nebraska ELEVATE Apprenticeship Consortium

Outstanding Rule 47 Career Academy Program Award
Plattsmouth Community Schools

The 2027 Nebraska Career and Technical Education Conference will take place in Kearney, Nebraska, June 7-9, 2027.

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