



"A Partnership serving the educational needs of Process Industries"

Issue 8

February 2000

# Gulf Coast Process Technology Alliance NEWSLETTER

## IPTA Update

*Report on the International Process Technology Alliance (IPTA) meeting in New Orleans*

John H. Reed

Chair, IPTA

The second annual conference of the International Process Technology Alliance (IPTA) was held on September 28 in New Orleans. Process industry and educational representatives from nine states, including Alaska, attended as well as from Sarnia, Canada. Paul Williams, the Deputy Consul-General from the United Kingdom, gave the keynote address. He told the group that the major workforce development issues being worked in the United Kingdom are: 1) standardization of curriculum, 2) articulation of the workforce across regional boundaries, 3) the development of a new cooperative paradigm for education and commerce, 4) redesigning systems to be more responsive to change, and 5) transatlantic cooperation for developing learning systems. Paul's comments were particularly appropriate to our alliance members because they represent the same basic challenges facing the U.K., the United States and Germany with regards to

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## Building a Pipeline for People

*The Founding of the Alaska Process Industry Consortium*

A watershed event in the history of workforce development in Alaska took place when over 100 representatives from the oil, utility and mining industries, K through 12 and post-secondary education, organized labor, native organizations, and government came together to jointly explore the creation of a new, cohesive workforce development system for the process industries in Alaska.

The workshop began by assessing both the supply and demand of skilled labor for the process industries in the State. Participants heard from three panels that represented the perspectives of industry, education, and clients. The following conclusions were cited:

- Alaskans are not being prepared for good jobs that will be available in the next 5-10 years
- Post-secondary and secondary education must become more responsive to industry requirements
- Industry must fully participate in the process and commit to jobs, internships and other support
- There are many solutions 'in the mill', and they now must be pulled together
- Action is needed now

Participants attended a reception addressed by Lt. Governor Fran Ulmer and University of Alaska Regent Chancy Croft. The Lt. Governor offered her support and the support of Governor Knowles' administration. Regent Croft hailed a partnership between Alaskan

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technical training.

Attendees felt that there were several key areas where the IPTA could provide valuable service. The top of the list was the opportunity to network, communicate, develop and share information in the areas of curriculum and curriculum development, resources, subject matter experts, in-kind support, core industry skill requirements and standards, and grant and graduate placement opportunities. The organization could also assist in representing the process industry to influence decision-makers, both at home and across borders, in industry, education, government, trade and labor associations.

All the attendees felt that the IPTA should continue meeting and networking. They also felt that it should be industry driven and work towards a national standard of core competencies within industries and support verifiable exit competencies.

All in all, the meeting was very well received and quite productive. Input from the 70-plus attendees set the stage for future IPTA development and agendas. Everyone who attended was able to leave with valuable information and contacts.

## Upcoming Events

GCPTA Career Fair  
Friday, February 11, 2000  
San Jacinto College

**Industry Invited, call (281) 834-0266 for details**

March 31, 2000  
GCPTA Meeting  
Holiday Inn Express, Lake Charles, LA

June 2, 2000  
GCPTA Meeting  
Hilton, Clear Lake, TX

August 11, 2000  
GCPTA Meeting  
Hilton, Clear Lake, TX

September 12, 2000  
IPTA Meeting  
New Orleans, La

## LAAP Grant Information

The U. S. Department of Education's **Learning Anytime Anywhere Partnerships** (LAAP) funds were established to bring innovation to distance education and broaden student access that is not limited by time or place. LAAPs inaugural, two-stage competition generated tremendous interest with more than 650 preliminary proposals submitted for \$10 million in funds.

The Gulf Coast Process Technology Alliance was one of the 29 grant recipients for its project entitled, "Educating the Incumbent Process Technician Workforce Through Distance Learning and Virtual Reality." The Alliance has received \$921,000 over the next three years to convert four of its eight core technical courses to an interactive, web-based curriculum. Training and Development Systems, Inc. is the subcontractor for this portion of the project and is currently redesigning the "Introduction to Process Technology" course for Internet delivery. The course will be ready for piloting in the Fall of 2000. In addition, the potential of virtual reality as a suitable alternative to demonstrate hands-on competencies at a distance will be investigated and evaluated.

## Perkins Grant Update

The piloting for the "Introduction to Process Technology" and "Safety, Health and Environment" courses is complete and the feedback we received from the pilot course instructors has been integrated. New versions of the Instructor Manuals are complete and are available for purchase through GCPTA. In addition to the Instructor Manuals, Student Workbooks have been developed to supplement the course materials of both courses. The workbooks include updated drawings and pictures that will reduce the need for the instructor to supply and reproduce their own supplemental materials. Look for the book order form on the GCPTA web site at [www.processtech.org](http://www.processtech.org).

## Texas Skill Standards Board Presented to Key Industry Group

The Texas Skill Standards Board's (TSSB) *Guidelines for the Development, Recognition and Usage of Skill Standards* (Guidelines) were presented to the Gulf Coast Process Technology Alliance at its July meeting in Lake Charles, Louisiana. The Director of the TSSB, Lee Rector, gave an overview of the Guidelines to Alliance members and presented Alliance President Steve Ames with a copy of the guidelines.

The TSSB approved Guidelines on May 26, 1999. The approval of this policy and procedural document was a milestone for the TSSB in its efforts to facilitate the development of a system of skill standards in Texas. The presentation of the document to the Alliance marked the first release of the Guidelines to an industry group.

At its April meeting, the Alliance approved the convening of a sub-committee to begin the organization and development of skill standards for the occupational area of process technology. The Guidelines presented at the July meeting will serve as the process map for converting process technology job analysis data into skill standards to be submitted to the TSSB for recognition.

In developing skill standards, the GCPTA is creating a valuable resource for all industry stakeholders. The TSSB commends the Alliance on its work and achievements to date, and looks forward to a collaborative partnership which will further benefit workforce development in Texas.

## CORRECTION!

In our last issue we listed the recipients of the Bellwether Award for Workforce Development. We inadvertently omitted the names of Merv Treigle and John Payne. Not only were these gentlemen recipients of the award, they were also presenters and played a key role in the success of the award winning presentation. Our apologies to these gentlemen for our oversight and many thanks for their many contributions to the GCPTA!

education and industry as an idea whose time had come.

A contingent from the GCPTA presented details of their highly successful consortium based in the South Texas and Louisiana areas. Bill Raley and Joanna Kile from College of the Mainland, John Payne of BP Amoco, and Mike Kukuk of Sterling Chemicals, provided the details, acted as panelists, and later as small group participants and facilitators.

The workshop closed with a high level of energy and enthusiasm, witnessed in the vast majority of participants signing on to committees to do the work necessary to make the Alaska Process Industry Consortium (APIC) a reality. John Payne has been asked to facilitate these sessions so as to provide insight from the Gulf Coast efforts.

"Many of the issues brought forth regarding the workforce in Alaska are very similar to those that we experience in the Gulf Coast Area," said Payne. "The GCPTA and the International Process Technology Alliance will provide assistance to help APIC realize the goals set for the Alaska area."

## Who Am I Hiring?

How can I hire a person with a certificate one day and get a person whose technical knowledge rivals that of associate degree graduates and yet another day I hire a person with a certificate who possesses only a very basic knowledge? It may surprise some to learn that there are actually 3 levels of knowledge job applicants can have after completing college. There are students who have received a 84 to 96 hour certificate, students who have received a 1-year certificate, and Associate Degree Graduates.

The first group have received a down and dirty introduction to the industry in a course that is between 84 and 96 clock hours and does not count for college credit. This course is similar to a speeded up version of the Introduction to Process Technology course offered to first semester students in an Associates Degree Program.

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The second group, the 1-year certificate recipients, have received technical training equivalent to that supplied by the Associate Degree Programs. This training does not include academic courses but constitutes about 525 clock hours and is counted for college credit.

The graduates from Associate Degree Programs have all of the technical training that holders of the 1-year certificate hold, but they also receive academic training in such fields as Physics, Chemistry, and Algebra.

Job applicants who have received training in Process Technology at their local college may not have equal levels of training. As long as you are aware of the different educational levels, you can ensure that you interview people who are at the proper level for the job opening you are trying to fill.

## **Farewell**

The GCPTA would like to bid farewell to Valerie Billiot. As the Administrative Assistant for the Alliance, Valerie went above and beyond to ensure that all ran smoothly. As Valerie pursues other opportunities we want to wish her our heartfelt thanks for a job well done!

## **Gulf Coast**

### **Process Technology Alliance**

P.O. Box 3950, NW 82  
Baytown, Texas 77522

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

## **Information for the GCPTA Website**

If you are an industry representative who would like to post your employment opportunities on the Alliance Website, please send an e-mail to the Process Technology Webmaster. ([Rkosar@ResourceDev.com](mailto:Rkosar@ResourceDev.com))

If you are a college representative and would like to post resumes of your students (graduates only please) please send that information to the same address. Other ideas about what should be included on the Website are always welcome.

The GCPTA would like to take this opportunity to thank our Webmaster, Bob Kosar, for his time and efforts in keeping our Website up to date and looking great. Thanks Bob!

## **New Officers for the GCPTA**

<b>President</b>	<b>Steve Ames, ExxonMobile</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Merv Treigle, Albemarle</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Ed Stiles, Lyondell Citgo</b>

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