Region V History
AMERICAN VOCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Eight decades have passed since the professional association, which represents the interest of people with concerns for vocational education was founded in 1926 (National Society for Vocational Education. (National Society for Vocational Education and the Vocational Education Association of the Middle West combined to form AVA). As the members of the ASSOCIATION FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION move into their ninth decade, they can look back with pride to evaluate their present position in the educational arena.

Our history of Region V was first documented in Philadelphia in 1967. A group of individuals (mainly) state and territorial presidents) from the western half of the United States joined together for the purpose of having an opportunity to discuss common problems. ACTE membership had grown by leaps and bounds, and the Western states felt that they had problems that needed to be addressed. The group entitled themselves COASTA as their meetings became known as the Conference of Officers of Affiliated State and Territorial Associations.

A few years later, ACTE appointed five Regional Liaisons. These were usually retired ACTE members who were still interested in assisting State Associations. They were charged with developing the format for the regional program of work and they supported the regional concept for a closer working relationship.

In 1974, a rebellion was happening in the West among state officers. There was no set time for people to get together. Growing pains were again happening in the individual states. A meeting was scheduled for Denver, Colorado, entitled Conference of Western States. The initials led this group to be called COWS. This was a unique conference because spirits were high, cowboy hats were visible, and instead of a gavel, the chairman called the meeting to order with a COWBELL. The Regions were established after an extensive organizational restructure process in 1974.

In July of 1975, the ACTE Board of Directors appointed five Regional Vice Presidents and charged them with the responsibility of taking the first steps necessary to make regions an integral and contributing part of ACTE. Regions were established based on the membership at the time as well as the membership projections with a protected ACTE membership of 15,000 per region.

Originally, New Mexico was part of Region V; but when the final decision was reached, 16 states and the territories of Guam and American Samoa made up the current region. These states were:

- Alaska
- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Kansas
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- North Dakota
- Oregon
- South Dakota
- Utah
- Washington
- Wyoming

Micronesia was added in 1979. Region V currently has the largest territory with a membership of 5,960 as of January 2016.

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The five Regional Vice Presidents serve on the ACTE Board of Directors. Under each Vice President is a Policy Committee composed of six people who serve a three-year term directing and implementing the Strategic Plan.

The following individuals have held the position of Vice President of Region V:

- **1976-1979** Jo Ellen Zgut, CO
- **1979-1982** Robert Thompson, CA
- **1982-1985** G. James Capelli, WA
- **1985-1988** Russell Blackman, CO
- **1988-1991** Harvey Link, ND
- **1991-1994** Thomas Lopp, WA
- **1994-1997** Lyn Velle, WY
- **1997-2000** Vern Chandler, WA
- **2000-2003** Mike Gillespie, AZ
- **2003-2006** Kathleen Lopp, WA
- **2006-2009** Kevin English, AZ
- **2009-2012** Doug Meyer, WA
- **2012-2015** Charles Gallagher, AZ
- **2015-2018** Dodie Bemis, SD
- **2018-2021** Mark Branger, MT
- **2021-2024** Shani Watkins, WA

Region V also has a Delegate Assembly (previously called Steering Committee) which serves in the capacity of an advisory committee for the Region V Policy Committee. This Delegate Assembly is made up of three persons from each state, usually the President, Vice President, and Executive Director/Secretary. Each state has one vote at the annual Delegate Assembly meeting held during the Region V Leadership Conference.

The first Region V Leadership Conference was held in 1976 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Attendance was limited, but many vocational educators from Nevada were present at the meeting. Listed below are the years and places the Region V Leadership Conferences has been held:

- **First** 1976 Las Vegas, NV  
- **Second** 1977 Boise, ID  
- **Third** 1978 Phoenix, AZ  
- **Fourth** 1979 Hilo, HI  
- **Fifth** 1980 Billings, MT  
- **Sixth** 1981 Wichita, KS  
- **Seventh** 1982 Portland, OR  
- **Eighth** 1983 Golden, CO  
- **Ninth** 1984 Fargo, ND  
- **Tenth** 1985 Seattle, WA  
- **Eleventh** 1986 Lincoln, NE  
- **Twelfth** 1987 Anchorage, AK  
- **Thirteenth** 1988 San Diego, CA  
- **Fourteenth** 1989 Jackson, WY  
- **Fifteenth** 1990 Rapid City, SD  
- **Sixteenth** 1991 Boise, ID  
- **Seventeenth** 1992 Denver, CO  
- **Eighteenth** 1993 Scottsdale, AZ  
- **Nineteenth** 1994 Bozeman, MT  
- **Twentieth** 1995 Overland Park, KS  
- **Twenty-first** 1996 Las Vegas, NV  
- **Twenty-second** 1997 Seattle, WA  
- **Twenty-third** 1998 Jackson Hole, WY  
- **Twenty-fourth** 1999 Rapid City, SD  
- **Twenty-fifth** 2000 Sedona, AZ  
- **Twenty-sixth** 2001 Salt Lake City, UT  
- **Twenty-seventh** 2002 Sun Valley, Idaho  
- **Twenty-eighth** 2003 Girdwood, AK  
- **Twenty-ninth** 2004 Great Falls, MT  
- **Thirtieth** 2005 Mandan, ND  
- **Thirty-first** 2006 Omaha, NE  
- **Thirty-second** 2007 Prescott, AZ  
- **Thirty-third** 2008 San Diego, CA  
- **Thirty-fourth** 2009 Semiahmoo, WA

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Region V is proud of its accomplishments. It is one thing to know your colleagues as names in an organization, or even as voices on the phone. It is quite another to know the feel of their handshakes, the warmth of their smiles, and the conviction of their beliefs. For professionals endeavoring to educate others, working in scattered locations throughout the country, meeting with their distant associates makes all the difference in the world. As a result of attending just one of these activities, many vocational educators return home knowing that they are not alone in their efforts. Many of us believe this is the best conference we attend each year.

The following individuals from Region V have served as the AVA/ACTE president:

**Edwin A. Lee**  
Dec. 1925-Dec. 1927  
(California - T&I)

**K. Otto Logan**  
July 1965-June 1966  
(Washington - Distributive Education)

**Charles M. Miller**  
Dec. 1930-Dec. 1931  
(Kansas - T&I)

**Gary D. Meers**  
July 1984-June 1985  
(Nebraska - Special Needs)

**L.R. Humpherys**  
Dec. 1940-Dec. 1941  
(Utah - Agriculture)

**Niel A. Edmunds**  
July 1988-June 1989  
(Nebraska - Industrial Arts)

**Julian A. McPhee**  
Dec. 1947-Dec. 1948  
(California - Agriculture)

**Harvey Link**  
July 1992-June 1993  
(North Dakota - Region V)

**Mark Nichols**  
Dec. 1953-Dec. 1954  
(Utah - Agriculture)

**Jesse L. Hudson**  
July 1993-June 1994  
(Kansas - T&I)

**Cecil E. Stanley**  
(Nebraska - Distributive Education)

**Tom Lopp**  
July 1995-June 1996  
(Washington - Region V)

**Eva W. Scully**  
Dec. 1956-Dec. 1957  
(Arizona - Home Economics)

**Dianne Mondry**  
July 2001-June 2002  
(North Dakota – Special Needs)
Coleen Keffeler  
July 2007 – June 2008  
(South Dakota – New and Related Services)

Sarah Heath  
July 2014 – June 2015  
(Colorado – Business)

Doug Meyer  
(Washington – Region V)

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