

Szczawinski, Leonard

**Page: Overview**

While “career and technical education (CTE)” is new to many, those in the field have long understood the power and importance of education that provides students with high-tech, real-world learning infused with career exploration. Not only is CTE at the roots of today’s most relevant education trends such as ‘STEM’ and ‘Maker Spaces,’ it’s a vital component to ensuring America’s economic prosperity and status as a leader for innovation. It is part of ACTE’s mission to ensure the value of CTE continues to grow and gain the recognition it deserves.

ACTE’s Champion for CTE Awards were created to recognize education leaders, business and industry executives, celebrities and thought leaders who support and champion CTE programs as a vital part of developing a prepared, adaptable and competitive workforce. The words and actions of a few dedicated and influential individuals have the power to further best practices, foster supportive policies, and shape a more positive public opinion of CTE. These awards showcase outstanding champions—from local leaders to national figureheads—who have leveraged their influence to expand, improve, and promote CTE.

These examples of model leadership serve to inspire and inform other leaders on creative and meaningful ways to positively impact the field. Highlighting their stories aligns with ACTE’s goal of cultivating a positive image of CTE and recognizing a broad community of supporters, ultimately creating a stronger vision for the future of CTE and empowering its leaders to speak with a unified voice.

If you know of a deserving candidate for this recognition, we urge you to explore ACTE’s preeminent awards program.

These awards are open to education leaders, business and industry executives, celebrities, thought leaders and other individuals who have made a significant impact on the improvement and expansion of CTE programs and/or on positively influencing policymakers and public opinion regarding CTE. *Federal policymakers are not eligible for these awards and should instead be nominated for [ACTE’s Policymaker of the Year Award](#).* Greater consideration will be given to candidates who have repeatedly demonstrated their public support for CTE and who exhibit an understanding of the components of modern, high-quality CTE.

Nominations will be accepted online until May 1 and may be submitted by the candidate or by a third party nominator. All candidates who meet eligibility and criteria requirements will be highlighted on ACTE's website as a 'Champion for CTE Spotlight.' Top nominations may be featured as model leaders in a future issue of *Techniques*, and/or invited to present sessions at ACTE's CareerTech VISION.

An independent panel will review all submissions to select the national recipient(s) of the ACTE Champion for CTE Award, which will then be considered for approval by the ACTE Board of Directors. Winners will be notified in August and recognized at the ACTE Awards Banquet during CareerTech VISION.

*All nominators permit ACTE to use and edit content of the application for promotional activities. ACTE reserves the right to maintain the anonymity of judges and confidentiality of their scores. Non-winning candidates may be re-nominated for the same or another Excellence Award the following year. Winning candidates at the national level may not be nominated for the same or another national ACTE Excellence Award within three years of their win.*

**Page: Basic Information**

**Nominator Information**

Please provide your information as the nominator of this candidate.

**Your Name**

Szczawinski, Leonard

**Email Address**

tszczawinski@pcti.tec.nj.us

**Title**

Director of Curriculum

**Employer**

Passaic County Technical Institute

**Phone Number**

973-389-4190

**Relationship to the Candidate**

Administrative Team Member

**Candidate Information**

Please provide information on the candidate being nominated.

**Candidate's Name**

Diana C. Lobosco

**Title**

Chief School Administrator

**Employer**

Passaic County Technical Institute

**Work Address**

45 Reinhardt Road  
Wayne New Jersey 07470 US

**Email**

lobosco@pcti.tec.nj.us

**Phone Number**

973-389-4202

**Does the candidate have a background (diploma, certificate, degree) in a career and technical education field?**

No

**If yes, please provide more detail about their background in CTE.**

**Page: Description of Candidate**

**1. Please describe actions the candidate took to help expand, improve, and/or promote CTE.**

Diana Lobosco has devoted 44 years serving the educational needs of students, with over 33 of those years devoted to career and technical education at Passaic County Technical Institute (PCTI). Since 1985, she has contributed to the lives of thousands of students through her work at PCTI, starting as Supervisor of Basic Skills & Bilingual Education, Principal of the Adult High School, Assistant Principal for Special Education, Principal (1992-1995) and Superintendent (1995-2018), where she leads over 3500 students and over 790 teachers and staff. In addition, Mrs. Lobosco has provided opportunities for hundreds of students in PCTI's Adult & Continuing Education program, Licensed Practical Nursing program, Passaic County Learning Center and GED programs. As the leader of the largest career and technical high school in the state of New Jersey, she remains a staunch supporter and is instrumental in contributing to the unprecedented success of career and technical education as reflected in PCTI's rigorous academic and globally focused CTE program offerings, state and national achievement awards, and student recognitions. She has expanded CTE program offerings in the traditional trades while introducing new CTE programs based on market and global trends, including high demand STEM pathways in engineering, math, and computer science. She has consistently acted on a vision and mission that strives to provide students with state of the art and cutting-edge technology, championship athletics and an extensive offering of extra-curricular activities serving all communities and students throughout Passaic County. In 2004, Mrs. Lobosco led Passaic County Technical Institute through a twenty-six-million dollar expansion initiative enabling 1,000 additional students to attend PCTI for career and technical education. In 2017 she embarked on a thirty-eight-million dollar expansion initiative through continued forums with local, county and state officials that will provide an additional 1,200 students access to a new STEM Career and Technical focused Academy opening in September 2018. PCTI's state-of-the-art STEM Academy will provide opportunities to better serve all students including under-represented groups in STEM fields, including Latinos, African Americans, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities and females, and will focus on establishing a solid foundation in the areas of Biomedical and Life Sciences, Computer Science and Information Technology, Mathematics and Engineering, addressing relevant and emerging trends in the industry and global workplace. Mrs. Lobosco is a visionary leader that connects students, faculty and staff with unprecedented opportunities to develop into leaders within their chosen vocation within the community and globally.

## **2. How did the candidate's actions shape the adoption/expansion of best practices in CTE?**

Diana Lobosco is an outstanding Chief School Administrator (CSA) that I have the honor to collaborate with as a CTE professional. She continually astounds our team with her engagement and knowledge of each level of educational service that we provide our students and stakeholders. Mrs. Lobosco models the Quality CTE Program of Study Framework to sustain PCTI's relevance in pedagogy, career and college readiness, assessments, industry credentials and a highly effective teaching staff. She strongly believes in advisory board input to guide CTE instruction and annually recognizes an industry partner. PCTI's curricula are aligned to state and industry standards, they utilize a cross-disciplinary collaborative approach that utilizes project based learning to simulate workplace experience. She has developed excellent relationships with post-secondary institutions, providing PCTI with multiple articulation agreements for dual enrollment courses that are vertically aligned to our course sequences. As CSA, Mrs. Lobosco has compelled administrators and instructional staff to use data-based decision making when seeking to implement change. At PCTI the data collected from formative and summative performance and written assessments are compiled and disaggregated to determine if standards are achieved. Mrs. Lobosco is a staunch advocate for sharing our CTE expertise with the State Department of Education (NJDOE), CTE and comprehensive colleagues along with engaging in professional organizations. She leads by example and encourages her teachers and administrators to engage in professional development and improvement by providing the necessary support to ensure success. PCTI was recognized by the media for having one of the the most highly effective instructional staff, an achievement only derived through continued professional development. Mrs. Lobosco has cultivated a culture of commitment and respect at PCTI that breeds excellence in instruction. Teachers and students alike engage in authentic experiences such as those provided through NASA HUNCH, NRAEF ProStart, State and National SkillsUSA competitions, JROTC SeaPerch, HOSA, and numerous other CTSO and technical skill challenges. Mrs. Lobosco's vision has provided opportunities to better serve under-represented groups, including Latinos, African Americans, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities and females. This vision was expanded through her securing NJDOE Partnership Grants worth approximately \$800,000.00 that provide CTE STEM programs in Passaic Public Schools, our comprehensive middle/high school partner. She supports successful CTE programs with services for career and college guidance along with work-based learning oversight that provides assistance for students with an interest in early career entry employment programs. Mrs. Lobosco truly values PCTI's staff membership in ACTE!

**3. How did the candidate's actions impact CTE policies or positively influence public opinion of CTE? How did these actions contribute to a broader understanding of modern CTE (not 'vocational education') that is robust, rigorous and relevant?**

Mrs. Lobosco has advocated for career and technical education through her many state, county and local leadership roles. Mrs. Lobosco encourages all those she interacts with, to give back and contribute by becoming active in organizations that support both professional and personal growth. She acts as a role model in this capacity and leads by example. Throughout her educational career she has played an active role in numerous educational organizations, serving as President for Phi Delta Kappa a professional organization for educators, President of the New Jersey Federal Programs Administrators assisting in providing awareness for economically disadvantaged students, President of the Bergen/Passaic Scholastic League promoting athletic programs within the region; President of the Passaic County Principals Association, President of the Passaic County Administrators Association, Board President of the Passaic County Educational Services Commission providing premier educational resources to local school districts within the region and as President of the New Jersey Council of County Vocational Technical Schools. In this capacity she has reinvented and made relevant career and technical education as a desirable pathway for career and college readiness for all students. Mrs. Lobosco has been honored with numerous recognitions from County agencies and dignitaries, including the "Woman of Distinction" Award, "Outstanding Educator" Award, "Friend of Education" Award, recognition by the Passaic County Sheriff for assisting the youth in Passaic County, as well as, recognition for her continued support of law enforcement and special honor by the Passaic County Freeholders for Women's History Month. Mrs. Lobosco's leadership and her engagement in the benefits promoted through these organizations has earned her a seat at the table and she is sought out for her knowledge and experience in the arena of CTE education policy and equity for students. She graciously hosts policy makers, schools and educators from around the country and the world to view career and technical education best practices. In 2017, Mrs. Lobosco graciously hosted an ACTE Region I Conference campus tour, highlighting the innovative programs and 21st Century career and technical education provided at PCTI. Most recently she assisted in the development of a budget to expand offerings at all schools in New Jersey through a \$500 Million Dollar CTE Bond ACT S2293 that has garnered overwhelming support in the New Jersey Assembly and Senate. As a relentless champion for career and technical education she continues to inspire and motivate future leaders with her energy and drive for excellence!

**4. What is the scope of the candidate's impact on CTE?**

State

**5. Would the candidate be willing to speak about their supportive efforts on behalf of CTE at an ACTE event?**

Yes