

# **INTRODUCING**

# **ACTE'S NATIONAL**

# **LEADERSHIP FELLOWS:**

**CONNECTED, CURIOUS, COMMITTED**

**F**or Jennifer Breman, ACTE's National Leadership Fellowship Program was "the most beneficial leadership training" she's participated in — an experience that echoes throughout a growing community of CTE educators who've discovered the power of connection, collaboration and strategic thinking to amplify their impact. This year's cohort of fellows represents the breadth and depth of CTE, and what unites them isn't their specific pathway or geographic location, but their shared commitment to supporting student success.

The fellowship's influence extends far beyond individual growth. These educators are breaking down

silos between CTE areas, serving on school boards with informed perspectives, and approaching technology integration with both innovation and intentionality. They're learning to leverage AI appropriately while maintaining a focus on essential professional skills, bringing 3D printing across multiple content areas, and using virtual welding technology to recruit students and manage costs.

Perhaps most significantly, they're developing what Ricardo Pimentel described as a more "inclusive and curious" approach to leadership. That is one that asks, How could this idea be adapted for other pathways? He wrote, "I've had the chance to connect with passionate professionals from all areas of CTE, and it's opened my eyes to how much stronger we are when we collaborate."

**“Overall, ACTE’s National Leadership Fellowship Program has made me a more connected, informed and strategic educator and advocate.”**

# INTRODUCING

## CTE'S NATIONAL LEADERSHIP FELLOWS:

CONNECTED, CURIOUS, COMMITTED



**Jennifer Breman**

CTE Program Specialist  
Alachua County Public Schools



**Lucas Schrauben**

Director of Secondary Programs, CTE Director, and Early College Administrator  
Holt Public Schools



**Jacob Ball**

Executive Director  
Bluegrass AgTech Development Corp



**Rachel Popham**

Health Science Instructor  
Jackson High School



**Randa Pirrong**

Project HOPE Administrator  
Francis Tuttle Technology Center



**Ethan Dado**

ALC and Pathways Program Administrator  
Eden Prairie Schools



**Katie Kensinger**

Assistant Principal  
Raymore-Peculiar School District



**Sarah Grossi**

Careers in Education Instructor  
Region 14 ATC at ConVal High School



**Emily Yoshikawa Ruesch**

Teacher  
Green Canyon High School



**Ricardo Pimentel**

Executive Director of CTE  
Providence Public School District



**Sophia Marie George**

High-Quality WBL Coordinator  
Norfolk Public Schools



**Carla S. Arciniega Henrici**

Perkins Lead, Project Coordinator II  
Lane Community College



**Jen Newendyke**

CTE Director  
Rock Hill Schools



**Arnaz Dotivala**

CTE Specialist  
Loudoun County Public Schools



**Christina Loyd**

FCS Teacher  
Nemo Vista High School



**Adrian Lucero**

CTE Coordinator  
Clovis High School



**Alyssa Alcos**

CTE Coordinator  
Kapolei High School



**Anna Alday**

CTE Coordinator  
Alamogordo Public School District

As fellows and CTE educators return from ACTE events, like VISION and National Policy Seminar, to their districts and states, they carry with them new skills and knowledge and a deeper understanding of CTE's impact. They are the advocates, the innovators and the bridge-builders — educators who can navigate complex policy landscapes while never losing sight of the students they serve.

## How has being part of ACTE's National Leadership Fellowship Program changed the way you work with educators from other CTE areas?

"I think the National Leadership Fellowship Program through ACTE has been the most beneficial leadership training I have participated in," wrote **Jennifer Breman**. "The focus on policy and advocacy has been pivotal in my development as a leader and supportive in my ability to network for my profession. I cannot say enough positive things about my experience with this fellowship."

"Participating in ACTE's National Leadership Fellowship Program has significantly transformed my collaboration with educators from various CTE fields," said

**Lucas Schrauben**. "It has helped eliminate barriers and foster a spirit of teamwork among professionals in my region and across the state."

"The program gave me a deeper understanding of how interconnected our fields are and how much we can gain from collaborating beyond our content areas," shared **Jacob Ball**. "The professional development sessions improved my teaching by helping me connect classroom instruction to real-world career opportunities, while the mentorship and networking expanded my perspective and approach. Now, in my role as executive director of the Bluegrass AgTech Development Corp, I apply those lessons in a broader context."

"It has given me the confidence to pursue leadership opportunities in my district and use my voice to speak up for issues concerning CTE and students' workforce development," offered **Ethan Dado**.

Before the fellowship, I tended to stay focused on what was happening in Rhode Island, not fully realizing how much I could learn from others," said **Ricardo Pimentel**. "I've had the chance to connect with passionate professionals from all areas of CTE, and it's opened my eyes to how much stronger we are when we collaborate. Now, I'm more intentional about bringing in diverse perspectives."

"Being part of ACTE's National Leadership Fellowship Program has significantly changed the way I collaborate with educators from other CTE areas. The program gave me a broader understanding of how different pathways

connect and how strategic planning and funding decisions impact all areas of CTE,” wrote **Sophia Marie George**. “As a result, I now sit on a CTE school board, where I bring a more informed perspective to the table. I’m better equipped to contribute to long-term planning discussions and advocate for equitable resources across programs.”

“Being part of ACTE’s National Leadership Fellowship Program has allowed me to move beyond the family and consumer sciences lens and build meaningful relationships with educators in agriculture, business, health sciences, trade and industry, and STEM pathways,” shared **Christina Loyd**. “Through shared discussions and joint advocacy efforts, I’ve gained a deeper understanding of the common challenges we face and the diverse solutions being implemented in other fields. This has enhanced my approach to professional development, classroom integration, and student leadership by incorporating cross-disciplinary ideas and strategies.”

“Through the fellowship’s strengths-based coaching, I’ve gained clarity on my own leadership style and how to intentionally leverage my strengths while recognizing, valuing and utilizing the strengths of others,” said **Adrian Lucero**. “It’s made me a more thoughtful and effective partner in cross-disciplinary work.”

“I now approach leadership with the mindset that every educator is a leader, and my role is to nurture and

support the growth of that leadership within my department and school,” offered **Alyssa Alcos**. “The fellowship has helped me become more intentional about creating opportunities for shared leadership, fostering collaboration across content areas, and building a stronger, more unified CTE community.”

### What’s one piece of technology your students are using now that wasn’t even on your radar three years ago? How did you learn to integrate that technology into your classroom?

“AI was around a few years ago but it has grown and changed very rapidly. This creates challenges and opportunities for us in CTE,” said **Randa Pirrong**. “Teaching teachers and students how to use it appropriately and efficiently is a priority. Alongside that is ensuring we are keeping professional skills a focus in the midst of such powerful technology at our hands.”

“Three years ago, I associated 3D printing mainly with engineering programs, and I never stretched to consider including them across numerous content areas,” com-

mented **Katie Kensinger**. “Now, our engineering programs work with health sciences, fashion, culinary, industrial technology, and other content areas to design and print pieces in alignment with relevant curricula. It’s been an incredible way to boost creativity, problem solving, and technical skills in a hands-on, highly engaging way.”

“Although the SWIVL camera has been around for some time, its recent updates have made it an invaluable tool in my Careers in Education program,” said

**Sarah Grossi**. “The SWIVL is a smart video recording system that tracks a presenter’s movement and captures both audio and video. For me, SWIVL allows me to efficiently observe my students’ lessons since I can’t be in multiple classrooms at once. This has become a critical resource for preparing future educators through authentic, technology-supported reflection and feedback.”

“Robotics technology was on my radar, but it did not feel attainable cost-wise,” offered **Emily Yoshikawa Ruesch**. “I first saw them after taking students on field trips to companies, but it’s been great feeling like we’re bridging education and industry.”

“I wouldn’t necessarily mention a piece of technology, but more so the programs that have become available to students to learn more about working in the health care field,” wrote **Rachel Popham**. “Being

able to provide my students ‘real-world’ experience using simulators is great!”

“Many CTE programs are engaging in cross-disciplinary technology implementation. For instance, at my institution, the animation program has partnered with health professions programs to utilize motion capture systems,” said **Carla S. Arciniega Henrici**. “Being able to collaborate in such manner opens broader opportunities for students to explore employment in diverse fields.”

“Artificial intelligence has been useful to me as a performance evaluator and administrator,” shared **Jen Newendyke**.

“Canva for Education has reshaped student engagement in my programs. A few years ago, it wasn’t even on my radar,” said **Arnaz Dotivala**. “Now, students use it to design professional portfolios, marketing materials, lesson visuals and interactive presentations. I learned to integrate Canva by diving into small projects and collaborating with colleagues across content areas.”

“Virtual welders! Technology has come a long way, and utilizing technology has greatly benefited the CTE programs in our district,” said **Anna Alday**. “Multiple companies have produced realistic, virtual welding technology that has benefited recruitment and our beginning welding courses. From an administrative standpoint, it has also been beneficial in cutting down costs on expensive supplies and consumables.” ■



“More than anything, I’d want that care package to say: You’re not alone. What you’re doing makes a difference. And you deserve to feel supported, too.”



# The Ultimate CTE Educators' Care Package



“A high-quality camera (even on a phone!): It’s important to share the story of CTE.”

“My work with a variety of CTE teachers has taught me that the personalities and needs of these teachers is as diverse as can be. I have switched my philosophy of gift giving to give more consumable items so that people aren’t saddled with more things to hold on to.”



- Good coffee, tea, water, or another satisfying beverage (like Sprite, if you're LeAnn Curry!) for the beverage goblin in us all
- Access to a gym with a sauna, and a cold plunge
- Access to ACTE conferences
- A copy of their school's yearbook so they can collect the heartfelt messages of the impact they have made on their students throughout the year
- A heavy-duty portable phone charger
- A pack of high-quality dry-erase markers, preferably in multiple colors, with a reliable eraser and a magnetic holder
- A stash of emergency snacks, like granola bars, trail mix, or some good chocolate
- A high-quality agenda (I live by mine!) or digital planning tools
- Simon Sinek's leadership book, *The Infinite Game*
- Business cards!
- Mentorship and a small network of professionals they can call on at any time to get resources or encouraging words
- A breathing ball for their desk
- Maybe a scented candle
- A small notebook to write notes but especially successes and items of gratitude to help recenter when bad days happen
- Ongoing professional development
- Admin support
- Curriculum
- A treat-yourself sweet
- A way to block evening and weekend emails until the next workday
- A vacation package
- An open mind
- A multitool to fix many minor things quickly in the shop or lab
- A prepared elevator speech to always inform and advocate for your programs
- A spa gift card for well-deserved self-care and stress relief
- A comfy teacher chair
- An action figure of themselves: a fun, daily reminder of how amazing and impactful they are
- A box of classroom must-haves, like markers, erasers, pencils, pens and tissues
- A keychain with an inspirational quote
- Blue light glasses for screen time
- A gift card for a favorite local lunch spot
- A CliftonStrengths workbook or session, because knowing your strengths and leadership style can be a game-changer in how you show up for your students and colleagues
- Reflection time
- Rest
- Networking time with other CTE educators
- A list of go-to experts in CTE in the state where they live, including content experts and CTE administrators
- Membership to state and national CTE associations
- A registration voucher to the region or national conference
- A personalized thank-you card with a note of encouragement
- A curated ACTE resource bundle, including the ACTE Quality CTE Program of Study Framework to support instruction and advocacy, policy updates, and contact information of key supporters at the state and regional levels

“A dictionary filled with CTE and education-specific definitions: Navigating the world of acronyms, pathways, and evolving terminology can seem like a lot, and this would help you educate others as well!”

“A good pair of walking shoes: I didn't realize how important this was until I found myself constantly exhausted from being on my feet all day. Investing in a pair of supportive shoes honestly changed everything. My feet stopped hurting, and I stopped ending my day feeling totally drained.”



# Techniques

OCTOBER 2025

CONNECTING EDUCATION AND CAREERS

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**THE**

# TECHNOLOGY REVOLUTION

- When AI Says Go Ahead: A Call to Action
- Writing Tomorrow's CTE Story
- Connected, Curious, Committed
- Leveling Up Industry 4.0 Education with Virtual Reality
- The Future is Hands-On and High-Tech

Association for Career and Technical Education  
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PUBLISHED BY THE ASSOCIATION FOR  
CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION  
ACTEONLINE.ORG • \$7.00