

Virginia ACTE President's Message

Welcome to School Year 2026-2027!

The strength of Career and Technical Education has never been found in buildings, equipment, or programs. It has always been found in people. Every day across Virginia, educators, administrators, counselors, teacher educators, business and industry partners, and community leaders invest their time, expertise, and passion to create opportunities for the next generation. Their dedication is what makes Career and Technical Education one of the most powerful forces in education and workforce development throughout the Commonwealth.

It is with great gratitude and humility that I begin my service as President of the Virginia Association for Career and Technical Education (Virginia ACTE). I am honored by the trust our members have placed in me and look forward to serving alongside the remarkable professionals who make our association and our profession so strong.

Virginia ACTE serves as the unified voice for Career and Technical Education across the Commonwealth. Our mission is to advocate for relevant and rigorous CTE programs, develop leaders, provide meaningful professional learning, and influence public policy that supports students, educators, and Virginia's workforce.

One of our association's greatest strengths is our collaborative structure. As the statewide umbrella organization for Career and Technical Education, Virginia ACTE brings together ten affiliate divisions representing the full breadth of our profession, including agricultural education, business education, career and technical education administration, counseling and career development, family and consumer sciences, health and medical sciences, marketing education, special populations, technology and engineering education, and trade and industrial education. Each affiliate is represented on our Board of Directors, ensuring that every division has a voice in shaping the future of our association and the profession we proudly serve.

As I begin this journey with you, my commitment is guided by four priorities.

1. **Serve our members.** Support educators and leaders through meaningful professional learning, recognition, and opportunities to grow as professionals and leaders.
2. **Strengthen collaboration.** Foster partnerships among our affiliate divisions, educational institutions, business and industry, and community organizations while creating opportunities for members to learn from one another.

3. **Champion innovation and excellence.** Celebrate outstanding teaching and leadership while encouraging innovative practices that ensure Career and Technical Education remains relevant, rigorous, and responsive to the needs of students and employers.
4. **Advocate with purpose.** Work alongside policymakers, educational leaders, and workforce partners to ensure Career and Technical Education continues to receive the recognition, investment, and support it deserves.

I am fortunate to serve alongside an exceptional leadership team, including Executive Director Chad Maclin, President-Elect Alisa Rushing, Past President Bo Bundrick, Treasurer Katy Stokes, Secretary Courtney Merridew, our vice presidents, regional representatives, affiliate leaders, Board of Directors, committee chairs, and volunteers. Their collective experience, dedication, and passion will continue to strengthen Virginia ACTE and the members we serve.

As we look ahead, I encourage every member to become engaged. Whether you are a classroom teacher, administrator, counselor, teacher educator, postsecondary faculty member, business and industry partner, or retiree, your voice matters. Our association is strongest when we learn from one another, support one another, and work together toward a common purpose.

I am excited for the year ahead and for the opportunity to listen, learn, and serve alongside each of you. Together, we will continue advancing Career and Technical Education across the Commonwealth, strengthening our profession, and expanding opportunities for every learner.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President. I look forward to all that we will accomplish together.

With gratitude,

Arnaz Dotivala, Ed.D.

President

Virginia Association for Career and Technical Education