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An Invited Article by Tony Casipit.....

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all VTEA members to become more involved in the association. There are many issues being addressed nationally concerning Technology Education and we are poised to make a substantial difference. Some current topics that are being discussed are CTE diploma standards, science technology engineering and mathematics (STEM), children's engineering, career clusters, student assessments, career and technical legislation/funding and many others. Technology Education has become a national and political topic. If you Google Technology Education you will find a variety of sources and definitions. I personally am working with my district to develop STEM courses to answer to the growing national shortage in engineering career fields, to increase student interest in engineering at all levels, and make academic study for students more connected to their real world. They are highly rigorous courses that employ interdisciplinary and contextual learning methods to make relevant connections re-enforcing the learning of academic curriculum in mathematics, science, and language arts. This will be accomplished by taking maximum advantage of the innate characteristics of technology education methodology; critical thinking, problem solving, hands-on tactile learning and real world study of the characteristics, operation, and application of technological systems and subjects. My goal is a K-12 technology approach that maximizes the best curriculum characteristics of technology education.

If these buzz words or edu-speak are new to you I would highly recommend that you begin to familiarize yourselves with the language of education spoken nationally and how others are discussing the advantages of Technology Education. There are also those who see us much differently. We must ensure that we are not continually associated only for our industrial arts/vocational background. After all it is not the year 1950 any more. See link <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vC928e629iM> Technology Education is at the apex of the perfect time to demonstrate the strengths of our programs and how we make real world connections for students. No other curriculum other than CTE has the mastery level as, **can teach others**. As all of you know to be successful in teaching you must not only know the material, but be able to convey the concepts. With so much opportunity to

be noticed we must take this opportunity to positively identify and define ourselves as the real connection to student learning of academic concepts. We may not see a national opportunity like this for some time especially if we sit and allow others to define what technology education is for us or allow it to pass all together.

Just think of what could happen if we don't take this opportunity. I encourage all of you to get involved and find ways to promote your programs and make others understand what technology education is all about. You could sit and watch opportunity go by or you can act and make history. If not now- when, if not you- who? You can't win a baseball game if you don't work hard in the field and get to the plate to swing. Your involvement is key, so I challenge you to get involved in the VTEA. Believe me one person can make a difference. Help your colleagues and me to do so.

Respectfully,

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