



The Industrial Instrumentation and Controls Technology Alliance (IICTA) is a partnership of instrumentation and controls technology business, industry, and education advisors sharing a vision and working to accomplish the mission.

## A Letter from the President

Dear IICTA friends:

As 2009 draws to a close, I'd like to share some thoughts with you.

First, I would like to thank everyone who has participated in IICTA activities during the year. From our superior Board of Directors, to our supportive members, and finally to those who provided invaluable input to our efforts during this great year.

As we began the year, we had two primary goals that we wanted to accomplish. These were to (1) revalidate the Texas Skills Standards for Instrumentation and Controls technicians, and (2) based on those skills standards, to create a national assessment for I&C technicians that would not only assess knowledge, but also would enable the "hands on" assessment to take place.

Both of these goals were accomplished ahead of time and under budget. Earlier in the year, the Board of Directors decided to create a special project team. This project team, under

the leadership of Michelle Payne, was able to provide the necessary information to have our Texas Skills Standards revalidated. Based on that work, Tony Kuphaldt, (Bellingham Technical College) led the development of the national skills assessment, including the "hands on" portion.

The organization also had to overcome additional challenges due to the economic climate that we were faced with. Our supporters' budgets were diminished, which meant we had to learn to do things differently. Using technology, we were able to accomplish our skills standards revalidation and national assessment development, as well as to conduct several "online" quarterly meetings to keep our membership engaged.

2010 will be a banner year for our organization. We will be rolling out the national assessment at Brazosport College in January at the first IICTA meeting of the year. Following our visioning session that week, we will be continuing forward on our journey into 2010, always looking to assure that both the quantity and quality of I&C Technicians

continues to meet the needs of industry. While the economic climate is not nearly as "dreary" as it was at the beginning of 2009, I believe that we will still face challenges during the next year. We have learned, however, that together we can accomplish great things even in difficult times.

I'm looking forward to working with each and every one of you during 2010 to make it the best ever for the IICTA. If you have ideas as to how to make the IICTA an even better organization, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Best wishes to you and your families over the holidays.

*Johnny*

Johnny Payne  
President

It is the **mission** of IICTA to promote the partnership of industry, education, business by (1) directing nationally recognized standards for instrument & control technicians and (2) supporting activities to assure the existence of a sufficient quantity of qualified instrument & control technicians who are highly sought after by industry.

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## IICTA Summer Institute

An IICTA Summer Institute was held in July 2009. The objective of the Summer Institute was to share ideas and best practices in teaching Instrumentation to students at the two-year college level and promote Instrumentation as a rewarding educational and career path to students at the high school level. Open discussion style sessions were held at Bellingham Technical College, where BTC's Instrumentation and Control Technology program served as a template and starting point for discussion. Attendees received complementary CD-ROMs containing student reference material used in BTC's Instrumentation program, as well as video clips showing the educational techniques and practices in action.

John Poelma and Tommie Broome of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College wrote the following review of their experience:

"Thank you for the opportunity to attend the Summer Institute for Best Practices in Instrumentation held in Bellingham, Washington. This was an

excellent opportunity for us to network with a world class educational program. We were able to see, first hand, equipment, laboratories, and projects that meet and exceed the needs of industry.

As a group we discussed best practices we use as instructors. We covered the advantages of web-enhanced classes, giving students opportunity to use technology to learn at their own pace. This method of instruction frees classroom time for hands-on laboratories and activities.

We exchanged many resources and ideas that have worked for us in the classroom. In addition to the face-to-face networking with fellow instructors one of the most valuable resources we were able to physically take home with us was a hands-on instrumentation textbook, *Lessons In Industrial Instrumentation* written by Tony Kuphaldt. He made a web link to the book available to us and gave additional Instrumentation Resources on a CD-ROM.

Seeing the Process Instrumentation Electronics lab at Bellingham Techni-

cal College, was very valuable to us as we are in the planning stages of our own Process Instrumentation Electronics program development. We now have a benchmark as we design and stock classrooms and labs. We saw positive things we wish to emulate and ideas we will use as a starting point for developing our program and gaining industry and community involvement. During the Best Practices workshop we exchanged ideas on how to involve our advisory teams and vendors to help supply the labs with real-world equipment.

We gained very valuable information that will assist us as we develop a Process Instrumentation Program at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community college to compliment our Process Operations and Electronics Technology programs. Discussions with our advisory committees and local industry partners has highlighted the immediate need for the addition of a Process Instrumentation program. We look forward to a relationship with IICTA that allows us to network with industry and education partners to develop a program that meets the needs of everyone now and in the future."



## Skills Standards and Assessment Updates

The Texas Skills Standards Board recognized the revalidated IICTA Skills Standards in October 2009. Using conference calls, emails and other eco-friendly communication tools, a consortium of nation-wide industry IICTA partners worked over a three-month period to revalidate the IICTA's skills standards. Originally developed by the IICTA and recognized by the TSSB in 2004, the skills

standards address the growing demand for skilled entry-level Industrial Instrumentation and Controls technicians.

During the revalidation process, it became evident that instrumentation needs across the nation would not be fully addressed using only the standards that are relevant to Texas. The IICTA is a national organization

dedicated to meeting the needs of industry across the country. As a direct result of the input from the consortium of industry partners participating on the revalidation process, the national assessment was created.

Over the course of the past year, an IICTA project team consisting of industry, education and business partners worked tirelessly to (cont. p.3)

## Brazosport Instrumentation Training Grants

Brazosport College recently received more than \$1 million dollars in grant money through Department of Labor and Texas Workforce Commission grants for the development and delivery of entry and incumbent level Applied Instrumentation curricula.

Both curriculum projects are rooted in IICTA's skills standards that were validated by the Texas Skills Standard Board in 2009.

"Between the two grants you have \$1,232,731 and a little over \$400,000 is for equipment," said Brazosport College Center for Business/Industry Training Director Anne Bartlett. "This equipment will not only be a benefit to the workforce training, but also to students working through academic programs"

The DOL project was a collaborative grant with other area colleges including Lee College, San Jacinto College and College of the Mainland. It includes \$420,275 over three years that will allow for the development and delivery of an Applied Instrumentation curriculum for newly hired instrument technicians. The TWC grant

was an Industry Consortium grant for Advanced Applied Instrumentation worth \$812,456. More than \$500,000 is going toward training, development and administration, while nearly \$300,000 will be for equipment.

"OVERALL I WAS VERY IMPRESSED WITH THIS COURSE. I REALLY ENJOYED THE TIME SPENT WITH HANDS-ON LABS THAT PROVIDED A MULTITUDE SCENARIOS FOR PEOPLE TO GET ACTUAL PRACTICE WITH "TRUE-TO-LIFE" APPLICATIONS. -APPLIED INSTRUMENTATION PARTICIPANT

BC Instrument Curriculum Developer Richard Honea also sees many advantages ahead because of this grant.

"The industries of Texas have instrument and electrical technicians with three to five years of experience that are doing a very good job, and this grant will allow us to develop training that will help these technicians to the next level of performance to increase their earning potential," Honea said. "The industries they work in will also benefit by

their increased performance and productivity. Another very exciting part of the grant is we will be able to obtain the latest technologies in process measurement and controls to use in training."

IICTA's partnership and guidance in both of these projects was integral. IICTA not only provided the skills standards for the curricula, but is also providing on-going SME support through its membership. These IICTA industry and education members provide feedback on curricula as it is developed. The IICTA website will also serve as a point of distribution for the open-source curricula once it is finalized.

The funds from this grant assisted BC and its Center for Business/Industry Training in meeting partners' requests for an I&E technician training with an emphasis on hands-on experience.

Below: Students work in teams on a rack during an Applied Instrumentation class.



## Skills Standards and Assessment Cont.

extract the data gleaned from the revalidation process and coordinate the assembling of that material into both knowledge and performance segments. This massive undertaking was made possible by grants from BP, Shell and Brazosport CBIT along with the generous support of Bellingham Technical College, LCTCS, APICC, Simtronics, Design Assistance Corp, Samson Controls, Eastman Chemical, Dow Chemical, Total, Martech Media, and numerous others whose contributions were invaluable. IICTA also extends its many thanks to the companies and individuals who helped with

the successful revalidation of the skills standards.

IICTA will be unveiling the National Assessment at its first quarterly meeting on Thursday, January 28<sup>th</sup> 2010 at the Center for Business and Industry Training at Brazosport College in Lake Jackson, TX. All are invited to attend.

### Applied Instrumentation Modules Include:

- Pressure • Temperature • Level • Flow • Process Plant Science • Electronic Instruments • Valves • Process Theory • Control Theory • Safety Instrumented Systems/Environmental Processes • Troubleshooting •

*Email [anne.bartlett@brazosport.edu](mailto:anne.bartlett@brazosport.edu) to enroll in these free classes!*



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[www.iicta.org](http://www.iicta.org)**

## **IICTA Hosts January Meeting**

IICTA is holding its January meeting at Brazosport College in Lake Jackson, Texas, on January 28, 2010. A block of rooms have been reserved at the Comfort Suites in Lake Jackson, TX. The negotiated room rate is \$101.95 and will be honored from January 26<sup>th</sup> through January 29<sup>th</sup>. To make a reservation, please call the hotel directly at 979-297-5545. Make sure to mention your affiliation with IICTA to get the group rate. See you there!

*Industrial Instrumentation & Controls Technology Alliance  
(IICTA)*

*First General Meeting of 2010*

*Official Rollout of the IICTA National Skills Assessment  
Showcasing the Knowledge and Performance Segments*

*Date: Thursday, January 28, 2010*

*Time: 9:00 AM to 2 PM*

*Place: CBIT at Brazosport College*

*500 College Drive*

*Lake Jackson, Texas 77566*

*RSVP to Michelle Payne*

*generalmanager@iicta.org*

*907-982-9252*

*Registration Fee \$35 at the door*