

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT!

*By Jarret Dyer, College of DuPage*

It's hard to believe that two months have already passed since the NCTA Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona. A lot has happened in the world of testing and NCTA in that time. I'd like to share with you a few key initiatives that I have been excited about these last few months and invite each of you to reach out and share what you have recently been excited about in the world of testing and NCTA. Contact me anytime at [dyerja@cod.edu](mailto:dyerja@cod.edu).

We are living in an exciting time as new technologies to assist human proctors are being developed and redesigned almost weekly. As you may be aware, NCTA is once again partnering with ATP on a project, this time to develop standards for online proctoring.

As you may be aware, NCTA is once again partnering with ATP on a project, this time to develop standards for online proctoring. I want to thank Chris Dayley, Paula Doughman and Eric D'Astolfo for their leadership in this project. For our newer members, I recommend checking out the product of our last collaboration, Proctoring Best Practices. It is available free to download [here](#) from the NCTA website or in print on Amazon.

Online proctoring would not be the same without certified proctors. We continue to develop the framework and collaborations necessary to create the NCTA Proctor Certification. The committee is

currently exploring avenues and creating a handbook from which interested members can prepare for this exam. The certification will take time to develop, but much of the work is currently underway. I



have asked the committee for a tentative release date of 2020 with the manual, a valuable resource for testing professionals entering the field, available much earlier. I want to express my thanks to both Sonya Sedivy and Luke Brymer, Chair and Co-chair, respectively, of the Proctor Certification Committee and Rachel Hample, Chair of the Proctor Certification Manual Committee.

In similar news, I want to again share how Kristen Vickery and her team have worked diligently over the past several years to create standards for Testing Programs and Services through the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). The standards were approved by the NCTA Board and released by CAS in August 2018. The full standards will be available in spring 2019. I encourage all of you to use them to ensure your center is compliant with these standards, once they are available.

Our testing centers continue to be in high demand! At the E-ATP conference mentioned above, I was approached by several European testing companies that expressed an interest in collaborating with a reliable network of testing sites in North America. NCTA's Consortium of College Testing Centers (CCTC) is a perfect fit for this. I have always been impressed by the CCTC and feel this is an

excellent opportunity to increase collaborations with colleagues outside of North America, especially as a platform to showcase Test Center Certification. April Imhoff, Chair of the CCTC and I will be scheduling meetings during the coming months to share this information. If you have suggestions on promoting the CCTC or improving its functionality, please let us know. Again, contact me anytime at [dyerja@cod.edu](mailto:dyerja@cod.edu).

Training is a constant topic in our field. I am delighted to share that the recorded sessions from the annual conference have been available for several weeks. In addition, Sally Carter, Chair of the Webinar Committee, has been working diligently to fill up our calendars with training opportunities. The next session is on the NCTA Grants Program and will be on November 13<sup>th</sup> at

3:00 PM EST. Registration is pain free and can be found [here](#).

Lastly, it gives me great pride to recognize again those that have contributed so much over the past year. If you were unable to attend this year's conference in Arizona, please know that you were missed. It also meant you missed the announcement of this year's award winners in person. If you have not yet viewed the Awards page, please visit it [here](#). It's never too early to consider nominating a colleague for an award for next year at our [20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference New Orleans!](#)

# 2018 CONFERENCE RECAP BY NAORA BEN-DOV

*By Naora Ben-Dov, Woodbury University*

This year's [conference in Scottsdale](#) was one of our largest ever attended professional development events. Between the location, which was well loved, and the workshops, that were both informative and beneficial to all members, the conference showed how as a collective whole we are a powerhouse of values and synonymous with data, advice and networking.

Our conference brought over 400 individuals together to Arizona for three days of well attended workshops from vendors and members all designed to provide learning opportunities in multiple formats. A pleasant surprise this year was from the UK with two attendees who are looking at creating their own association of testing centers.

Three of the corporate workshops and seven of the developmental sessions were filmed for the virtual conference and are accessible by any member and non-member. If you attended the conference the virtual sessions are available without cost through the website. Those that were unable to attend may purchase the sessions through NCTA. Also included is the President's Welcome and the Ad Hoc session created by our wonderful corporate keynote panel in place of our unfortunately injured keynote speaker.

All materials from handouts to PowerPoint slides will soon be obtainable online for members to download.

Please look out for another E-Blast letting everyone know they are available.

Our conference brought over 400 individuals together to Arizona for three days of well attended workshops from vendors and members all designed to provide learning opportunities in multiple formats.

As always, we owe a debt of gratitude to our amazing corporate sponsors, presenters, host committee, SRO's, and the many volunteers who served as moderators, at the resource fair, and at every possibility.

We as an association are nothing without every single one of you.

If anyone has any feedback or commentary not yet addressed in the post-workshop or -conference survey or feels they require a more personal discourse, please do not hesitate to contact anyone on the Governing Board or Divisions.

The Governing Board is looking forward to 2019 and creating the 20th NCTA Conference in New Orleans.

Laissez Les Bon Temps Rouler!

# DECREASING TEST ANXIETY AMONG FUTURE NURSING STUDENTS

*By Keesha Taylor, Roxbury Community College*

The question I am proposing is “how can we decrease test anxiety among students who want to become future nurses?”

As a test proctor/administrator, I came to witness how much future nursing students are one of the most

I will never forget one student who was occasionally running to the bathroom. She was having a nervous stomach. She told me she felt extremely “stress out” about the ATI TEAS exam, because the nursing program she wanted to get into required all applicants to take the test. Apparently, she was really losing it. Stress is one of the most common symptoms for having a nervous stomach. Out of the blue, a student will shed a tear due to stress.

anxious group of students to face the nursing exam - Test of Essential Academic Skills (ATI TEAS). Let’s face it, future nursing students have already set the bar high for themselves. They want to perform well on the ATI TEAS exam and pass it. They

want to succeed in life, and, their ultimate goal is to become nurses someday. Often times, they walk into the testing office feeling nervous about the test. Some of them do not know what to expect, which makes them feel even more nervous. Their hands are shaking while they present their photo ID to show proof of identity. They are mumbling when speaking to the testing office staff, and sometimes, they accidentally drop their personal items on the floor.

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having a nervous stomach. Out of the blue, a student will shed a tear due to stress.

Now, as test proctors and administrators, what can we do to decrease test anxiety among future nursing students? I thought about four different ideas we could all possibly agree on. 1) To provide stress balls for students. Stress balls could release the tension and help to relieve stress. It may not be useful to every student; however, stress balls can be useful to those who find them helpful. 2) To comfort students before they take the ATI TEAS exam. For example, test proctors can initiate the conversation by asking students “how is your day going so far?” or “how are you feeling?” Initiating a conversation like these types of questions could relieve stress if students find the testing space to be welcoming and friendly. 3) To provide candies or small snacks, like mixed fruit snacks, could change the moods of students. For example, instead of students feeling pessimistic about the test, they might feel optimistic about it. 4) To provide a pet therapy program on campus. For example, providing an animal on campus such as a dog could be good for students’ mental health and their well-being. Therapy dogs could provide comfort and affection to students who are feeling stressed about taking the ATI TEAS exam. These four ideas came from my experience working in the field of higher education for almost ten years. I have seen each of these ideas work in similar situations among different colleges. These four ideas could help to decrease test anxiety experienced by many students who aspire to become future nurses.

## TRANSITIONING TO ACCUPLAER

*By Shirley Siovaila, Ivy Tech Community College, Lafayette, IN*

Six years ago, Ivy Tech Community College made the transition from using COMPASS as our placement tool to Accuplacer (a College Board product). If a student takes the Accuplacer diagnostic test in reading, writing and math, the diagnostic information directly relates to the My Foundations Lab by Pearson. If the student places into remedial or pre-college level courses, they can then work in the My Foundations Lab on the areas where they were weak or need to do some “brush up”. Ivy Tech believed this would be especially helpful since many students were placing into lower level classes that did not provide credit hours towards their degrees. If a student could self-study and then place into the college level classes, it would then save them both time and money!

The biggest challenges for the Testing Centers were simply learning how to set up the new testing platform and understanding the results of the test, so that the Testing Specialists could be helpful to students once they completed testing. Ivy Tech set up training workshops throughout the state so that every Testing Center manager and many of the Testing Specialists could gain hands on experience with the testing platform. Informational flyers were created for the students showing the “paths” for math, reading and writing courses. Testing Center Managers were given clear instructions for setting up the platform and for creating accounts for the campus reporters and proctors. Because of the prep work put in during the weeks before the launch, testing went smoothly from the first!

One of the characteristics that had drawn the administration towards Accuplacer, was the ability to

create Ivy Tech’s own version of the diagnostic exams. Faculty committees worked with Accuplacer to choose the specific questions and concepts which they felt were important to succeed in college. The Ivy Tech version launched approximated six months after the initial startup of Accuplacer testing. Unfortunately, with Accuplacer’s transition to the Next Generation Accuplacer, this feature will no longer be available.

This fall, Accuplacer initiated a certification for proctors and site administrators. After some hiccups during the first week, this has worked well and helped Testing Center Managers tighten the strings a bit with regards to test security and reiterated the rules for testing at some of the dual credit high school sites. All in all, the platform

is easy to use and the Accuplacer representative, Kathie Montgonese, is always helpful and attentive to the Testing Center needs. Ivy Tech is now in the midst of working thru the concept of Holistic Placement and determining how Accuplacer will be used, so once again, the Testing Centers are preparing for change! We are confident that whatever is asked of us, we will be ready!

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# WHY I THINK RETIREES SHOULD REMAIN MEMBERS OF NCTA

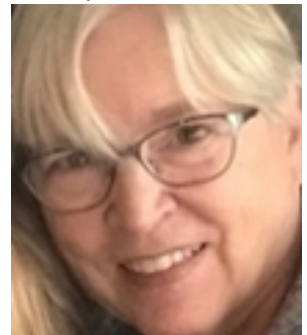
*By Connie Ganger, Ivy Tech Community College, Richmond, IN*

I am soon to be a retiree; my second retirement, I might add. My first retirement was at the end of a 26-year career with the United States Postal Service. Now, at 71, I am retiring from my part time proctoring position at Ivy Tech Community College. But I'm not retiring to twiddle my thumbs. I don't think many people do that anymore and I think it is much healthier to stay active.

That leads me to my main point. Even if you are planning on retiring soon don't plan on retiring from the professional organizations to which you

belong. Like NCTA most organizations offer discounted membership fees to retirees. This provides us with a number of advantages. If you stay involved in your organizations you can keep your mind stimulated by staying current on what is happening in your fields of interest; you can, where opportunity is provided, volunteer and allow others

to gain from your expertise; and it allows you to stay in touch with other professionals you have come to know during your career. Beyond those reasons I think that belonging to organizations can give you a sense of self-worth, and a sense of knowing who you are.



None of us are just a parent, spouse, or friend, we are advisors, mentors, listeners, caregivers, and a multitude of other roles. When we identify with our careers, even when we have retired we are claiming that part of ourselves that effected events that have changed people's lives and helped them to reach goals, both personal and professional. We have mattered in the world in which we live and we can continue to participate by continuing to give of ourselves through volunteer opportunities in your communities and through your favorite organizations. Retirement doesn't have to be a door closing behind us; it should be but another way of freeing time for us to make new choices and new ways of giving of ourselves to others.

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## NCTA MEMBER FOCUS

*By Connie Ganger, Ivy Tech Community College, Richmond, IN*

Soon you will find a new page on our [NCTA website](#). It is a way of introducing yourself, or another member to all our NCTA membership! Whether you are a new member (like me), or a member who has been part of the organization since its inception we can learn so much from each other.

The page is a Focus on Members. You have the option of telling your own story or nominating someone who you believe has a story worth sharing with the rest of us. Please take the time to tell us who you are and what it is about NCTA that keeps you involved. Our stories inspire and lead us to better relationships within the organization. I look forward to reading about you!

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING NCTA TEST CENTERS!

Certified between March 1, 2018 and August 31, 2018, these centers are the newest to join the Test Center Certification Club, and we are so happy to have them.

Are you interested in learning more about this certification and the benefits? Just click [here](#), or send an email to [precertification@gmail.com](mailto:precertification@gmail.com).

- ***Ivy Tech Community College – Logansport, IN***
- ***Front Range Community College – Larimer Campus - Fort Collins, CO***
- ***Ivy Tech Community College – Terre Haute, IN***
- ***Ivy Tech Community College – Sellersburg, IN***
- ***Liberty University – Lynchburg, VA***
- ***San Diego State University – San Diego, CA***
- ***Lewis-Clark State College – Lewiston, ID***
- ***Coastal Pines Technical College – Golden Isles, GA***
- ***University of Alabama – Huntsville, AL***
- ***Ivy Tech Community College – Bloomington, IN***
- ***Saginaw Valley State University – University Center, MI***
- ***Kent State University at Stark – North Canton, OH***
- ***Wiregrass Georgia Technical College – Valdosta, GA***
- ***Tulsa Community College – Metro Campus – Tulsa, OK***
- ***Tulsa Community College – Northeast Campus – Tulsa, OK***
- ***Tulsa Community College – Southeast Campus – Tulsa, OK***
- ***Tulsa Community College – West Campus – Tulsa, OK***
- ***Utah State University – Logan, UT***
- ***College of Central Florida – Levy Campus – Ocala, FL***
- ***Moore Norman Technical College – Norman, OK***

Have an idea for an article for the Testing Times? Please follow [this link](#) to submit your article(s). You must be an active NCTA member to submit an article. The deadline to submit for the next edition is March 15, 2019. More information is available on the [NCTA website](#).

