

## **TSSB Recognizes Visual Communications Programs at Lone Star Colleges**

**October 2008** – The Texas Skill Standards Board (TSSB) granted program recognition to the common Visual Communications-Graphic Design Associate of Applied Science (AAS) Degree at Lone Star Colleges Cy-Fair, Kingwood, and North Harris. The programs were recognized as being integrated with the national, industry-defined Digital Media Skill Standards.

The skill standards enhanced programs, which were endorsed by their industry advisory committee, will benefit both employers and graduates. Graduates will gain the work competencies—skills and knowledge—that employers have agreed are required for success in digital media positions. Employers in turn will gain a more qualified workforce.

The Digital Media Skill Standards define the knowledge and skills that are required for entry-level to more experienced employees in this information technology (IT) specialty area. The standards were developed nationwide through expert panels of IT workers representing 40 organizations, conducted in geographically diverse locations of the country with high concentrations of these workers. The draft standards were then validated by a random sample of 748 companies.

The National Workforce Center on Emerging Technologies (NWCET) facilitated the skill standards development and validation process with funding from the National Science Foundation and the American Electronics Association. The NWCET is located at Bellevue Community College in Washington State.

Julie Brasher, Donna Monteferante Johnson, and Kay Pallavicini, visual communications professors at Lone Star Colleges Cy-Fair, Kingwood, and North Harris, respectively, integrated the skill standards into the Visual Communications-Graphic Design AAS Degree program, with the assistance of Eileen Booher, Director of Resource Development and Grants Administration at the Cy-Fair campus. For their efforts, the colleges received a \$5,000 Skill Standards-Based Curriculum Development Incentive Award. The incentive awards, which are granted upon completion of deliverables, including integrating skill standards into curriculum and receiving TSSB Program Recognition, were administered by the Texas State Leadership Council out of Perkins State Leadership funds from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The Lone Star College faculty followed the TSSB's recommended six-step process in the guidance document, *A User's Guide: Incorporating Skill Standards into Community and Technical College Curriculum*, which is available for download from this web site, and took advantage of technical assistance from TSSB staff, provided on site at the college.

Examples of the program recognition application materials submitted by Lone Star College for TSSB Recognition are available in the Community and Technical Colleges and Employers and Industry Groups sections of this web site under the TSSB-Recognized Programs link.

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