



NJDOE News

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Performing Arts Academy Reaps National Honor

The Navy Lakehurst Center Performing Arts Academy of the Ocean County Vocational Technical School District (OCTVS) in Lakehurst has been singled out for special national recognition. The National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) has awarded the academy with its *Outstanding School / Program Award*.

"It is special and particularly gratifying to be recognized by your peers for outstanding work in your field," said Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy. "The Navy Lakehurst Center Performing Arts Academy clearly is providing first-rate instruction to its students. I am pleased to add my congratulations and recognition of their high quality program as setting a standard for schools to emulate in New Jersey and throughout the nation."

NDEO recently presented its Outstanding School / Program Award to OCTVS in *Recognition of Excellence in Advancing Dance as an Art in Education* to dance faculty members Cristina Marte and Michelle Perosi, who received it on behalf of the school.

Thom Cobb, an associate professor of dance at Slippery Rock College, a well-known and respected educator on national and international levels, nominated OCTVS for the award. He recently spent a week teaching as a visiting artist for the dance program at OCTVS.

"I have the opportunity to conduct numerous residency programs in a variety of school settings over the past 20 years and I can state without equivocation that this school is by far the most outstanding school in which and with whom I have worked," said Cobb, who cited the school's exemplary curriculum, students committed to their study of dance, strong administrative support for the program and the dedication of instructors Marte and Perosi.

OCTVS has been an active member of the New Jersey State Department of Education's Career and Technical Education Performing Arts Curriculum consortium since the program's inception. The consortium helps New Jersey's public schools to offer career and technical education programs in the performing arts/dance and theatre to meet the state and national standards in the arts.

The award was presented to the school by NJDOE's Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator Dale Schmid, who is also a past president of NDEO. Schmid noted that the school particularly impressed the organization with its high-caliber, evidence-based approach to the curriculum. He explained that evidence-based instruction relates to what teachers have done to provoke learning, determining how they know what their students know.

Schmid added his praise for the work the dance faculty has done to increase student achievement and prepare students to become 21st century learners and community members. "We look forward to continuing to work with OCTVS and other members of the consortium to drive high academic achievement and artistry in New Jersey's public schools."