

Tech studies program, department earn five-star status twice

The New Jersey Technology Education Association has awarded High Point's Technological Studies Department with their prestigious "Five Star Award." High Point received this award in 2003 and a school may hold the title for five years. "High Point reapplied for the award so that an outside agency can provide us with a useful assessment on what we teach and how we teach it," said Mark Wallace, supervisor of Technological Studies.

The assessments and site visit took a look at three major areas, ethos, quality of teaching/learning and management arrangements. Ethos is the distinctive character and atmosphere which typifies a Technology Department and reflects the extent to which all students are enabled to become confident and responsible in solving real life problems, striving for creative solutions, independent learning, product excellence and social consciousness. The quality of teaching reflects the quality of teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subject, the identification of the purpose of the lessons and the means to achieve good quality outcomes. The quality of learning relies on how the knowledge and understanding of technology and design are transmitted, received and translated into practice. Teaching and learning are supported and enhanced by efficient and effective management arrangements. These are the responsibility of the department supervisor together with staff within the department.

Members of the Technological Studies Department are Joe Portello, Brian Drelick, Allan Vandergoot, Dan Muller, Ben Kappler and Stephen Peliter. Together these teachers along with Wallace teach courses that include Engineering Design Technology, Communication Technology, Biotechnology, Women in Engineering, Power, Energy and Transportation Technology, CADD, Architectural Design, Material Processing and more.

Rapid societal changes, including innovations in technology, information exchange, and communications, have increased the demand for internation-

ally competitive workers and for an educational system designed to meet that demand. Today's students will be employed through much of the twenty-first century and will, therefore, need increasingly advanced levels of knowledge and skill. To obtain and retain high-wage employment that provides job satisfaction, they will also need to continue to learn throughout their lives.

To compete in this global, information-based economy, students must be able to identify and solve real problems, reason effectively, and apply critical thinking skills.

All of High Point's Technological Studies Programs focus on designing, developing, and utilizing technological systems; open-ended, problem-based design activities; cognitive, manipulative, and affective learning strategies; applying technological knowledge and processes to real world experiences; using up-to-date resources; working individually as well as in a team to solve problems.

"One thing we noticed that sets High Point apart from other Technology Education programs is its connections to local and state business and industry representatives through their use of advisory boards," said Dave Janosz, executive director of the New Jersey Technology Education Association. They also have great connections with institutions of higher education such as NJIT, Winoona State University, Stevens Institute of Technology, and Millersville University.

The association hopes that High Point will help to promote a K-8 program of study to their elementary and middle school level sending districts. "We realize the difficulty in trying to do this but feel those students that experience K-12 Technology Education programs are most competitive when applying for top positions at many companies and institutions," said Janosz. "The High Point program is one of our finest models and we share it with other districts all the time. Their staff is to be commended for providing the local area with such a fine program of study. These



students will be better prepared for the real world," Janosz added. "As the state and schools around it consider various reform models, Technology Education Program models such as High Point's ought to be a big part of any change."

For more information or to arrange a visit contact the school.

