Farewell and Thank You, Gwenn Wolters!

Since 2017, Gwenn has been focused on supporting regional high schools in their career and technical education and working with business partners to make connections to high schools. The goal: provide opportunities for high school students to learn about different careers and explore them while they’re still in school. It’s a job she has truly enjoyed and will miss when she leaves SCSC to begin her new position at Minnesota State University-Mankato’s Strategic Partnership Center.

Gwenn continues on page 2

Welcome!

SCSC is thrilled to have four new employees join our team in July:

- **Molly Lynett**, Au.D, CCC-A, Educational Audiologist
- **Allyson Mitchell**, CILC Director of Partnerships and Engagement
- **Kim Mueller**, Regional Career and Technical Education Coordinator
- **Holle Spessard**, Special Education Director, Region 9 Low Incidence Project, Centers of Excellence CSPD

Also, a warm welcome to **Crista Krosch** in her expanded role at SCSC as Marketing Communications Support.

Look for profiles of these employees in a future issue of SCSCconnects and on our website and social media pages.
Gwenn continued from page 1

“A servant leader, Gwenn Wolters can be depended on to find solutions,” said Glenn Morris, SCSC Regional Program Director. “She has a profound spirit for advocating for all learners. Her student-centered approach serves as a consistent reminder to remain laser-focused on positive outcomes for all. Gwenn shows a certain persistence for moving forward.

“She has forged strong relationships in all sectors throughout the region,” Glenn continued. “SCSC is grateful for her laying a strong foundation for continuing the work to develop opportunities for our members to deliver career and technical education.”

For Gwenn, some of the highlights of her time at SCSC have included:

- **CRAVE**, a culinary experience for high school kids. The first event, held in 2020, was very popular,” said Gwenn. “Unfortunately, the completely planned event for 2021 had to be cancelled due to the COVID pandemic. The goal for all the event partners is to bring it back in 2022.”

- **Strengthening of Communities of Practice**
  “There are so many great people in the region working in CTE but not every district has a dedicated CTE person or coordinator,” said Gwenn. “CTE cohorts were formed to be a resource for ideas, for educators to support each other and work together.”

- **Transportation Camp: Get Your Career In Gear – June 2022**, a summer camp for high school kids. “I had the idea for this in January 2022, thinking we’d plan it this year with the goal of holding the event next year,” said Gwenn. “But the industry partners were so supportive and excited about it, they wanted to hold it this summer! So, we pulled it together in six months! The event focused on all transportation careers, from farm implements to semi-trucks to drones…all really cool stuff!” (See photos from Transportation Camp on page 15.)

- **Pathway Development**
  “The region is working hard to develop pathways for high school kids,” said Gwenn. “This was started with grant from Twin Cities United Way. The goal is to help students figure out what they want to do after high school, whether it’s college, the military, or directly into a workplace.”

  One example of the grant in action is in Madelia. “They didn’t have the ability to offer career exploration in health care,” explained Gwenn. “Now, through the High-STEP Health Science Academy and a partnership with Madelia Health and Living Meadows in Madelia, we have an established program where students can gain real-world experience in health care while they’re still in high school.”

- **Career Expo – March 2022**
  “Last year we had to cancel the Expo due to the pandemic. This year, everyone was thrilled to have an in-person gathering again,” said Gwenn. “The excitement from the students and industry partners was incredible. The kids were into it and had a blast, and the employers felt that positive energy too.”

Gwenn’s work with education and industry partners will continue in her new role at MSU-M, as the Director of Strategic Partnership Center Initiatives. The mission of the Strategic Partnership center is to work with businesses and communities globally to create mutually beneficial connections. The result of these partnerships is a well-equipped workforce and improved economic health for the region.

She leaves SCSC’s CTE programs in the very capable hands of Kim Mueller, currently Career Pathway Coordinator at Mankato Area Public Schools, who will be taking over as CTE coordinator in July.

Kim Mueller and Gwenn Wolters have worked together on many CTE projects over the years. As Gwenn moves on to her new role at MSU-M, she leaves the CTE role in Kim’s very capable hands!

For all you have done to bring a variety of career exploration opportunities to high school students. We wish you well as you bring your talents to MSU-M!
Last call for photo entries!

We are looking for your photos of Minnesota! SCSC members, staff, partners, and students are invited to submit photos for SCSC’s Photography Contest. Send us your photos of your favorite spots in Minnesota – they do not have to be from this year but should be high resolution. Winning photos will be published in the SCSC 2023 calendar. Submission deadline is July 31st, 2022. Email to scscontest@mnscsc.org. View Flyer

Two SCSC employees mark one-year work anniversaries!

This July, SCSC celebrates one-year anniversaries with Dustin Julius, Regional Health Science Educator/Coordinator and Roberta Jensen, Marketing Communications Specialist.

“This year has been a great one working with Dustin,” said Gwenn Wolters, CTE Coordinator. “His willingness to jump in with both feet and create an awesome experience for our students in the High-STEP Academy has been remarkable! He is a problem solver and someone who can shift when necessary. Cheers to you, Dustin, on your anniversary!”

“It is hard to believe that a year has passed since Roberta joined the team,” said Hannah Keltgen, Manager of Wellness and Marketing Communications. “Roberta’s work ethic, collaboration, and expertise have provided a catalyst to accelerate SCSC’s brand and objectives. Roberta is dependable and trusted by all who work with her. We are incredibly fortunate to have her on our team!”

SCSC wouldn’t be the same without you. Congratulations on completing your first year!
Local Government Solutions
SCSC and MHC: Partners in Building Awareness of Service Cooperatives and Insurance Pools
By Mike Humpal

Cities and counties have been part of the SCSC insurance pool for many years. Previously, however, most of these groups were identified through various insurance industry channels. Lately, SCSC local government solutions staff along with insurance services staff and consultants, have tried a new strategy: work with and educate these groups through their statewide organizations. The goal is to build awareness about SCSC’s programs and service and insurance available through the Minnesota Healthcare Consortium (MHC).

Since 2021, SCSC has been a member in three statewide organizations: the Association of Minnesota Counties, the League of Minnesota Cities, and the Minnesota City/County Managers Association, and SCSC and MHC have sponsored or attended their annual events. Event attendees are both elected and appointed top local government official “decision makers.”

PARTNERS continues on page 6

CPC Furniture Vendors
It is never too early to engage with CPC vendors! In fact, many CPC Furniture Vendors can work with your architects or project managers to be “spec’d into” your project and referendum planning. We’ve listed out a few CPC Furniture Vendors and a brief description of their specialties below. For more information on their contract with CPC, please click on the name of a vendor to review their vendor profile page on PurchasingConnection.org.

- **Lakeshore** – Specializing in furniture for the littles!
- **Premier F+E** – New! Furniture project management, installation, and learning services.
- **School Specialty** – A staple furniture provider in the education market. They are especially interested in projects relating to special education.

Online Speech and Occupational Therapy for Your Students
TinyEYE is now on the CPC Contract! Similar to on-site therapy, online therapy enables your students to visit their therapy room and meet the same therapist every week. During student sessions, TinyEYE therapists deliver learning experiences that are highly engaging and drive student success.

**Dollars and Sense**
- No recruitment cost
- Fixed or hourly pricing options
- Only charged for services used
- Budget management assistance
- No setup costs or annual fees
- End contract at any time – no fees or restrictions after 30 days

Learn more about CPC’s contract with TinyEYE or book a no obligation demo.
Wellness Corner by Hannah Keltgen

Do you get stressed every time you have to choose a watermelon from the bunch at your grocery store? Here are a few tips for how you can pick the perfect watermelon every time!

- Find a watermelon that is a uniform size (oval or round) either is okay. You just want to watch out for irregular bumps.
- Select a melon that is heavy for its size. This usually means it will be sweeter and will have more water content.
- Look for an orange creamy field spot. The darker yellow field spot usually means it was on the vine longer and is full of flavor.
- If the field spot is white that is a sign that the melon is not quite ripe.
- Larger “webbing” or “sugar spots” means that the melon is seeping out sugar and is usually the sign of sweet melon.
- Look for dark and dull melons which is a sign that the melon is ripe. When the melon is shiny it is underripe.

We hope this helps!

Happy eating!

National Watermelon Day is August 3!
Events such as the League of Minnesota Cities’ annual conference (this year held June 22–24 in Duluth) are for the groups to learn innovative ideas, attend educational sessions on several topics, and develop skills. The events also provide MCH and SCSC staff networking opportunities with officials, allowing one-on-one conversations, thus building better relationships for later in-person conversations at their offices.

These events help us educate individuals about services cooperatives in general, build awareness of our insurance and other local government services, and finally, inform them that by pooling human and financial resources we can all be more efficient and cost effective in our individual efforts. In the end, we learn that we share many of the same concerns and challenges, and that by working together from different directions, we can collectively produce better solutions.

SCSC’s SPOTLIGHT award program recognizes SCSC members for outstanding contributions they make to their organizations. Award submissions are accepted throughout the year and honorees are announced quarterly. Honor someone today at mnsccc.org/spotlight
Look for these Nursing Student Interns in Area Schools this Summer!

By Magen Borkenhagen

SCSC is thrilled to have these Minnesota State University-Mankato students come on board this summer as School Nurse Student Interns. They will be working in 10 south central schools, doing health presentations (hand washing, healthy habits, etc.) and assisting Licensed School Nurses with day-to-day tasks.

Natasha Friedges from Forest Lake, MN
- She enjoys reading, working out, teaching dance, traveling, trying new things, being with family and friends.
- She is interested in many specialties within the nursing field including abnormal psychology and has a desire to further her education to become a Nurse Practitioner.

Madison Hogan from Woodbury, MN
- She enjoys reading, shopping, and playing with her puppy, Jack!
- She chose nursing because of her grandma, who was in and out of the hospital a lot when Madison was a kid. After seeing how kind and gentle the nurses were with her, Madison decided she wanted to be that person for other people.
- She hopes to either become a labor and delivery, or NICU nurse, or both!

Anna Mauss from Caledonia, MN
- She enjoys snowboarding, hiking, and spending time with friends and family.
- She chose nursing as a profession which stemmed from an experience while she was working at a nursing home during high school and realized it was something in which she was really interested.
- Upon graduation from nursing school she would like to work in a hospital setting providing care to pediatric and/or maternity patients.

Sophia Schultz from Andover, MN
- She enjoys working out, hanging out with friends and family, attending church, and playing softball and volleyball.
- She chose nursing because she wants to make a difference in the lives of others, provide patient centered care, and get people back to being healthy and living a satisfying life.
- Her nursing goals are to become a maternity care nurse and hopes to return to the classroom to focus on coming a Nurse Practitioner in the near future.

Cassie Sorenson from Chippewa Falls, WI
- She loves traveling and is a big dog lover! She also enjoys spending time outdoors and being with family and friends.
- She chose nursing as she loves knowing she is making a difference in someone’s life and being a sense of comfort in difficult situations. She also chose nursing as it is a profession that allows for many opportunities and versatility.
- She hopes to work in pediatrics and possibly go back to school and obtain a Master of Science in Nursing and practice as an APRN. Travel nursing is something that also really interests her!
by Crista Krosch

SOCRATES – South Central Regional Area Telecommunications System – a project under South Central Service Cooperative, was established in 1996 to provide data, internet connectivity and network services to schools and libraries in South Central Minnesota. Today SOCRATES consists of an exceptionally talented team of three professionals: David Paschke, Managing Director; Gerard Breiter, Manager of Information Services; and Jason Borglum, Educational Technologies Manager. Together the team works to provide services that are essential to its members.

According to David Paschke, “Internet service is now a commodity—like electricity—the schools and other organizations we serve cannot do their work without it!” The SOCRATES team provides its members telecommunication services, completes funding applications, manages security, offers professional development opportunities as well as provides niche services as needed to members.

The SOCRATES Telecommunications Cluster is one of 20 in Minnesota focusing on the nine counties of Region V and Scott County. The SOCRATES Consortium represents 28 schools and educational entities providing Internet and Network Services in partnership with Consolidated Communications. Internet and related data services are provided over a private network using a redundant design and management features to ensure excellent performance and reliability.

Completing the financial application process for Federal funding, known as E-Rate, and state funding – Telecommunications Equity Aid
(TEA), is the responsibility of **Gerard Breiter**, who has been with the project since 2006. The annual paperwork and review of a $750,000+ application is quite challenging for a consortium with 66 circuits. Gerard, however, enjoys the challenge of finding efficient ways to complete the funding application and his vast knowledge of the process protects SOCRATES member interests. For example, should an application be denied or challenged, Gerard has the background and aptitude to submit a successful appeal. Collectively, upwards of 80 percent of the cost for Internet, Network Services and Securities are funded through E-Rate and TEA.

The security side of SOCRATES largely falls into the capable hands of **Jason Borglum** who has been with SCSC for seven years. Jason currently focuses on the technical aspects of Security as a Service which has two general phases. Phase 1: Conducting interviews for IT Governance and Vulnerability Scans culminating in a Security Risk Assessment Profile. Phase 2: Contracting with participating members for on-site assistance in the Information and Security Realm. Currently, there are 11 participants, each participating at varying levels. Another responsibility of the security portion of the project focuses on trends and anticipating the needs of members two to three years in advance.

Additional programming under the SOCRATES umbrella includes On-Line Educational Options, Leadership Support, and Professional Development.

**IN FOCUS** continues on page 10
David Paschke, who is beginning his eighth year with the project, has taken the lead on these activities. As a response to the COVID pandemic, SOCRATES partnered with Mankato and Fairmont Public Schools to offer an alternative educational model to students and families wishing to attend school virtually. During the 2021-22 school year, over 200 students in grades K-12 participated in the program. SOCRATES also facilitates Communities of Practice and a variety of PD options to those in leadership roles including: Curriculum Directors, Technology Integration Specialists, Technology Coordinators and Counselors.

Thank you, SOCRATES team!
We appreciate all you do for our members; keeping their interests and needs at the heart of what you do!

“Maple River has been part of the SOCRATES network since before I started in this position about 20 years ago. They have always been very professional and easy to work with but this year in particular, they have gone above and beyond. My counterpart passed away in early September in the midst of putting up a new building. They were more than willing to help me out and keep things moving along in a world that I was very unfamiliar with yet was thrown into. They helped me with tasks that were in no way their responsibility and even traveled out to my building to give assistance. While it was not their obligation, they have attended weekly meetings to ensure that our transition to the products they provide will go seamlessly for us. I am very grateful and appreciative to be part of such a great technology community they foster for the south central region.”

Dee Stencel, Technology Coordinator, Maple River Schools

“Being a SOCRATES member is one of the most beneficial things we could do to improve our district, pertaining to information technology. From security awareness and training to the regional network, everything we do saves the district time and money.

“Some of my favorite parts of are:
- The regional network: It’s fantastic. Not having to deal with firewall updates/upgrades saves so much time.
- The expert advice from, not only Jason and Dave, but from members has been crucial to me as a newer member.
- SOCRATES has helped Cleveland in securing funding from the government for various projects, which has saved the district money.
- Receiving huge discounts on software and hardware because we’re able to bundle with other schools.
- Bringing in experts from all over to talk about software, hardware, and/or bring awareness has been very helpful in learning and keeping up to date in a very fast-moving field.
- Staying current on student data privacy and other laws has been especially important to us, as they’re always changing.

“Our district wouldn’t be where we are without SOCRATES. It’s been a lifesaver for our smaller school district.”

Tavish Satrom, Technology Director, Cleveland Public School
Let’s meet the SOCRATES Team!

David Paschke, Managing Director
“Internet service is now a commodity – like electricity, the schools, and other organizations we service can’t do their work without it!”

Gerard Breiter, Manager of Information Services
“We want members to be relieved of the aid process but knowing and trusting that we’re protecting their interests.”

Jason Borglum, Educational Technologies Manager
“The biggest challenge is to deliver quality services at a reasonable price.”

Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration
CILC Awarded First-Place Gold for Innovation in Distance Learning from USDLA

Each year, the United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) recognizes innovators and leaders within the distance/digital learning industry as part of its International Award program. These highly coveted awards are presented annually to organizations and individuals who compete across several categories of excellence. The USDLA International Distance Learning Awards are created to acknowledge major accomplishments in distance learning and to highlight those distance learning instructors, programs, and professionals who have achieved and demonstrated extraordinary achievements using online learning techniques, innovation, and video delivery technologies globally.

“USDLA sets the standard for international distance learning education, and CILC is honored to receive such a prestigious award,” said Jan Zanetis, former managing director, Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration. “CILC has worked hard over the last year to ensure our nonprofit is laser focused on narrowing opportunity gaps for students by providing interactive learning experiences that would otherwise be limited for underserved students.”

“The International Award program continues to provide prestigious recognition for educational influencers around the world,” said Dr. Arletha McSwain, president of USDLA. “These award winners are truly leaders in the distance/digital learning industry and their work in support of pedagogy is unsurpassed.”

On July 20, Jan Zanetis will accept the award on behalf of CILC at the USDLA 2022 National Conference in Nashville. Congratulations to everyone at CILC!

SOCRATES Online
New Online Option for K-12 Students

SCSC is partnering with Stride Learning and Northern Star Online to provide online options for students from member school districts during the upcoming school year. These partnerships help our member school districts provide online options for their families while keeping the students who participate enrolled as full-time students in the district. We can provide courseware, management systems and related support services for schools wanting help in developing their own online, hybrid or related credit recovery options K-12. We are also able to provide online courses, taught by our instructors, along with a variety of support services for members who want to provide online options but don’t have the capacity to directly deliver online programming.

Look for more information in future news releases. If you have questions now, please contact Dave Paschke, SOCRATES Managing Director, at 507-389-1773 or dpaschke@projectsoicates.org.
By Roberta Jensen

For the past year, South Central Perkins Consortium schools have been part of the Technology, Engineering, Careers (TEC) Network at St. Cloud State University. Through the TEC Network, middle and high schools gain access to the latest technology and engineering equipment and support for teacher training and curriculum development. The network helps Minnesota schools to provide classes and grow technical programs with a focus on manufacturing and construction, programs that had previously downsized or been cut by many districts.

“St. Cloud State University started the outreach program 10 years ago with the T&E Express, which would bring advanced equipment to schools in the region,” explained Kurt Helgeson, Professor & Chair, Department of Environmental & Technological Studies at St. Cloud State University. “Teachers and administrators soon began to ask about other areas that would support the technical programs. As a result, we rebranded the program to the TEC Network and included professional development, curriculum assistance, support for youth apprenticeship programs, assessment and annual reports, mentorship training, and support for facilities design and review.”

The equipment schools have access to are 3D printers, CNC equipment, plasma cutters, concrete and masonry tools, a virtual painter and more. This spring, New-Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) and United South Central (USC) High Schools students tried out a laser engraver and USC students also used a 3D scanner and printer and CNC router.

According to Dan Sorum, Ag Educator at NRHEG, “The students really enjoyed working with the laser engraver. I didn’t know anything about these machines before we got this one through the TEC Network, so I had to learn with the kids, which is fun to do. One student in particular (Asa) really took to the technology and discovered quite a bit for me. I found the availability of the equipment to be excellent.”

“Adding these machines, even temporarily, is a huge boost to the student’s education as it exposes them to so much more than what our budget can allow,” Dan continued. “I hope to use this program extensively next year so that my junior high students can experience the different areas of technology. The only thing I wish I had more of was basic knowledge on the equipment so that I could teach the kids more.”

At USC, students had fun making marble mazes using scrap plywood. They first planned out their designs on grid paper, made the maze in Tinkercad (a web application for 3D design) and then ported their design to be programmed into the Wood CNC unit. Art class students designed 3D scan clay models and 3D printed them to show how those things
transfer to different mediums, and computer class students made magnetic locker name plates using the laser etcher and cardboard.

“Having the TEC Network resources allowed us to try new projects that we were not able to do before,” said Doug Sahr, 7-12 Agriculture Educator at USC. “Students appreciated the opportunity to try something new that they could take home.”

Thanks to the TEC Network partnership, South Central Minnesota schools stay current and high school students gain access to advanced equipment they normally would not be able to use. These experiences may help students understand the career options they have today and into the future.

USC student, Ivy, made her marble maze project pair up with her passion of basketball. Students first drew out their designs on grid paper, then used Tinkercad to create a 3D view before loading their projects into the CNC router.

NRHEG Student, Asa (pictured left) used the laser engraver to create this incredible Chevelle emblem.

USC computer class students made magnetic locker name plates using the laser engraver and cardboard.
For These Students, Summer is All About Going to (Trades) Camp!

June 14–16, 2022
63 students from 25 area towns participated

This camp gets students excited and interested in pursuing a career in the health sciences, and to go back home motivated and focused about what they can do in middle and high school to prepare for that potential career.
June 13-24, 2022
9 students from 5 area schools participated

This camp offers students opportunities to try out interactive projects with electricians, cement masons and more. The students also get the chance to learn about union apprenticeship training opportunities and take tours of different training centers.

June 21-23, 2022
11 students from 6 area schools participated

This camp offers students the opportunity to learn about careers in transportation areas ranging from Automotive Technology, Auto Body and Collision Repair, Medium and Heavy Truck Technology, Diesel and Heavy Equipment to Marine and Powersports by learning technical skills through hands-on activities.
SCSC is excited to offer a new workshop series “Leadership Facilitation and Adult Learning Skills.”

The series will benefit all types of school leaders: team leaders, curriculum leaders, department managers, building administrators, superintendents, etc.

This three-part series teaches powerful ways to integrate the best practices of learning leadership into real-world scenarios. Through three intensive workshops, individuals will learn, apply, and reflect on methods of facilitation, adult learning theory, and consensus-building. Participants are encouraged to attend all three workshops for the greatest impact.

Workshop Dates:
Part One • September 22, 2022
Part Two • November 10, 2022
Part Three • January 26, 2023

Workshop Times:
Each workshop will include two segments:
9am–1pm • direct instruction
1pm–4pm • guided collaboration with your team and with leaders from other schools

Cost of Series: No cost to SCSC staff and SCSC members. Non-members: $100.

CEUs: 12 CEUs available.

Participants are encouraged to attend all three parts of the series to receive the most benefit.

Please see the flyer for session details and register at mnescsc.org/events-registration

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