



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OP-TEC Releases Skill Standards for Precision Optics Technicians

WACO, Texas (February 27, 2009) – Dan Hull, Executive Director of The National Center for Optics and Photonics Education (OP-TEC), today announced the official release of *The National Precision Optics Skill Standards for Technicians* (CORD, 2009).

The National Precision Optics Skill Standards for Technicians represent the consensus of a broad cross-section of U.S. employers regarding the technical and workplace skills required of precision optics technicians. They are designed to give educators and employer advisory committees a solid foundation for generating courses and programs that will enable two-year colleges (and their feeder high schools) to produce globally competitive workers.

Precision optics technicians produce, test, and handle optical components that are used in lasers and sophisticated electro-optical systems for defense, homeland security, aerospace, biomedical equipment, digital displays, alternate energy production, and nanotechnology. They also integrate precision optical components into electro-optical systems and maintain electro-optical systems.

Skill standards are employer-driven statements of expectation as to what workers should know and be able to do on the job. Skill standards are employers' "specifications." They are the primary means by which employers communicate to educators their (the employers') requirements regarding the content of the courses and programs that will produce their future employees. Skill standards are necessary to ensure that technicians are well prepared for the challenges that await them in today's high-tech, globally engaged workplace.

The National Precision Optics Skill Standards for Technicians were developed by OP-TEC and subject matter experts, reviewed and edited by industry professionals, and approved by leaders from several corporations that employ precision optics technicians. The standards were presented to members of the American Precision Optics Manufacturers Association (APOMA) at their annual meeting on January 28, 2009 in San Jose, California. The standards have been endorsed by APOMA, the Florida Photonics Cluster, and the Rochester (New York) Regional Photonics Cluster.

To request a complimentary bound copy or download a free copy of *The National Precision Optics Skill Standards for Technicians* (2009), visit <http://www.op-tec.org/precisionoptics/skillstandards/>.

About OP-TEC

The National Center for Optics and Photonics Education, OP-TEC, is a consortium of two-year colleges, high schools, universities, national laboratories, industry partners, and professional societies funded by the National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program. The participating entities of OP-TEC have joined forces to create a secondary-to-postsecondary "pipeline" of highly qualified and strongly motivated students and to empower high schools and community colleges to meet the urgent need for technicians in optics and photonics.

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