

Wilkerson Receives NSPRA Presidents Award

Ron Wilkerson, APR, retired chief communications officer for the Oklahoma Department of *CareerTech* in Stillwater, Okla., is the winner of the 2008 Presidents Award, given by the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA).

Wilkerson received the award July 7, 2008, at NSPRA's 55th Annual Seminar at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Va.

Wilkerson is a recognized national communications leader in the field of career and technical education. He created the statewide PIO Communications & Marketing Council which has helped to develop a strong, collective presence for Oklahoma's Technology Center system, resulting in a more unified approach to marketing, consistent messaging, and greater cooperative efforts among the state's tech centers. The Council's campaigns became a national model for career programs, and Tech Center leaders from around the U.S. sought Ron's advice and counsel. The statewide marketing and communication campaigns continue today, 23 years after Ron created the original concept.

In 2003, Ron received the University of Oklahoma's Arch Alexander Award, the most prestigious award given by the Oklahoma *CareerTech* system, and more recently he was inducted into the Oklahoma *CareerTech* Hall of Fame.

But perhaps no higher praise can be given than that from retired State Director Dr. Ann Benson who says, "Students in Oklahoma, both high school and adult, are better off because of Ron's work."

NSPRA Executive Director Rich Bagin, APR, adds, "Ron's contribution to raising the status of career tech programs opened the door to success for thousands of students during his career in Oklahoma. He is one of our nation's best communicators and leaders in career education."

The Presidents Award is the highest, most prestigious recognition given by NSPRA. The award honors NSPRA leaders for outstanding contributions to the field of school public relations and to the Association.