

## **Southwestern Bell Recognizes Pace U. NACTEL Program**

Greenwood Village, CO: Pace University's online program for the telecommunications industry, called NACTEL, has been recognized by Southwestern Bell Telephone (SWBT) company as meeting the requirements for its Technical Knowledge Test (TKT). That means that SWBT employees who complete their online A.S. degree in Telecommunications or Essentials of Telecommunications Certificate in this program will be exempt from taking the TKT.

"We feel this is a very positive step for our members. The NACTEL program not only helps SWBT develop a highly trained technical staff, but it also enables our members to enhance their career prospects and advance in the industry," says Communications Workers of America District 6 Vice President Andy Milburn.

NACTEL ([www.nactel.org](http://www.nactel.org)) is a non-profit coalition of telecommunications employers and unions, which represents over 2 million employees. NACTEL co-developed the curriculum for the program of the same name with Pace University in 1998/99. At that time, the industry was experiencing a critical need for skilled telecom technicians and the coalition decided that online learning was the best venue to upgrade the existing technical workforce. Since that time, the industry has gone through enormous upheaval, but the need for skilled technicians still exists.

"The Telecommunications industry will always need skilled technicians," says David McKie, SBC Director of Network Training, "And as the technology gets more sophisticated, the educated employee is our best representative to our customer - which is why we endorse NACTEL."

SBC (parent company of Southwestern Bell) has twelve employees who have already graduated from the program. To date, over 750 individuals have enrolled in the NACTEL program since its inception in 1999, most because of the convenience and flexibility of online learning.

"Many companies are still cautious about embracing online learning into their training mix, especially since the quality of some early providers has not been the best," according to Susan Kannel, Executive Director of the NACTEL coalition. "However, the SWBT waiver/exemption recognizes that, if a program is properly designed with an experienced online educator like Pace University, quality learning can be accomplished."

*NACTEL (National Coalition for Telecommunications Education and Learning) is a collaboration of the CWA, Frontier/Citizens, the IBEW, Qwest, SBC and Verizon, to empower the telecom workforce to learn and advance in the Telecommunications industry. For more information, visit: [www.nactel.org](http://www.nactel.org).*

