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GAERF[®] AWARDS CERTIFICATIONS IN LAUNCH OF PrintED[®] EXAMS

The Graphic Arts Education and Research Foundation has awarded certifications to 108 students who earned passing scores on the standardized PrintED online examinations that were launched in May 2004. Twenty-seven students were granted certifications with distinction.

	Introduction to Graphic Communications	Press Operations	Digital File Preparation
Certifications	65	12	31
Certifications with Distinction	24	2	1

This new series of examinations developed by the national PrintED accreditation program will give graphic communications courses of study a means to measure and demonstrate their success, responding to the growing emphasis on accountability in education. Tests are currently available in three of the seven areas of accreditation: Introduction to Graphic Communications, Press Operations and Digital File Preparation. Tests in Binding & Finishing, Digital File Output, Advanced Press Operations, and Advanced Digital File Preparation will be added at a later date.

PrintED accredits high school and post-secondary graphic communications programs. It bases accreditation on defined industry competencies consisting of more than 400 tasks covering the seven areas in which a program can be accredited. Accreditation in the introductory course, as well as in one other area is required. Institutions may choose to be accredited in additional areas based on their programs.

The development of the new online examinations began in 2003 with the pilot testing of some 600 questions administered to about 500 student participants. The results of these tests were reviewed by panels of testing and subject matter experts, which resulted in the publication of the revised exams.

“One of the key objectives in developing these exams was to ensure that PrintED accredited programs would produce graduates who could demonstrate minimal competency in key technical areas,” notes GAERF Chairman Randolph W. Camp, CEO of Walton Media Services in Monroe, Georgia. “Subject matter experts representing education, business and curriculum development established the passing scores for these exams, and their goal was to provide a realistic picture of what students are learning and where our schools need to improve.

Another goal, Camp continues, was to provide feedback to individual schools. “We hope this process will encourage schools with lower pass rates to assess their curricula and instruction and take action to improve the competency levels of their students,” he comments.

The PrintED National Accreditation Program is one part of GAERF’s mission. In addition to this program, the Foundation administers two other programs designed to support recruitment and training of a skilled workforce: the grant-making program which since its inception in 1983, has awarded over \$4.5 million in funding, and MAKE YOUR MARK® in Graphic Communications, a campaign to high schools aimed at promoting a positive image of the printing and graphic communications industry and raising student awareness of the industry’s diverse career opportunities.

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The Graphic Arts Education and Research Foundation was created by the National Association for Printing Leadership (NAPL), NPES The Association for Suppliers of Printing, Publishing, and Converting Technologies and the Printing Industries of America (PIA) in 1983. These three national associations jointly own the Graphic Arts Show Company (GASC®). GAERF was created to channel a portion of the revenues earned by GASC-managed shows into projects supporting a strong future for the industry.

For additional information about the Foundation and its programs, visit the GAERF web site at www.gaerf.org or call toll-free at (866) 381-9839.

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