



# news release

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## **ASTD Presents the Gordon M. Bliss Memorial Award to Elaine Biech**

**(Alexandria, VA)** June 27, 2007 – The American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) presented the Gordon M. Bliss Memorial Award to Elaine Biech at its 2007 International Conference & Exposition in Atlanta, Georgia. This award is the highest volunteer recognition given to an ASTD member who has made significant contributions in three areas: advancing ASTD's vision and goals, improving an employer's or client's workplace learning and performance, and enriching a community through volunteering professional skills.

Throughout Biech's 25 years in the workplace learning and performance profession, she has advanced the industry through sharing her vast knowledge, her unflagging enthusiasm, and her considerable talents. She has worked to improve and define the profession, and her work has benefited ASTD on every level – from chapters to international networks. She has always led by example, demonstrating that only through commitment and dedication can true change be achieved.

Since the beginning of her involvement with ASTD on the chapter level in 1985, Biech has touched nearly every important aspect of knowledge and programming at ASTD. All along, she has been an enthusiastic advocate for professional certification, and finally saw that dream realized with the introduction of the Certified Professional in Learning and Performance™ (CPLP™) in 2005. She also worked hard to shape and ensure the excellence of the credential, laying the ground work with her participation in the competency study that led to the development of the ASTD Competency Model.

After helping to define what workplace learning and performance should look like, Biech served on the team that developed the first round of CPLP test questions. She also turned her energies to the certification candidates themselves, editing the first edition of the ASTD Learning System that helps interested participants prepare for the exam and moderating eight related webinars. Simultaneously, she designed and launched both the "Training Certificate" and the "Facilitating Organizational Change Certificate" programs for ASTD.

Recognizing that her fellow learning and performance consultants have challenges and goals that are different than those of internal practitioners, Biech served as creator and chair of Consultant's Day at the ASTD International Conference & Exposition, which became a conference-within-a-conference in 2000, attracting such marquee speakers as Peter Block, Margie Blanchard, Geoff Bellman, Jim Kouzes, and Warner Burke. She shared her own knowledge selflessly, writing and editing the "Ask a Consulting Expert" column on the ASTD website for four years.

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Biech has also found time to write more than a dozen books including several for ASTD. She is the author of these ASTD Press books: *Creativity and Innovation*, *Training for Dummies*, two *ASTD Infolines*, and most recently, *Thriving Through Change*, another ASTD publication.

As part of her service to ASTD, she has held nearly every significant volunteer role. Biech has served as a board member, secretary, chapter president, regional council member, nominating committee member, and national conference design committee chair. She received the ASTD Torch Award in 1992 and the Volunteer-Staff Partnership Award in 2004.

In addition, Biech's contribution to workplace learning and performance in organizations has been outstanding in the field. She has shared her expertise in the pursuit of the client's corporate goals, and she has worked with high-profile projects that run the gamut from implementing TQM at McDonald's, to reengineering at Lands' End, to leadership development at Land O' Lakes. Biech's work has also affected thousands of workers nationwide. She has had a long-standing working relationship with the U.S. Navy, working on a myriad of projects for various offices and departments with the branch of service, leveraging her skills and expertise on everything from process re-engineering to facilitating large-scale change management processes.

In addition to her extensive work with ASTD, Biech has enthusiastically addressed other needs she has encountered in her community. She donates her time to provide training for not-for-profit organizations and small community colleges, such as a program for single parents returning to school in northeastern Virginia.

For more information on ASTD's Awards program, visit [http://www.astd.org/astd/about\\_ASTD/awards/](http://www.astd.org/astd/about_ASTD/awards/).

#### About ASTD

ASTD (American Society for Training & Development) is the world's largest association dedicated to workplace learning and performance professionals. ASTD's members come from more than 100 countries and connect locally in 136 U.S. chapters and 25 Global Networks. Members work in thousands of organizations of all sizes, in government, as independent consultants, and suppliers.

ASTD started in 1944 when the organization held its first annual conference. ASTD has widened the profession's focus to link learning and performance to individual and organizational results, and is a sought-after voice on critical public policy issues. For more information, visit [www.astd.org](http://www.astd.org).

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