The Drive to Do More
Paying It Forward

career ready
turning a job into a passion

helping others out of poverty

who’s competing at internationals

an amazing trajectory in aerospace: where it all began
APPAREL FOR EVERY KIND OF MEMBER
AND EVERY KIND OF JOURNEY.

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SkillsUSA Champion Ricardo Brito of Norwalk, Calif. Photo by Lloyd Wolf.
Blaze Your Own Trail

Executive Director Tim Lawrence has known SkillsUSA as a student member, instructor, industry partner and state director. Got a question? He can help.

Q: How do I get started on a leadership path? People want to follow someone who already has experience.

Tim: As the new school year begins, I encourage you to step forward at your next SkillsUSA chapter meeting and seek a position as an elected officer. If you feel more comfortable in a support role, join a committee or help with a special project. Either way, you can make a difference.

Speaking of following experienced leaders, this issue of SkillsUSA Champions highlights the team of students elected to serve as your 2018-19 national officers. Most never dreamed of the success they’ve achieved, but as they look back, they share a path of growth and self-discovery. Their stories are no different from yours, and these students are great role models.

We all have a right to be active citizens in our schools, communities, states and nation. Our annual Washington Leadership Training Institute (WLTI) involves more than 500 students, teachers and state leaders from over 25 states. During 100 or more congressional visits, they advocate to elected officials. The work in our nation’s capital may seem remote to your daily life, but it affects the economy and future workforce in your state and hometown.

Check out our website for WLTI photos, and consider participating next year. Everyone can apply to attend.

You can also lead through involvement in the SkillsUSA Championships. In this issue, just look at the achievements of our WorldSkills USA students who are on the road to Kazan, Russia, and of those of Kevin Matthes, a former international competitor who now leads a large aerospace company’s manufacturing processes.

You’ll also read about students who — empowered through SkillsUSA to make a difference in their own lives and those of others — are facing huge challenges, even being homeless, or achieving great things across the world. And it’s not just students whose lives change through SkillsUSA. Our five Advisor of the Year finalists have over 100 years of classroom experience. Learn how the winner, Joyce Price, puts students first and leads with passion.

Each fall, you have a great opportunity to clarify your own dreams and build a clearer path toward your future. Step forward, volunteer and try something new. The main thing is to get started. Get involved, and we may see you in a future issue of SkillsUSA Champions. Allow SkillsUSA and those around you to help you fulfill your incredible potential.

Got questions about SkillsUSA or other topics? Email anyinfo@skillsusa.org or send a letter to the address on the facing page. Put “Ask Tim” in the subject line or mail address.
The atmosphere was electric as the new WorldSkills USA team took the stage, raised their flags and soaked in the support of thousands. This magic moment was a highlight at SkillsUSA’s recent national awards ceremony, and it signaled the first step on the team’s road to the WorldSkills Competition in Kazan, Russia, in August 2019.

The group currently stands at 20 competitors, and additional members added over the coming months will make this the largest WorldSkills USA team ever assembled. (See Pages 21-23 for their names and more on the internationals.)

Follow the team’s road to Kazan by subscribing to @WorldSkillsUSA on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and interact with the members by using the hashtags #WorldSkillsUSA and #RoadtoKazan. For more information, visit the website at: www.worldskillsusa.org.

The WorldSkills USA team is set to compete against the world in Kazan in August 2019. Follow its progress all year at: www.worldskillsusa.org.
NEW CHAPTER HITS HOME RUN ON FIRST PITCH

Back in 1980, Wanda Henry was a SkillsUSA student member studying cosmetology. Today, she’s a cosmetology instructor and SkillsUSA advisor at Hueytown (Ala.) High School. That alone is a cool full-circle story, but, as you might expect, there’s more of the tale to tell.

Henry’s chapter secured the first-place prize — as well as the envy-worthy title of “Media Champion” — in SkillsUSA’s national Public Relations Challenge contest. Even more impressive is the fact that this was the very first year Hueytown High had an active SkillsUSA chapter.

“My students had so much fun participating and promoting SkillsUSA through our ‘Must Love Red’ campaign,” Henry says. “We had students stopping in from other classes wanting to know how to join.”

The online challenge encouraged local chapters and state officer teams to demonstrate how they showcased SkillsUSA to the news media in ways that highlighted career and technical education opportunities and student success.

SkillsUSA Massachusetts scored the top prize in the state officer category, and the second-place local winner — a.k.a. “Media Boss” — was Greenville County High School in Emporia, Va.

SkillsUSA Wisconsin and SkillsUSA New Jersey were also recognized for their stellar public relations efforts. The winners received grants for their local chapter or state association. For full details and results, visit: www.skillsusa.org/skillsusa-announces-winners-pr-challenge/.

Something We Can All Agree On

President Trump’s recent signing of the “Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act” officially reauthorized the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, more commonly called Perkins funding. The plan provides more than $1 billion each year to states for vocational and career-focused education programs. “This legislation marks an important bipartisan federal investment in career and technical education,” said SkillsUSA Executive Director Tim Lawrence. For more information on the signing and what it means to your school, visit: tinyurl.com/skillsusa-perkins.

New podcasts spread the word about SkillsUSA

The WorldSkills Champions Trust (WSCT) is made up of nine members from across the globe promoting involvement in WorldSkills and WorldSkills Foundation projects, initiatives and activities. One of those nine members is our own Kieron Kohlman, who competed in Automotive Technology at the 2013 WorldSkills Competition (pictured at left).

Kohlman now co-hosts the “WorldSkills Champions Trust Podcast,” and two recent episodes contain great SkillsUSA content. One features an interview with Snap-on CEO and SkillsUSA supporter Nick Pinchuk, and the other introduces us to an all-female Welding Fabrication team from Pennsylvania that competed at the 2018 SkillsUSA Championships. For links, go to: tinyurl.com/skillsusa-podcasts.
BIGGEST NLSC MAY ALSO BE THE BEST EVER

We did it again! SkillsUSA’s 54th National Leadership and Skills Conference (NLSC) is officially the biggest in the organization’s history. There’s no official stat to support those who’d argue it was the best, but the photos at right (and hundreds more online, along with video) make a pretty compelling case.

Official registration for the conference — held annually in Louisville, Ky. — reached 10,879, a new record. Another all-time high was the number of competitors — 6,251, to be exact — at the SkillsUSA Championships. Add in volunteers and observers, and the total number of attendees comes to nearly 20,000.

Television personality and SkillsUSA supporter Mike Rowe took notice of SkillsUSA’s expanding membership girth, saying, “This organization is starting to grow with a capital ‘G,’ and that’s really great!” Rowe delivered those comments at the emotional Awards Ceremony, which saw national champions awarded gold medals in 102 skilled and leadership competitions (the most ever).

That ceremony was the capper on a week full of many big moments, including a visit from U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos. “The framework that SkillsUSA focuses on is really so important in helping the whole person develop,” DeVos said, adding, “It’s really fun and energizing for me to be here.”

From the pageantry of the Opening Ceremony to the electricity of SkillsUSA TECHSPO, from the elation of Champions Night to the pride of citywide service projects, the 2018 NLSC was the experience of a lifetime. For more, visit: www.skillsusa.org/events-training/national-leadership-and-skills-conference/.
2018 Honorees
Advisor of the Year: Joyce Price, Blacksburg (Va.) High School (story, Page 12)
Alumni Pioneer of Excellence Award: Paul King, graphic designer, instructor and longtime member from Oklahoma
Ernie Gary SkillsUSA Championships Volunteer of the Year: Sharon Shaub, leadership contest chair, Ramona, Okla.
Honorary Life Members: Keith Ashby, 38-year employee of SkillsUSA headquarters; Russ Hoffbauer, SkillsUSA board member from State Farm Insurance Companies; Alonza Lewis, longtime leader for SkillsUSA South Carolina; Beth Loftus of Oklahoma, supporter for more than 40 years; Etta Maynard, instructor and founding board member of SkillsUSA Maryland; Dave Milliken, retired teacher and SkillsUSA board member from Utah; Peggy Torrens, SkillsUSA board member, Kansas State Department of Education
Models of Excellence First-Place Chapters: Catawba Valley Community College, Hickory, N.C., Union Grove High School, McDonough, Ga.; Willow Canyon High School, Surprise, Ariz.
Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award: Andrea Arbogast, former national officer and current alumni volunteer from Missouri
Outstanding Educators: Jessie Kalloo, Edison High School, Jamaica, N.Y.; Todd Bonsall, Burlington County Institute of Technology, Westhampton, N.J.; Luis Maldonado, Middle Creek High School, Apex, N.C.; Deborah Tripp, SkillsUSA Virginia director
President’s Volunteer Service Award: 70 individuals and 12 teams; for the list, go to: www.skillsusa.org/membership-resources/awards/presidents-volunteer-service-award/
Student2Student Mentoring Grand Prize: Harris County High School, Hamilton, Ga.
Torch Carrier Award: Pam Evans of GE Appliances, a Haier Company •

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SkillsUSA national, state and chapter officers have enrolled at JWU in the last six years
GOLD MEDALISTS 2018

Congratulations to the students (and their teachers and schools) who earned top honors at this year’s SkillsUSA Championships, which has grown to 102 different competitions.

(For the names of silver and bronze medalists, and those in teams of three or more, go to: www.skillsusa-register.org/rpts/EventMedalists.aspx)

3D VISUALIZATION AND ANIMATION: Keith Takens/Ben Waters, Ferris State University, Big Rapids, Mich.; Samuel Myers/Jackson Pilitovich, Kern High Regional Occupational Center, Bakersfield, Calif.

ACTION SKILLS: Skylee Thomas, Central Technology Center, Drumright, Okla.; Amanda Ohlau, South Technical High School, Sunset Hills, Mo.

ADDITIVE MANUFACTURING: Alexander Kemnitz/Adolfo Vargas, Central Community College, Hastings, Neb.; Getty George/Sam Green, Martin Luther King High School, Riverside, Calif.


AMERICAN SPIRIT: (team) Gloucester County Institute of Technology, Sewell, N.J.

ARCHITECTURAL DRAFTING: Galina Alekseeva, Calhoun Community College, Decatur, Ala.; Jennifer Sprov, Stafford Senior High School, Falmouth, Va.


AUTOMATED MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY: (teams) Waukesha County Technical College, Pewaukee, Wis.; South and West Washtenaw Consortium, Saline, Mich.

AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR TECHNOLOGY: Scotty George, Utah Valley University, Orem, Utah; Elmer Hernandez, Pickens Technical College, Aurora, Colo.

AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY: Sam Peterson, St. Cloud (Minn.) Technical and Community College, John Myers, Dennis Technical Education Center, Boise, Idaho

AVIATION MAINTENANCE TECHNOLOGY: Bailey Mills, South Georgia Technical College, Americus; Heather Nutter, Gordon Cooper Technology Center, Shawnee, Okla.

BARBERING: Jayd Jacobson, Davis Technical College, Kaysville, Utah; Kevin Ortega Enriquez, Pickens Technical College, Aurora, Colo.

BASIC HEALTH CARE SKILLS: Megan Brown, Shawsheen High School, Billerica, Mass.

BROADCAST NEWS PRODUCTION: (teams) Northeast Community College, Norfolk, Neb.; Southeast High School, Bradenton, Fla.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE: Alexus Blosch, Indian Capital Technology Center, Muskogee, Okla.; Richard Karr, Vanguard-Sentinel Career and Technology Centers Vanguard Campus, Fremont, Ohio

CABINETMAKING: Alex Hamacher, Washburn Institute of Technology, Topeka, Kan.; Bradlee Benjamin, Berks Career and Technology Center (CTC) East Campus, Oley, Pa.

CAREER PATHWAYS SHOWCASE: (teams) A&M Consolidated High School, College Station, Texas; A.W. Beattie Career Center, Allison Park, Pa.; Career Parkways Center, Shawnee, Okla.

CUSTOMER SERVICE: Katharine Schweitzer, Pensacola (Fla.) State College; Samuel Frye, Catawba Valley Community College, Hickory, N.C.

DENTAL ASSISTING: (teams) Central Georgia Technical College, Macon; Charlie (WT.) High School; CNC MILLING SPECIALIST: Landon Miller, Pennsylvania College of Technology, Williamsport; Steven Kelly, St. Clair Technical Education Center, Marysville, Mich.


COMMUNITY COLLEGE, Decatur, Ala.; Joseph Stevens, Academy for Career Education, Reno, Nev.


COLLISION REPAIR TECHNOLOGY: Johnathan Wolfe, Wiregrass Georgia Tech College, Valdosta; Caleb Eyler, Warren (Pa.) County Career Center

COMMERCIAL BAKING: Jessica Henson, Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, NY.; Maxime Frechette, St. Johnsburg (VT) Academy

ACTION PROJECT: David Casey/Austin Davidson, Central Technology Center, Drumright, Okla.; Joycelyn Phillips/Sanjesh Singh, Cesar Chavez High School, Stockton, Calif.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: (teams) Wiregrass Georgia Technical College, Valdosta; Providence (R.I.) Career and Technical Academy

COOKING:crete: Jeremiah Stones, Texas State Technical College, Waco; Ashish D’Souza, Polytech High School, Woodside, Del.

CUSTOMER SERVICE: Katherine Schweitzer, Pensacola (Fla.) State College; Samuel Frye, Catawba Valley Community College, Hickory, N.C.

DIESEL EQUIPMENT PRODUCTION: Madeleine Fox-Wahab/Austin Swain, South Central College, North Mankato, Minn.; Amira Aboudallah/Jacob Hebdon, Las Vegas Academy

DIGITAL CINEMA PRODUCTION: Madeline Fox-Wahab/Austin Swain, South Central College, North Mankato, Minn.; Amira Aboudallah/Jacob Hebdon, Las Vegas Academy

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: Milan Tolani, Cuesta Community College, San Luis Obispo, Calif.; Julia Coyne, Alhambra High School, Martinez, Calif.

ELECTRICAL CONSTRUCTION WIRING: Dan Chism, Manchester (N.H.) Community College; Cory Marquardt, Southwestern Community College, Creston, Iowa

ELECTRONICS TECHNOLOGY: Spencer Brocksmith, State Technical College of Missouri, Linn; Joshua McKelvey, Parkside Career Technology Center, Willow Street, Pa.

ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY/DESIGN: (teams) Catawba Valley Community College, Hickory, N.C.; Dubiski Career High School, Grand Prairie, Texas

ENTREPRENEURSHIP: (teams) Catawba Valley Community College, Hickory, N.C. (two gold medals)
**ESTHETICS:** Kennedy Kirkland, Northeast Alabama Community College, Rainsville; Sydney Davis, Sun Area Technical Institute, New Berlin, Pa.

**EXTemporaneous SPEAKING:** Aaron Gabriel, Forsyth Technical Community College, Winston-Salem, N.C.; Austin Zbierski, Washburn Institute of Technology, Topeka, Kan.

**FIREFIGHTING:** Josh Forrest, Southeast Community College, Lincoln, Neb.; Tyler Bertram, Wenasatche (Wash.) Valley Technical Skills Center

**FIRST AID – CPR:** Leslie Bean, Nunez Community College, Chalmette, La.; Cheyenne Biser, Southern Garrett High School, Oakland, Md.

**GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS:** Cheyanne Kasmierski, Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology, Lancaster, Pa.; Julia Meassick, Carroll County Career and Technology Center, Westminster, Md. **GRAPHICS IMAGING – SUBIMATION:** College, Sandra Castaneda, Salt Lake Community College, Salt Lake City; Mattie Egly, Lawrence County High School, Lawrenceburg, Tenn.

**HEALTH KNOWLEDGE BOWL:** (teams) Northeast State Community College, Blountville, Tenn.; Somerset County Academy of Medical Sciences, Bridgewater, N.J. **HEALTH OCCUPATIONAL PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO:** Vernessa Steele, Northeast Alabama Community College, Rainsville, Ala.; Christina Walter, Parkway West Career and Technology Center, Oakdale, Pa. **HEATING, VENTILATION, AIR CONDITIONING AND REFRIGERATION:** Casey Dowell, Tennessee College of Applied Technology, McKenzie; Ian McCleese, Collins Career Center, Cheseapeake, Ohio. **HUMANOID ROBOTICS:** Andrew Hartnett/ Joseph Schimmer, Hollenstein Career and Technology Center, Fort Worth, Texas.

**INDUSTRIAL MOTOR CONTROL:** Brett Karpovich, Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology, Lancaster, Pa.; Isaac Russell, Maplewood Career Center, Ravenna, Ohio. **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES:** Randall Meyer, Ozarks Technical Community College, Springfield, Mo.; Rahmi Husein, Stanley (Wis.) Boyd High School

**INTERACTIVE APPLICATION AND VIDEO GAME DEVELOPMENT:** Asa Gordon/ Chyan Wolfe, Forsyth Technical Community College, Winston-Salem, N.C.; Erin Peterson/ Taylor Woods, Eastern Oklahoma County Technology Center, Chockaw. **INTERNET-WORKING:** Andrew Hoy, College of Western Idaho, Nampa; Tate Hetherington, Livingston Area Career Center, Pontiac, Ill.

**JOB INTERVIEW:** Grant Saulsbury, Alexandria (Minn.) Technical and Community College, Emma Long; Pickens High School, Jasper, Ga. **JOB SKILL DEMONSTRATION A:** Savannah Schmidt, Bladen Community College, Dublin, N.C.; Carson Kelley/Wayne County Vo-Tech Center, Waynesboro, Miss.; David Hinjosa, Kennedy Middle School, Pharr, Texas. **JOB SKILL DEMONSTRATION OPEN:** College, Matthew Walsh, East Mississippi Community College, Mayhew; Cinnamon Digan, Sun Area Technical Institute, New Berlin, Pa.; Madison Melcher, Unified School District – Clearwater/Orchard, Orchard, Neb.

**MAJOR APPLIANCE AND REFRIGERATION TECHNOLOGY:** April Archibald, Tennessee College of Applied Technology, McKenzie; Corbin Payne, Excelsior Springs (Mo.) Area Career Center

**MARINE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY:** Will Weins, Mitchell (S.D.) Technical Institute; Jacob Heaton, Suncoast Technical College, Sarasota, Fla.

**MASONRY:** Ashton White, Rowan Cabarrus Community College, Salisbury, N.C.; Mason Saunders, Mount Pleasant (N.C.) High School

**MECHATRONICS:** Ryan Gibson/Robert Thompson, Elizabethtown (Ky.) Technical College; Josiah Dempsey/Andrew O’Donohue, Berks Career and Technology Center West Campus, Leesport, Pa.

**MEDICAL ASSISTING:** Billie Morris, Pensacola (Fla.) State College; Ashley Stelet; Lancaster County Career and Technology Center, Willow Street, Pa. **MEDICAL MATH:** Ben Nguyen, Community College of Rhode Island; Jason Conner, North Point High School for Science, Technology and Industry, Walford, Md. **MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY:** Will Miller, Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Johnson, Tenn.; Elizabeth Gershter, Somerset County Academy of Medical Sciences, Bridgewater, N.J.

**MOBILE ELECTRONICS INSTALLATION:** Rene Nunez, Slawson Occupational Center, Bell, Calif.; Damian Vazquez, Schurr High School, Montebello, Calif. **MOBILE ROBOTICS TECHNOLOGY:** Tanvi Kenjale/Ved Kenjale, San Luis Obispo (Calif.) High School

**MOTORCYCLE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY:** Kevin Neill, Bates Technical College, Tacoma, Wash.; Hayden Sedlak, Plattsmouth (Neb.) High School

**NAIL CARE:** Nithinunt Pankib, Manatee Technical College, Bradenton, Fla.; Riane Bailey, Jordan Academy for Technology and Careers South, Riverton, Utah **NURSE ASSISTING:** Ashleigh Rutherford, Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Knoxville; Chantel Thieren, North Country Career Center, Newport, Vt.

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY – MULTIPLE:** (teams) Pensacola (Fla.) State College; Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School, Bourne, Mass. **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY – SINGLE:** (teams) Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School, Bourne, Mass. **OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES:** (teams) Northeast Alabama Community College, Rainsville; Miami Valley Career Technology Center, Englewood, Ohio; Kitty Hawk Middle School, Universal City, Texas. **OUTSTANDING CHAPER:** (teams) Catawba Valley Community College, Hickory, N.C.; Buckeye Hills Career Center, Rio Grande, Ohio

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Troy Koltermann, Salt Lake Community College, Salt Lake City; Josh Jorenman, Pullman (Wash.) High School **PIN DESIGN (STATE CONFERENCE):** Sana Lor, Catawba Valley Community College, Hickory, N.C.; Keegan Tyverouel, Arcadia High School, Phoenix; Biana Lynch, Sabin-Schellenberg Center, Milwaukie, Ore. **PLUMBING:** Keith Ashby, Davis Technical College, Kaysville, Utah; Nolan Moore, North Cobb High School, Kennesaw, Ga. **POWER EQUIPMENT TECHNOLOGY:** Tanner Klein, North Dakota State College of Science, Wahpeton; Jakob Ohl, Dickinson (N.D.) High School

**PRACTICAL NURSING:** Rachel Haeter, Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Knoxville; James Swingle, Mid-East Career and Technology Centers, Zanesville, Ohio **PRESERVED SPEECH:** Anthony Adams, Lamar Institute of Technology, Beaumont, Texas; Alycia Autoomp, Lewis and Clark Career Center, St. Charles, Mo.

**PRINCIPLES OF ENGINEERING/TECHNOLOGY:** Garrett Parker, Edgecombe Community College, Tarboro, N.C.; Emily Haas, Francis Tuttle Technology Center Portland Campus, Oklahoma City

**PROMOTIONAL BULLETIN BOARD:** (teams) Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Crump, Carroll County Career and Tech Center, Westminster, Md.

**QUIZ BOWL:** (teams) Catawba Valley Community College, Hickory, N.C.; McCracken County High School, Paducah, Ky.

**RELATED TECHNICAL MATH:** Bonnie Young, Washburn Institute of Technology, Topeka, Kan.; Joshua Martin; A&M Consolidated High School, College Station, Texas. **RESIDENTIAL SYSTEMS INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE:** Zachary Pahler, Orange Technical College Mid-Florida Campus, Orlando; Arif Moula, Southside Technical Center, Lexington, Ky. **RESTAURANT SERVICE:** Kacy Wolfram, Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge Campus, Farmington Hills, Mich.; Lana Vong, Plano (Texas) East High School

**ROBOTICS AND AUTOMATION TECHNOLOGY:** Mihai Raducan/William Warren-Aliff, Lanier Technical College, Oakwood, Ga.; Timothy Crowder/Jordan Whiting, Martin Luther King High School, Riverside, Calif. **ROBOTICS: URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE:** Aaron Haymore/Willard Sheets, Wilkes Community College, Wilkesboro, N.C.; Christopher Calvao/Nicholas Buel, Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (RVTCH), Upton, Mass.; Alana Lee/Diara Tsikis, Texas City (Texas) High School

**SCREEN PRINTING TECHNOLOGY:** Kyle Kelsch, Dixie State University, Saint George, Utah; Makayla Buscher, Nichols Career Center, Jefferson City, Mo. **SHEET METAL:** Brennan Kearney, Scott Community College, Bettendorf, Iowa; Jared VanHaren, Oconto Falls (Wis.) High School

**TEAM ENGINEERING CHALLENGE:** (teams) Merrill Middle School, Oskosh, Wis. **TEAMWORKS:** (teams) Salt Lake Community College, Salt Lake City; Belton (Texas) High School **TECHNICAL COMPUTER APPLICATIONS:** Heather Poythress, Nash Community College, Rocky Mount, N.C.; Travis McCloughan, Columbia-Montour Area Vocational Technical School, Bloomsburg, Pa. **TECHNICAL DRAFTING:** Wyatt Brodan, Butte College, Oroville, Calif.; William Owens, Morris Knolls High School, Rockaway, N.J. **TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARLING:** Jacob McGonigle, Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Crossville, Tenn.; Donovan Tames, Blackstone Valley RHS, Upton, Mass. **TELEVISION (VIDEO) PRODUCTION:** Robert Fornabaia/Cameron Guck, William T. McFatter Technical College, Davie, Fla.; Cole Black/Peyton Gerber, West Lake High School, Saratoga Springs, Utah **T-SHIRT DESIGN:** Ryan Ragerston, Augusta (Ga.) Technical College; Stephanie McInturff, Sullivan South High School, Kingsport, Tenn.

**WEB DESIGN:** Morgan Lashbrook/Micaela Frakes-Zieger, Macomb Community College, Warren, Mich.; Mark Devaughan/Evan Young, South Technical High School, Sunset Hills, Mo. **WELDING:** Raymond Papierniak, WashTechnaw Community College, Ann Arbor, Mich.; Dakota Stockman, Lufkin (Texas) High School **WELDING FABRICATION:** (teams) Utah State University Eastern, Price; Douglas (Wyo.) High School **WELDING SCULPTURE:** Michael Miller, Austin Community College, Round Rock, Texas; Logan Sutton, Cumberland County Regional Technical Education Center, Cornelius, N.C. •
Passion drives SkillsUSA Advisor of the Year Joyce Price to improve the lives of her students and give back to her local community

By Karen N. Kitzel

Advisor of the Year Joyce Price admits she has faced challenges running a SkillsUSA chapter. “But I always say it’s not about me. It’s about the kids. It’s always about the kids.”

A cosmetology instructor and chapter advisor at Blacksburg (Va.) High School, Price has many accomplishments that reflect her commitment. The former student member has been active in SkillsUSA for more than 34 years.

“I started as a student, and I’ve continued to stay involved throughout my career,” says the detail-oriented advisor.

While working in industry, Price judged SkillsUSA competitions and attended district, state and national conferences. After becoming an advisor, she connected back to her passion for the organization and even earned its elite International Degree.

Price says she wants to show her students what the organization can do for them, too, while helping each of them seek personal success. “I try to share with students my passion for SkillsUSA.”

A true professional who exhibits extraordinary teaching and leadership skills, Price is dedicated to both her students and community. Her cosmetology students participate in SkillsUSA’s Week of Service.

Price accepts the trophy from her student Hunter Radford and award sponsor Air Products’ Shannon Byrne.

Photo: Craig E. Moore
Their projects include working with the Girl Scouts and providing free haircuts for needy children.

“We give the county Department of Social Services coupons for haircuts that they can hand out to their clients,” Price explains.

Members also participate in a service program called Mika’s Backpack. “We help pack up food supplies to send home with students in need, so they have enough food and snacks for after school and weekends,” Price adds. Her chapter also has a lot of ongoing projects with local veterans’ groups.

The instructor looks for real-world experiences that teach time and project management while enhancing students’ technical skills and communication. To build an outdoor classroom and community garden, Price wrote an application and received a $10,000 SkillsUSA/Lowe’s grant for the school. Two of her students served as project managers.

“Lowe’s employees helped us plan it, and our drafting department helped design it,” she points out. Everyone in the area can now enjoy the classroom and garden.

“The agriculture department helps maintain it, the culinary department hosts events there, and it is available for the community to use. It’s been a great asset for the community.”

**CTE Signing Day a success**

In a new public relations effort, Price and her students were involved in a CTE Signing Day, similar to the events held for sports teams. “Athletes get all the attention, but we thought our students should get attention, too,” the advisor explains.

“We worked with the county and had great media coverage. We work with the media on a lot, and I try to stay as involved in the community as I possibly can.”

Price is fortunate to have support from the school administration and other instructors, but she accepts that not every teacher wants to invest so much personal time into the SkillsUSA chapter.

Raising money is also an issue. “There’s always fundraising,” she notes. “You work at it because we have to do it. As long as you stay positive and you promote your program, that’s the key.”

Because Price embraces a balanced SkillsUSA program of work, she gets involved in all its programs, from competitive events to the SkillsUSA Career Essentials suite and the Chapter Excellence Program. SkillsUSA has recognized her program as a Gold Chapter of Distinction for the past three years.

**Her greatest accomplishment**

As much as Price is proud of the state and national recognition garnered for her school, she cares more about the individual lives she can touch. She remembers being a high school student herself and knows how one teacher’s support can make a huge difference. “I’ve been involved in SkillsUSA for 34 years, and my teachers always encouraged me,” she says.

Price recalls a recent student who had very little ambition. “The first day this student entered my classroom, she stated that she didn’t know what I could possibly do for her. I told her not to worry, because she would become a licensed cosmetologist.” After doing just that, her student is now enrolled in further schooling to get her esthetician’s license. She also became one of the strongest state SkillsUSA officers Price has ever had.

“I’m especially proud of her because her mom told me she was bullied at school and didn’t have much self-confidence. She is now a totally changed person,” Price asserts. “Any student can benefit from this organization.”

While this SkillsUSA advisor of the year, Sunday school teacher, mother of two and grandmother of four puts many hours into the program, she gets back more than she gives.

“To me, it’s not work,” Price says. “I’ve always told myself if it becomes a job, it’s time for me to stop. It’s not a job. It’s a passion.”
Some of us are born leaders, but for these two presidents, it’s been more of a process.

“I joined SkillsUSA as a freshman, and the best way I could describe myself back then is ‘lost.’ I didn’t have any idea what I wanted to do,” says Brandon Ramirez. “Every valuable lesson I’ve learned in high school has come through SkillsUSA, whether it’s the work ethic I learned while practicing for competition, professional development from creating my first résumé or the self-confidence I learned as I overcame fears and spoke in front of crowds of people.”

Ramirez, now national high-school president, and his counterpart in the college/postsecondary division, Nickolas Joyner, are both from North Carolina. It’s the first time in almost 30 years that both presidents are from the same state. (Aside from regional officers, team positions are chosen by the student leaders themselves.)

But that’s not all they have in common. “When I first joined, I was a very disorganized student, and that leaked over into many other parts of my life,” Joyner says. “However, as I joined and progressed through SkillsUSA, my planning, organization and management qualities drastically improved. I first competed in Entrepreneurship, which forced me to plan and stay organized through the creation of an elaborate 35-page business plan and 15-minute presentation.”

After his first state leadership conference, Ramirez says he “pursued every opportunity I could within SkillsUSA. Now I’m filled with more self-motivation than ever to continue chasing my dreams.”

Joyner adds, “If someone told me I would be a national officer five years ago, I would have laughed. But I stand here telling you that this organization performs miracles and changes lives. So, are you ready to be a miracle?”

by E. Thomas Hall

NATIONAL OFFICER TEAM:

1 Janice Oh, SkillsUSA Region 4 vice president, a health science student at Westwood High School in Austin, Texas.

2 Amari Brown, high school secretary, a cosmetology student at Muskogee (Okla.) High School.

3 Emily Heiden, Region 1 vice president, a law and public safety student at Sussex County Technical School in Sparta, N.J.

4 Kaylee Corvin, high school vice president, a cosmetology student at Pulaski County High School in Dublin, Va.

5 Brooke Gatchell, college/postsecondary treasurer, a hospitality and tourism management student at Johnson and Wales University in Providence, R.I.

6 Ulamila Uluiviti, Region 3 vice president, a medical careers student at Upper Valley Career Center in Piqua, Ohio.
Lorena Giesbrecht, college/postsecondary vice president, a culinary arts student at Navajo Technical University in Crownpoint, N.M. Tony Peeler Jr., high school parliamentarian, a law and public safety student at Townview Law Magnet in Dallas. Guadalupe Cortez, college/postsecondary secretary, a photography student at Fullerton (Calif.) College. Preston Prince, Region 2 vice president, a culinary arts student at Columbus Career and College Academy in Fair Bluff, N.C. Adam Cavanaugh, high school treasurer, a business technology student at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School in Upton, Mass. Timothy Myers, college/postsecondary parliamentarian, a mechanical design student at Madison (Wis.) Area Technical College. Nickolas Joyner, college/postsecondary president, a business and entrepreneurship student at Western Carolina University in Hickory, N.C. Brandon Ramirez, high school president, an engineering student at Lee County High School in Sanford, N.C.
From a very young age, Edwin Maxcy remembers helping his dad with the family’s diesel 2002 Ford Excursion. The experience became a drive to learn more, leading him to an automotive and diesel technology program in Cypress, Texas. The truck became his home.

“I have seen so much more than anyone my age should have ever seen in their first 18 years of life,” Maxcy says. But with his personal vision of the American dream, and a tremendous amount of hard work, the student became a state leader and national competitor in SkillsUSA.

Both of his parents have now passed away. His mother, who suffered from addiction issues, took her own life when he was 11. And then the summer before Maxcy’s senior year at Cypress Springs High School, his father succumbed to heart disease.

“I grew up in a house with lots of family violence, drugs and alcohol,” Maxcy adds. “Cops were always being called out, family members being arrested. Growing up with three older brothers and three sisters was hard.” He wound up going through the child protective services system.

Later, with their father gone, Maxcy’s family dispersed. Older siblings have housing, and the younger ones live with an aunt and uncle.

Maxcy, left on his own, now lives in that Ford Excursion he worked on with his father.

When describing this difficult personal life, Maxcy doesn’t ask for pity. He does his best with the hand he’s been dealt.

“I’m not going to let stuff hold me back,” he explains. “I’m not going to let it hold me down. I’m not going to use it as an excuse to be lazy. I want to strive to be the best. That’s what I do.”

‘I am living the American dream’

His best took him to the SkillsUSA Championships in Louisville, Ky., in June. He competed in Diesel Equipment Technology on a mikeroweWORKS travel scholarship. Now he is back working at the MustangCAT headquarters for Caterpillar Inc. in Houston.

His instructor at Cypress Springs, Jonathan Warren, has been supportive throughout this challenging chapter, helping Maxcy to stay in school despite being homeless. After Warren introduced him to SkillsUSA, the student went to the state competition, graduated and made it to nationals ... without parents.

Maxcy says SkillsUSA has been instrumental to his success, and he’s inspired by this line from the SkillsUSA Creed: I believe in the American way of life.

By Ann P. Schreiber

ON THE WEB

Maxcy volunteers with an organization for special needs children, where he’s helped repair its diesel truck, lawn mower and water pipes. In return, Halter Inc. has set up a fundraising site to help him at: https://www.gofundme.com/help-edwin-go-to-college

Learn more about this story at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6OxUWnoY

The mikeroweWORKS Foundation website: profoundlydisconnected.com
“I can identify with this [part of the creed] most, because I am living the American dream,” he explains. “I have learned from this great nation what it takes to become successful."

Maxcy served as a SkillsUSA Texas district officer and was known at Cypress Springs for his ambition as well as his leadership abilities. And then there’s his work ethic. When his father passed away, he texted Warren that his boss wouldn’t let him come in. Yes, despite experiencing such a loss, Maxcy wanted to go to work.

To say that he doesn’t use his challenges as a crutch is an understatement. His drive and dreams keep him motivated and astound those who know him.

“The dream right now is to go to college, graduate and work two years for Caterpillar or whatever dealership that I’ll be with after I get out of college,” Maxcy explains. He hopes to attend the Big Cat Program at Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology.

Maxcy wants to become a high-school teacher eventually in Houston, where he can help students join SkillsUSA and become successful, the same way his teachers have helped him.

With so few material possessions, he shows great strength. Maxcy cites three things he can’t live without: “Diesel, God and things to fix.”

“Edwin is a really hard worker. Most of our students are, but Edwin has this drive to be better than everyone else. Just doing the minimum or even doing what is required isn’t enough for him.”

— Cheryl Henry, Principal, Cypress High School

Hat’s off: Maxcy with Mike Rowe and Donna Allen, a Cypress Creek High School instructor.

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DO IT IN #SkillsUSA

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A young immigrant fulfills her American dream, then pays it forward to her native country. No longer shy, she says “Life is as much of an adventure as you’re willing to go on!”

By Craig E. Moore

Rohini Dhand moved with her family from New Delhi, India, to the Wisconsin dairyland when she was 11 years old. At that age, starting at a new school can be difficult. Moving to a brand-new country was especially challenging.

“In a small town, it was hard to fit in,” she says, referring to herself then as “a shy immigrant girl.”

Dhand was fortunate to be going to Rice Lake (Wis.) Middle School, which happened to have an exploratory program tied to SkillsUSA (then known as the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America, or VICA). She enjoyed her experience so much, she continued her involvement — this time, officially — as a member of the Rice Lake High chapter.

At last, she felt like she belonged. “VICA gave me a place where I fit,” she explains. “I could show up and I had a purpose, a right to be there, to be involved.”

As with many student members, Dhand’s participation started with competing. Her contest was Job Interview. She also became interested in leadership opportunities while participating in Wisconsin’s conference.

“At last, she felt like she belonged. “VICA gave me a place where I fit,” she explains. “I could show up and I had a purpose, a right to be there, to be involved.”

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“I actually ran for a state office. I didn’t get it,” she says. Despite the disappointment of losing, Dhand made such a positive impression that she was encouraged to aim higher.

ON THE WEB

- Learn more about Hum and its current programs: www.humthepeople.com
- Learn how you can become a SkillsUSA national officer: http://bit.ly/BecomeNO
I was asked by some of the advisors who interviewed me for state office to consider a national office run,” Dhand says, crediting then-state director Bryan Albrecht for being instrumental in encouraging her.

Dhand was elected as Region 3 vice president for the 1996-97 school year. As a national officer, she found even more opportunities opening up for her.

“I will never forget the pride I felt when we laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, or when Sen. Orrin Hatch just chatted with us in his office at the Capitol during WLTI (Washington Leadership Training Institute),” she adds. “It was the manifestation of my American dream.”

Returning to India for a good cause
After high school, Dhand continued her education, earning a bachelor’s degree in health sciences with a minor in sociology from Purdue University.

After graduating from the Lafayette, Ind., university, Dhand moved to California, where she worked for the Alameda County health department. She also continued her education at the University of California, Berkeley, where she earned a master’s degree in public health, specializing in mothers and children. In 2009, she completed a second bachelor’s program, this time in nursing science.

Dhand spent several years after that working in the medical field, first as a nurse in the special care unit at Bassett Healthcare in Cooperstown, N.Y., and later as a labor and delivery nurse at Newark (N.J.) Beth Israel Medical Center.

What drove her to achieve so much? “What I learned from being a national officer was to dream big,” she replies. Dhand’s experience in the organization stuck with her, and she had the urge to pay her good fortune forward.

“I didn’t come from a school that had an involved chapter,” she says. “I was just lucky enough to have supportive adults who made things happen.”

Thanks to a timely meeting, Dhand’s next adventure was to make things happen in her native country. “I was fortunate enough to meet with Vipul Prakash, the co-founder of Hum, as he was conceptualizing an idea,” she says.

Hum (which means “we”) is a social enterprise in India. Committed to breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty, it organizes communities that are at the lower end of the economic scale.

As a collective, Hum community members get access to quality goods and services at better prices than they could get on their own, saving between 5 to 12 percent.

“Given my background in public health, I had a love of social entrepreneurship and the possibilities it presents to sustainably solve problems,” Dhand says.

Prakash had connections in a resettlement colony on the outskirts of Delhi. He was hoping to help the families there save money by leveraging their buying power as a group.

Dhand was intrigued, and in January 2013, she moved to India to help get the idea off the ground. Upon her arrival, she became Hum’s co-founder and chief operating officer.

Hum eventually expanded its offerings to include employment services, skill development and even English classes. A year after its founding, Hum was awarded recognition as a Top 100 social entrepreneur. Today, it is focused on connecting Indian senior citizens with employment opportunities.

In 2015, Dhand returned to Wisconsin, where she is working as manager of outpatient services at Lakeview Medical Center in Rice Lake.

She’s come full circle and then some, quite a long way since being that “shy immigrant girl.” With so many significant accomplishments, does she have any advice for new students in SkillsUSA?

“Dream big. Keep your eyes on your prize, whatever that is for you,” she begins.

“Stay true to yourself,” she adds. “Don’t substitute someone else’s values or dreams for your own.”

And finally, “Don’t be afraid of the road less traveled. Life is as much of an adventure as you’re willing to go on!” •
Kevin Matthies is the only American to date to earn a Precision Machining-Milling medal at the World-Skills Competition. Now a senior vice president for Spirit AeroSystems, he traces his stratospheric rise back to 1985, when he first competed in a SkillsUSA event.

How much of that experience took him to where he is now? “I would say almost all of it,” Matthies replies. “It’s directly applicable to what I’ve done in my 31-year career in various aerospace activities.”

As a high school student in Sterling Heights, Mich., Matthies joined the organization in the path of his sister, Tammy Brown (a former national officer and now director of SkillsUSA Michigan). His own run for state office was unsuccessful, but he excelled in his first state competition. He came in second and wound up going to the 1985 nationals when the winner couldn’t make the trip. Only a sophomore, he finished in eighth place nationally.

His junior year, it was all systems go, as Matthies won his regional, state and then national events in Precision Machining. “That journey that occurred over about a 15-month period really began to shape who I am,” he says.

Rather than go for another national gold medal in his senior year, Matthies chose to compete in the tryouts for the international competition. He was only 17.

“I started on the milling competition first, and then the next day was going to be lathe,” he says. “It turns out what they had us compete and try out against was a previous year’s international [competition] part. That international part usually takes 24 hours to make. We were given 12.”

Halfway through that first day, one of the trainers told him, “Hey, we think you’ve done really well, but … you’re not going to make the international team.”

As Matthies remembers, “This is in the middle of a competition, about seven or eight hours into it, and I don’t understand what’s happening, right? He’s telling me something. He’s basically ruining my dreams and hopes of what I wanted to do at that point in time in my life.”

Aerospace executive Kevin Matthies’ career took off as he prepared for 1988’s international competition in Sydney. The road to Kazan will be just as empowering for the 2019 competitors.

By E. Thomas Hall
The reason was that I was actually too young,” Matthies explains. “I would not graduate high school until the summer of 1987, and they wanted to train the team for one full year. So, he wasn’t being mean to me; he was being realistic on what the expectations were.”

As he later describes, “That’s one of those moments in your life when you can decide that you can give up or you can take on the world. For whatever reason, I decided, ‘I’m going to take on the world.’”

After thinking about it all night, “I came in the next day determined to show them that they had made a wrong decision,” he adds. “Not only did I finish the entire 24 hours on the parts, I finished it in such a way that they had to fly in two people from California to make a decision on whether or not they were going to add me to the team or not. I ended up making the milling team.”

“I thought my dreams were shot”

After six months of preparation, Matthies and the rest of the U.S. team traveled to Sydney, Australia, in 1988 for the three-day international competition.

“First day went pretty good,” he begins. “I was so stressed out, I cramped up. I had all kinds of physical problems with my body, much like an athlete might. I got a 15-minute break. They gave me some salt tablets, made me drink some water, and I went back to work. But it was interesting, the way stress plays on your body.

“Around the second day, I made what I thought was going to be a fatal mistake. I had squared off my part and got it to the size I wanted, and I left no material on that part.” But then after “an extremely aggressive roughing operation” — a machining term, he explains — “I had essentially bent or warped my part. And again, I thought my dreams were shot.”

That night, Matthies and three other U.S. competitors “devised a scheme for me to fix that part,” he says. “And luckily the next morning, within about 10 minutes, I actually had recovered the part and fixed it in such a state that I could actually submit it and have the right quality that I needed.” In the end, his quick thinking was enough to, as he says, make him “the only American ever to this date to hold a medal in Precision Machining-Milling at the international competition.”

Of the overall experience, Matthies says “it was probably the single most important defining moment in my life, short of my marriage and the birth of my son. But it really defined and set the course for me and my ability to fundamentally do just about anything I ever really wanted to do. It empowered me. It provided me confidence beyond, probably, my wildest imagination.”

The Road to Kazan: 2019 WorldSkills USA Competitors

**Autobody Repair**
David Fors, Lunenburg, Mass.

**Automotive Service**
Paul Allen Danenberg, Boise, Idaho

**Aircraft Maintenance**
Alex Millikan, Trinity, N.C.

**Bakery**
Daylan Torres, Fall River, Mass.

**Bricklaying**
Kelby Thornton, Midland, N.C.

**Cabinetmaking**
Ethan Harrison, Blackfoot, Idaho

**Car Painting**
Dylan Wertz, Tiffin, Ohio

**CNC Milling**
Scott May, Port Huron, Mich.

**CNC Turning**
Derbe Stroup, Kunkletown, Pa.

**Cooking**
Julia Spondike, Lorain, Ohio

**Graphic Design Technology**
Anthony Moore, Adrian, Mich.

**Hairdressing**
Rebekah Hagberg, Bloomington, Ill.

**Heavy Vehicle Maintenance**
Ryan Meppelink, Zeeland, Mich.

**Mechanical Engineering (CAD)**
Benjamin Campbell, Nampa, Idaho

**Mechatronics**
Ryan Hitepole, Mt. Pleasant, N.C.; Curt Love, Oakboro, N.C. (team)

**Plumbing and Heating**
Timothy Girouard, Southampton, Mass.

**Print Media Technology**
Brittany Whitestone, Westminster, Md.

**Restaurant Service**
Robert Schultz, League City, Texas

**Web Design and Development**
Matthew Vreman, Parrish, Fla.

Competitors in Welding and Cyber Security will be announced at a later date.

22  SkillsUSA Champions  Fall 2018
“The demand for highly skilled workers continues to grow, and many companies are struggling to find the people to fill those roles. This is where SkillsUSA and other organizations who seek to build technical skills capability become so critical.”

— Matthies, shown as a machining student at Utica High School

‘A student is fundamentally changed’
Matthies went on to earn degrees in computer science from California State University and his master’s in systems engineering from the University of Arizona. He has since worked in executive positions for Raytheon Missile Systems, Hughes Aircraft Co. and General Dynamics. His roles span program management, chief engineer, software engineering leadership and technical leadership on several proprietary programs.

In 2013, after a 26-year career at Raytheon, he joined Spirit AeroSystems and is now the senior vice president of its Global Fabrication business. The 16,000-employee company generated $7 billion in sales in 2017. Matthies has managed Airbus and 787 programs in places ranging from his home base in Wichita, Kan., to Subang, Malaysia.

“We deliver four Boeing aircraft shipsets and three Airbus aircraft shipsets every day from our facilities,” he says. “It takes quite a bit of skill to be able to produce them at the rates that we need and also with the quality that we need, and we’re always looking for highly talented people. SkillsUSA provides us with the unique opportunity to tap into that very early in their career.”

As an active supporter of SkillsUSA, Matthies keynoted at the Michigan state conference. Later, during the National Leadership and Skills Conference in Louisville, Ky., he shared his WorldSkills experience with potential sponsors.

“A student is fundamentally changed by having this experience,” he says. “He or she may come in — not all of them, but some of them — a little quiet and tentative. But when they leave this two-day experience or multiday experience, they are forever changed. No matter whether they win or lose, they probably see the world radically differently than they did before they actually tried to compete against others.”

Before his event, Matthies was trained by industry experts as well as former student competitors. They “were instrumental in preparing me for WorldSkills,” he notes. “Not only did I learn the day-to-day in and outs of how we in America approach certain sets of skills, but they were also able to tell me how a competitor — from Korea or Taiwan, Japan, Austria, Germany — how they may have approached that problem.

“And that gave me a lot of ability as I looked at the part the very first time,” Matthies adds. “When I sat down with 24 hours of competition ahead of me, there was a significant amount of experience, albeit virtual, about how others might have approached a particular problem. And being able to leverage that was really key for me. It really was.”

The other competitors who medaled in 1988 were from Japan and Taiwan, he says. “I spend a lot of time now traveling the world to various locations that we use to support our business. It happens to be Japan, Taiwan, Korea, other areas. And I see the essence of what I saw 31 years ago in their cultures, their behaviors and who they are, and how they train even today.

“And I’m sure if I went to WorldSkills, this upcoming one in Kazan, you’d probably see the essence of that still.”
OK, let’s be honest: It’s a lot easier to complain about problems than help solve them. For instance, we often hear that SkillsUSA is America’s “best-kept secret.” We don’t want to be a secret, so that’s a problem ... one you can help solve.

The SkillsUSA Advocacy Site is a free service to all our members. There, you can easily contact local media, share the importance of SkillsUSA with your congressional representatives, invite elected officials to your events and more.

As a group, identify some of the programs or events your chapter will be conducting this year that you’d love to share with your community. Plan to take pictures or video, conduct interviews and write concise press releases to share with media. Next, imagine you’re sitting in the office of a member of Congress. How would you inspire that representative to support SkillsUSA?

Once you’ve focused your plans, visit the advocacy site at tinyurl.com/skillsusa-advocacy and start sharing that “secret” until it becomes “common knowledge.”

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Ability is what you’re capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it.

— LOU HOLTZ

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No, the picture on the left isn’t abstract art. It’s actually a distorted part of another photo in this issue. Find the original photo and tell us the story or page where it appears to win a SkillsUSA special “sackpack” (first prize) or travel mug (second prize). To enter, email your answer, name, address and phone number to anyinfo@skillsusa.org (include “Photo Contest” in the subject line). Or, send to SkillsUSA Photo Contest, 14001 SkillsUSA Way, Leesburg, VA 20176. One first- and one second-prize winner will be drawn at random from the correct entries. Entries must be received by Nov. 15.

Congratulations to last issue’s winners: Ceaira Gill of Paris, Texas, and Melissa Boyce of Kansas City, Kan.
FURNISHINGS AND THE ARTS IMPROVE LIVES

At the Vancouver (Wash.) School of Arts and Academics, students decorated and furnished a housing unit affiliated with Open House Ministries. A $2,000 grant from Lowe’s not only helped them improve the housing unit at this family homeless shelter, but also allowed them to create a community garden for the residents.

The ongoing project includes teaching workshops to make arts accessible to all and improve life at the shelter. To learn more, view the students’ Community Service contest PowerPoint at: http://bit.ly/2wmfJLz and videos of them in action at: https://youtu.be/Tf5m8TsGRQ4.

Honoring veterans

Production and imaging students at Delcastle Technical High School in Wilmington, Del., gather donated flowers from a local funeral home, then share them in bud vases at the nearby Veterans’ Administration Medical Center. The flowers decorate both eating and common areas.

While planning the project, students touring the medical center noticed that artwork by patients was in need of a better type of display. With an engraver at school, they made plates with the artist’s name and the title of artwork.

Putting a song in their hearts

With the goal of promoting patriotism and citizenship, Somerset County (N.J.) Vocational and Technical High School students Islam Soliman, Vyonce Lawson and Rithika Mechineni (pictured, left to right) contacted the Somerset County Senior Wellness Center about performing a series of classical and patriotic songs. At the event, the group handed out copies of the lyrics to the senior citizens who wanted to follow along or join in to the sing-along.

Mentors share vital skills

Thanks to the Denver Project Management Institute (PMI), SkillsUSA members from the Center for Communication Technology at Thomas Jefferson High School received project management mentoring plus training in ProjectLibre software. PMI members taught SkillsUSA students globally recognized guidelines for project management. Projects created to PMI standards included a golf handicap phone app, a prototype 3D turbocharge system, interactive gaming apps and a website developer tool. For addressing essential elements in SkillsUSA Framework category of Technical Skills Grounded in Academics, the chapter earned the 2018 Model of Excellence distinction through the SkillsUSA Chapter Excellence Program.
Student Isaiah Gomez teaches principal Brett Bending how to produce a weld bead at Hampshire (Ill.) High School. His instructor, Vince Serritella, captured the moment.

SkillsUSA Champions features our members’ photography. We’re looking for images of SkillsUSA chapters in action, or ones that show individual members’ concentration or perseverance. For details, email thall@skillsusa.org (put “Image Photo” in the subject header) or write SkillsUSA Champions, 14001 SkillsUSA Way, Leesburg, VA 20176. The photographer’s chapter is awarded $150.

SkillsUSA programs like Chapter Excellence and the Career Essentials suite are helping to enhance and change, and actually revolutionize, CTE programs. And in the process, you’re also changing students’ lives.

Through SkillsUSA, I have developed so much as a person, specifically building a strong sense of self-motivation to run toward my goals.

Janice Oh of Austin, Texas, aspires to be a pediatrician.

Craig Stanton, U.S. Department of Education Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education
SkillsUSA’s National Leadership Center is located in Leesburg, Va., approximately 50 miles northwest of our nation’s capital, Washington, D.C. The building welcomes influential visitors such as industry executives, manufacturers and VIPs from education and government.

Purchase your own custom-engraved paver for the walkway of SkillsUSA’s National Leadership Center and learn more about this campaign at:

www.skillsusa.org/store/pavers

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For additional sponsorship opportunities, please contact Helen Carafa at 703-737-0637 hcarafa@skillsusa.org

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In today’s world, it’s not enough to just have technical skills. If you want to advance your career potential and compete in today’s job market, you need to stand out, be distinct and be a step ahead.

The SkillsUSA Career Essentials suite is industry-demanded and industry-validated for career-ready students. For full details on these resources including purchasing information, please visit: www.careeressentials.org