In keeping with the tradition of respect for the individuality of our members and our role in workforce development, SkillsUSA strives to ensure inclusive participation in all our programs, partnerships and employment opportunities.
# STATE of the ASSOCIATION
Report to the SkillsUSA Corporation

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State of the Association Report to the SkillsUSA Corporation — Executive Summary

It is my distinct honor to share this report with you as my second and final term as board president draws to a close. This 55th year in SkillsUSA's proud history was a year like no other, one filled with organizational firsts. Unfortunately, as a result of the ongoing pandemic, not all of those “firsts” were cause for celebration. In dark times, however, SkillsUSA's mission shines brightest, spotlighting the fact that’s more obvious now than ever: the skills this organization champions are essential elements of the American success story.

Many exciting new pages were added to SkillsUSA's ongoing success story this year. We set new records in membership, assembled our largest WorldSkills USA Team ever, held the biggest Washington Leadership Training Institute in our history, officially unveiled our SkillsUSA Career Essentials Credential and more. Internally, we engaged with strategic advisors to help us streamline the organization's fundraising procedures and internal protocols, including our decision to merge the SkillsUSA Foundation with SkillsUSA Inc.

We also officially bid farewell to Tim Lawrence, who served SkillsUSA as executive director for 19 successful years. Tim's departure opened the door for another organizational first definitely worth celebrating, as we hired our first female executive director: Chelle Travis. Chelle's leadership would be tested quickly and severely with the sudden onset of COVID-19. The crisis forced a variety of heart-wrenching decisions no other executive director has had to face, including the cancellation of what was primed to be the largest National Leadership and Skills Conference in SkillsUSA history. Chelle's calm, decisive guidance, however, proved that our faith in her as SkillsUSA's new leader was well-founded.

As the gravity of this health crisis became understood, SkillsUSA members across the nation found themselves treading uncharted waters. Instead of capitulating to panic and confusion, however, our national staff and leadership team — led by Chelle and supported by each of you — set the example. The organization created resources to guide our state associations in an impossibly short time frame, worked to find ways to offset financial losses, spearheaded instructional support efforts like the CTE Coalition, opened the lines of communication across all channels to keep members informed and inspired, implemented proactive financial protections and more. In short, SkillsUSA rose to the challenge. Though the crisis continues, SkillsUSA's flag still flies high and proud.

The accomplishments you see represented here are the result of your support and work on behalf of our next-generation workforce. Take pride in that fact. Take pride also in the knowledge that SkillsUSA's mission has never been more vital, and when this crisis is over, the skills we've been helping our students discover and develop since 1965 will be in greater demand than ever as America works to rebuild and recover.

Thank you for your continued contributions, not just to the success of this organization, but to the hundreds of thousands of lives you help change for the better every year.

With gratitude,

Jennifer Worth, Immediate Past President, 2020
Board of Directors, SkillsUSA Inc.
Dear SkillsUSA stakeholders and friends,

Sharing this report with you as the fourth executive director in SkillsUSA history is truly an honor. Serving in this role is a dream job for me, as SkillsUSA’s mission is so deeply ingrained in my own personal and professional life. As a former SkillsUSA state association director who’s been working on behalf of career and technical education for nearly two decades, I’ve seen firsthand how our mission changes lives each and every day. As you’ll see in this report, despite the unique challenges we’ve all faced this year, that mission is still being accomplished.

You can learn much about the quality of a structure’s foundation when it’s buffeted by storms. SkillsUSA’s foundation is illustrated by our SkillsUSA Framework of personal, workplace and technical skills grounded in academics. Our foundation has been harshly tested during this ongoing pandemic, but the test has revealed our true strength, both within our organization and in the lives of our students.

Because of the skills our students learned in their SkillsUSA classrooms, they were ready to adapt and demonstrate flexibility while discovering new ways to communicate and work together as teams. Many even used their technical skills to contribute directly to the fight against COVID-19. Your vitally important work on their behalf has helped nurture those accomplishments. Take pride — more importantly, find hope — in their efforts.

Our record-setting membership, wider media visibility, increasing support within the halls of government, and growing reputation as a thought leader in career and technical education demonstrate that the value of SkillsUSA continues to rise. The pandemic has reinforced our value, reminding the nation of the importance and dignity of the skilled trades we champion and the personal and leadership skills that complement them.

This is your report, as the life-changing moments it represents would not be possible without your continued support and dedication. Thank you. We will successfully navigate the road ahead together, bumps and all, because we are ready. We are … SkillsUSA.

Chelle Travis
Executive Director
SkillsUSA
The sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in January 2020 caused major disruptions nationwide across all walks of life. SkillsUSA was no exception. While no one was fully prepared for closures or quarantine, SkillsUSA responded rapidly to the organizational threats the pandemic posed. Work began immediately to support and guide our state associations, implement cohesive internal strategies at the national headquarters and effectively communicate our decisions to members, stakeholders and the public.

**State Guidance**

- SkillsUSA staff created a “SkillsUSA COVID-19 Guidance” document. This 100-page digital resource contained a wealth of information designed to help guide our state associations respond to the pandemic.

- Executive director Chelle Travis initiated **weekly Zoom calls** with state directors to ensure open lines of communication.

- Staff created a new **state director online community** where files, messages and ideas could be shared and questions could be asked and answered.

- SkillsUSA provided **public relations support** for SkillsUSA Georgia, whose conference was canceled while in progress due to rapidly changing state directives.

- Staff created a **video message of inspiration from our national officer team**, along with **customized inspirational video messages for each state and territory** from our national officers.

**Internal Response**

- Internal **messaging templates** were created and shared with staff.

- **Teleworking** was implemented for all staff, and the leadership team met daily. The Employee Engagement Committee instituted weekly “Staff Hangouts” and “Lunch and Learn” events.

- A new **digital newsletter for staff**, The SkillsUSA Adviser, was created to share updates and answer questions related to the pandemic and its effects on the workplace.

- Staff worked with our legal counsel to prepare for **contract issues related to cancellation** of major events and mitigate financial losses.
COVID-19 RESPONSE (continued)

External Response

• The director of communications worked on sharing regular updates from the executive director on our website and social media as well as e-newsletters.

• The organization joined with select partners to create the CTE Coalition and a web portal called “Keep CTE Moving” designed to share free instructional resources with CTE instructors and students.

• A targeted communications plan for the cancellation of national conference was developed and implemented. A video announcement by Chelle Travis was shared. Specific messages for primary stakeholder groups (state directors, technical committee members, partners, national officers, etc.) were sent prior to our public announcement.

Moving Forward

• The communications team conducted a virtual event on May 27 to honor 2020 graduates. “SkillsUSA Grad Night 2020” was hosted by four national officers and featured messages of inspiration and hope from our board president Jennifer Worth, Executive Director Chelle Travis and keynote speaker Nick Pinchuk, Chairman and CEO of Snap-on Incorporated. The event also featured musical performances by SkillsUSA students and a montage of “graduate shoutouts” shared by members and stakeholders.

• Following the event, an “After-Party” — hosted by a national officer — streamed live on Instagram. The Grad Night events generated a combined total of 18,513 impressions to date and 4,570 engagements.

• On June 26, SkillsUSA held National Leadership and Skills Conference Virtual Recognition Sessions. The three separate 30-minute segments streamed live on Facebook, Instagram and Youtube at 3, 5 and 7 p.m. EDT. With more than 4,800 impressions, these sessions recognized outstanding national honorees, including Advisors of the Year finalists, Models of Excellence schools, President’s Volunteer Service Award winners and more. In addition, the 2020 SkillsUSA delegate sessions and national officer candidate events and elections transitioned to virtual interactions. The community portion of the new SkillsUSA portal, now in development, was used as the single location for the events, and virtual campaigning took place for this year’s election.
• SkillsUSA is offering this year’s Leverage training free of charge as a virtual experience for all state officer teams. This unique leadership experience has been transformed from an in-person, 2.5-day conference to a dynamic hybrid of live interactions with an assigned facilitator and e-module based learning. State officer teams will be assigned to an individual facilitator trained to personalize this experience to meet the unique needs of state associations. To date, 48 state associations have registered state officers teams, totaling over 340 registered students.

• To help members feel supported, valued and honored as they use their skills to continue serving their communities during this health crisis, SkillsUSA and its merchandising partner, Centricity, developed a summer social media campaign: “Essential Skills, Essential Workers.” This campaign recognizes the essential nature of so many of the skilled areas we champion. Further, it highlights stories of our members using their skills to help fight COVID-19. The campaign will continue through August 31.

• Due to the ongoing pandemic, SkillsUSA has made the decision to postpone our 2020 Washington Leadership Training Institute (WLTI), originally scheduled for September 19-23. The health and safety of our members was the primary reason for this decision.

• Faced with the likelihood that many of our in-person local, state and national programs will not take place as usual this fall, a SkillsUSA Agility Plan for students and teachers has been created to engage members in new ways. New virtual programming is being designed to:

1. Create a sense of community.
2. Provide opportunities for recognition.
3. Provide opportunities for individual growth.

The three themes emerged from recent member research conducted to better understand what students and teachers most wanted from their participation in SkillsUSA. Teachers will have an opportunity to participate in virtual professional development and activities that allow them to strengthen their chapter, program and instructional delivery. A virtual Fall Leadership Conference model is also being created as part of the agility plan, one that can be delivered as a stand-alone opportunity for members or customized by state associations.

The agility plan addresses concerns by state associations and local chapters that membership may be affected by hybrid or online school environments that will include fewer activities, field trips and travel for students and teachers.
INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

Strengthening Our Commitment

Inclusion and diversity have always been points of emphasis for SkillsUSA’s programs. “Multicultural Sensitivity and Awareness,” in fact, is one of the Essential Elements that comprise the SkillsUSA Framework. However, the nation’s recent and impassioned focus on racial injustice and issues of inequality have in turn inspired SkillsUSA to re-examine its own commitments to these important issues.

Actions Louder Than Words

The steps detailed below have been taken recently and over the past year to reveal areas for organizational improvement while ensuring an environment within SkillsUSA where every member feels equally valued, appreciated, respected and heard.

- In late 2019, SkillsUSA commissioned research designed to help address gaps and next steps in creating innovative student programming in the area of Multicultural Sensitivity and Awareness. Those results — still being compiled — will help shape the next generation of SkillsUSA programming.

- During a revision of our Washington Leadership Training Institute (WLTI) curriculum, it was decided that Multicultural Sensitivity and Awareness would be one of three Essential Elements addressed as part of the event’s leadership training for students.

- Training modules that directly address Multicultural Sensitivity and Awareness are implemented within our Career Essentials online curricula. Some of the competencies covered are “Demonstrate awareness of issues important to different cultures,” “Demonstrate a willingness to learn about the perspectives of others,” “Proactively address potential sources of cultural conflict” and many more.
• In June, executive director Chelle Travis delivered two official statements through our website and social media reflecting SkillsUSA's commitment to inclusion and diversity. Travis also shared specific initiatives the organization will be undertaking that will, in Travis’ words, “ultimately speak louder than our words” when it comes to demonstrating SkillsUSA’s values and vision.

• The executive director initiated calls and communication with past national officers and SkillsUSA alumni to discuss diversity issues and ways the organization could improve in those areas.

• SkillsUSA is developing a holistic organizational plan designed to strengthen and better reflect our commitment to inclusion, diversity and equality. The first stage of that development will incorporate facilitated discussions with our board, staff, students, alumni, partners, instructors and state directors.

• To help guide the creation of our organizational plan, a new relationship with the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE) has been established. SkillsUSA is working closely with NAPE on these and other components of the plan:

1. The formation of an advisory committee — made up of a diverse group of SkillsUSA alumni — to ensure that we address Multicultural Sensitivity and Awareness within all our programs.

2. A review of our board structure and hiring practices to ensure that our organization best reflects the diversity of the membership we serve.

3. Action to develop and sustain SkillsUSA membership and its associated experiences in communities of color through new programs like SkillsUSA Works.

4. A review of our strategic planning process, program review process, organizational policies, and professional development opportunities for staff and state leaders.
Membership Hits A Record High

FY’20 saw the largest membership in SkillsUSA’s 55-year history with 372,655 paid members. Membership totaled 434,141 members when including our alumni and honorary life members.

- 2020 is our 17th consecutive year of growth.
- SkillsUSA involved 4,658 schools (chapters) and 19,260 classrooms.
- Professional membership reached 20,598 SkillsUSA instructors.
- 35 state associations exceeded their previous year’s overall membership.
- SkillsUSA has served nearly 14 million members when totaling all of the annual membership figures since our founding in 1965.
New Directions and Local Connections

The SkillsUSA Alumni and Friends Association headed in a new direction this year following the organization of a **national Alumni Task Force** in 2019. Even with the greatest of efforts by many dedicated and talented alumni serving the organization, the approach to providing engagement for former members, mainly at the national level, has allowed us to serve only a fraction of our 14 million former members.

As the need arose to adjust our current alumni engagement to better serve the organization, SkillsUSA formed a stakeholder task force that first met in February 2019. The necessity to build stronger alumni engagement at the local level quickly became evident. As a result, the task force made several recommendations, and a **formal strategic plan** was developed and submitted to the SkillsUSA Board of Directors. It was approved on Sept. 22, 2019.

This new direction serves as an exciting revamp of the alumni organization and positions SkillsUSA to best serve all former members by simplifying the connection between alumni and their local chapters and communities. Moving forward, SkillsUSA will build a new structure for local chapters, increase state and national engagement through the development of test pilot chapters, create resources to engage local alumni, develop tool kits to assist alumni in supporting local competitions and develop new resources to help alumni foster more workplace learning experiences.

In preparation for these changes to our alumni engagement approach, previous positions on the National Alumni and Friends Executive Board were eliminated at the end of June 2020. This is the beginning of a new chapter for the alumni arm of the organization, and there will be future leadership opportunities for alumni in this exciting new plan.
SkillsUSA Engages Key Policy Makers

- **Face Time:** SkillsUSA members and staff held **158 meetings with federal policymakers this year.** On Sept. 24, students and teachers participating in the Washington Leadership Training Institute (WLTI) made **135 visits on Capitol Hill,** meeting with 22 senators and 113 representatives, the most single-day visits in WLTI history.

- **VIPS at NLSCE:** More than a dozen VIPs — including **General Mick Zais,** the Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education — attended the 2019 National Leadership and Skills Conference. Other VIPs included Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin, Kentucky Lt. Governor Jeanne Hampton and Robin Utz from the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education at the U.S. Department of Education. Many CEOs and C-suite executives joined the VIPs for special tours and events.

- **National CTE Rally:** During WLTI, **550 students, teachers and state leaders** participated in the third “SkillsUSA CTE Rally” on Sept. 24 in Washington, D.C. Joining SkillsUSA for the rally at the U.S. Capitol were Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio) and Rep. Glenn “GT” Thompson (R-Pa.). Following the event, students set off to meet with their elected officials.

- **SkillsUSA Week:** SkillsUSA Executive Director Chelle Travis, staff and national officers held a legislative breakfast on Feb. 4 for key supporters of SkillsUSA and career and technical education at the Old Ebbitt Grill in Washington, D.C. Attending were: Rep. Glenn Thompson (Pa.) and staff from the offices of Sen. Tammy Baldwin (Wis.) and Rep. Jim Langevin (R.I.). Also attending were staff from the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education at the U.S. Department of Education; staff from the Association for Career and Technical Education; and three business partners. Rep. Glenn Thompson spoke at the SkillsUSA Week breakfast.
• **Department of Labor Visit:** On Feb. 4, SkillsUSA met with the U.S. Department of Labor. Assistant Secretary of the Employment and Training Administration John Pallasch led the meeting along with Acting Deputy Administrator Robin Fernkas and Principal Deputy Under Secretary Diane Auer Jones from the U.S. Department of Education. The national officers and staff presented information about SkillsUSA programs and activities that help develop well-rounded graduates who are ready to lead America’s future skilled workforce.

• **Keep CTE Moving:** A press release about the CTE Coalition and its “Keep CTE Moving” web portal was sent to the six chairs of the House and Senate CTE Caucuses, who then shared our efforts with their constituents.
SkillsUSA CONNECT

Work Continues on New Engagement Portal

SkillsUSA continued work on SkillsUSA CONNECT this year, our new online portal and data management system. The goal of this project is to connect every constituent group within SkillsUSA and facilitate communication with members and partners.

The portal will provide a user-friendly interface to help overcome current barriers to the effective delivery of SkillsUSA mission-critical programming to members, regardless of age, geographic location or occupational training program. The portal can also be used to deliver professional development directly to teachers and alumni. The portal will support our partners by allowing them to easily engage at every level with the national staff, state associations and schools. Most importantly, this new platform will allow for the development of deeper community relationships and provide richer, more meaningful experiences for everyone involved with SkillsUSA, no matter where these individuals are in their education or career paths. It will also provide a seamless path from registration to participation.

The community portion of SkillsUSA CONNECT began testing in February 2020 during the lead up to SkillsUSA National Signing Day. In just a brief time period, more than 400 users registered and were actively using the platform. The test of the SkillsUSA CONNECT community platform for National Signing Day halted when the event was canceled due to COVID-19 concerns. In June, the community portion of SkillsUSA CONNECT was reopened to support state delegates and national officer candidates. Users were able to complete a profile and then access information about delegate events, participate in Q&A forums and blogs, and view national officer candidates’ profile pages with photos, essays and a link to their video campaign speeches. Work will continue on SkillsUSA CONNECT in FY21, and additional funding for the portal is being sought.
Engagement Soars for the SkillsUSA Career Essentials Suite

Use of the SkillsUSA Career Essentials suite surged this year. Our signature online career-readiness resource for students was built to engage learners of all ages in defining, implementing and measuring personal skills, workplace skills and technical skills grounded in academics.

- **Partners Provide Complimentary Access:** When the COVID-19 pandemic forced teachers to quickly move classrooms to online environments, several SkillsUSA partners stepped up to support online learning. Thanks to some incredible partners, SkillsUSA was able to provide complimentary access to the SkillsUSA Career Essentials suite, with 49,650 bundles made available to SkillsUSA members (middle school, high school, college/postsecondary or adult learners). SkillsUSA partners who joined in the effort included CHANNELLOCK, Distribution Contractors Association (DCA), Ferguson Enterprises Inc., Harbor Freight Tools for Schools, Lowe’s Companies, NASSCO, Pella Corporation and Volvo Construction Equipment. Each donated curriculum bundle was valued at $25 to $65.

- **Teacher Support:** Teachers were able to sign up for the complimentary access to the curriculum, connect with a Career Essentials coach to ask questions or take training to become a Career Essentials certified teacher.

“We believe in the SkillsUSA Career Essentials curriculum and credential as a much-needed academic resource to strengthen CTE to define, implement and measure career readiness beyond just technical skills. When someone asks what we’re doing to help close America’s skills gap, sponsoring Career Essentials is one thing we can point to.”

— Al Smith, Group Vice President and Chief Social Innovation Officer
Toyota Motor North America
Continuing to Improve Our Award-Winning Communications

The SkillsUSA communications team works continuously to enhance all national communications. This year, we embarked on an ambitious new SkillsUSA National Communication Stakeholder Engagement Strategies Plan for FY20-22 that began with a communications audit by Stone Ward, a marketing strategy firm that serves nonprofit organizations. This work resulted in a new digital news and story hub and a planned redesign of SkillsUSA Champions magazine.

SkillsUSA Champions magazine earned an APEX Award of Excellence for the print version for the 14th time. SkillsUSA was recognized by APEX alongside such familiar names as AARP, Ford Motor Co., NASA and Pepsi Cola International. The judges noted that they were “more impressed by the creative ideas than by the expense of execution.”

The FY18 SkillsUSA Annual Report received a 2019 Gold MarCom Award for excellence in marketing and communication. Other 2019 winners included Dell, Deloitte, Harvard Business School Online, Hilton, IBM, NBC Universal and Nationwide. Our annual report was also reviewed by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in their 2019 Bronze Anvil competition and the judges’ feedback included: “The SkillsUSA annual report is extremely well-executed — graphically appealing and well-written. It’s especially impressive considering the low budget and small staff. It has the look and feel of a report from a much larger organization. Impressive effort, especially for a nonprofit.”
Increasing SkillsUSA’s Visibility

A steady stream of news stories published about SkillsUSA this year resulted in more than 7,200 stories in print and online to support SkillsUSA awareness at every level. The PR team highlighted the organization in ongoing public relations efforts by sending out over 9,000 press releases and media alerts and maintaining a robust Press Room.

**Press event:** A press conference was held at the National Press Club in September 2019 to officially unveil the SkillsUSA Career Essentials Credential. Speakers at the event included U.S. Department of Labor Assistant Secretary of the Employment and Training Administration John Pallasch, Principal Deputy Under Secretary Diane Auer Jones from the U.S. Department of Education, several industry partners and two former SkillsUSA national officers.

**Highlighting SkillsUSA:** Our students were featured on “The Build Show” with YouTube influencer Matt Risinger for their work at the Lowe’s Generation T California Bunk Bed Build. Juan Carosso featured SkillsUSA on the Skilled Trades Playbook podcast, which shared insights from those working to close the skills gap. SkillsUSA was featured by Peggy Smedley on ConstructTech TV in an episode called “The Labor Debate about Construction Jobs.” SkillsUSA Board President Jennifer Worth was highlighted in the Metallica Foundation magazine. Chelle Travis was quoted in the online news source “Education Dive” regarding CTE learning during the pandemic. Chelle was also a featured guest on Mike Holmes’ “Holmes @ Home” live streaming show, part of the HGTV network. The broadcast reached nearly half a million people in under 24 hours. National officer Taytum McGill was quoted in “The Guardian” in a story about college students adapting to the pandemic.

**WorldSkills USA public relations:** The SkillsUSA PR team worked with Racepoint Global and Maroon PR to generate 738 stories about the WorldSkills USA team, with a media reach of 163 million and an earned media value of $1.9 million.

**SkillsUSA Championships public relations:** Media alerts were sent to hometown media for 1,122 SkillsUSA Championships national winners and Skill Point certificate recipients. Letters were also sent to 52 governors, 100 Senators and 266 Representatives to highlight the winners from their states.

**2019 NLSC media highlights:** In June 2019 during NLSC, SkillsUSA was in the local news 63 times, up from 57 the previous year. Coverage included features in “Insider Louisville” and “Louisville Business First” and TV stations WHAS 11, WAVE 3, WDRB 41 and WLKY 32, plus multiple live segments and in-studio appearances.
DIGITAL STRATEGY

Greater Access, Greater Reach

From our website to our social media presence, SkillsUSA made a variety of noteworthy strides in 2019 to increase our digital reach while creating more effective ways to share our members’ success stories.

**New Digital Story Hub Launched**

SkillsUSA’s Office of Communications launched a new *SkillsUSA Champions* digital hub on May 1, 2020 to better serve members who asked for more content, more often. The site provides inspiring feature stories, relevant and timely news and a user-friendly design that lets readers share anything they deem share-worthy by email or social media. There’s also a “Submit a Story” link at the top of every page, so students and teachers can submit news and photos to SkillsUSA’s communications staff. Rather than launching the site as a traditional issue of the magazine, it was designed as an ever-expanding resource of inspirational, real-world examples of individuals demonstrating the SkillsUSA mission in action.

Current plans for the print edition of *SkillsUSA Champions* magazine call for issues to be published twice per school year rather than quarterly, with the digital hub now becoming the main focus of content delivery. Delivery of the print edition for fall 2020 may be adjusted as we gain new information about what school will look like during the 2020–21 school year.
**DIGITAL STRATEGY (continued)**

**Stronger Social Media Traction**

- Since June 2019, SkillsUSA’s social media channels enjoyed a **11.7% increase** in followers, totaling 86,763 followers across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. Posting frequency has increased on all channels, along with post engagement by users.

- SkillsUSA’s **social media channels** have generated a total of 6,158,790 impressions and 322,184 engagements since June 2019.

**Two Websites Refreshed**

- SkillsUSA debuted a **refreshed website design** for [www.SkillsUSA.org](http://www.SkillsUSA.org) in December 2019. The new look includes an updated main page, new sliders and enhanced search function to improve the overall user experience. The refresh was part of the **National Communication Stakeholder Engagement Strategies Plan** developed in 2019 following an external communications audit to improve our communications.

- The main SkillsUSA website generated **1,988,580 page views** in the past year and **1,545,099 unique page views**, which averages to **180,780 monthly page views** and **140,464 unique monthly page views**.

- The **SkillsUSA’s Career Essentials microsite** was also refreshed in November 2019, with updated content and a new look. It generated 72,380 total page views and 51,007 unique page views, which averages to **6,580 monthly pageviews** and **4,637 unique monthly pageviews**.
FUNDRAISING

2020 Partner Update

FY20 has been an unusual year by any measure. Partner support was surging upward early in the year until the pandemic caused sudden and major disruptions nationwide. Schools moved to virtual learning and state conferences were canceled, which in turn forced the cancellation of the 2020 National Leadership and Skills Conference (NLSC), including the SkillsUSA Championships and SkillsUSA TECHSPO trade show. In the face of this financial hit, the Office of Business Partnerships and Development (BPD) was nimble in its efforts to work with partners to retain and redirect funding when possible, refund money when required, and re-engage partners in core mission support.

Pivot to Core Mission Support

When the pandemic hit, the fundraising team pivoted to obtain support for delivering our mission by:

- Connecting with partners to retain or redirect FY20 support, and we were able to re-engage numerous partners in alternate programming.

- Obtaining sponsorships for the SkillsUSA Career Essentials suite, representing $870,960 in retained revenue. (See Page 23 for more information.)

- Redesigning sector sponsorships to cluster sponsorships that are year-round activations that go beyond visibility at the SkillsUSA Championships.

- Actively seeking new foundation grants and submitting 26 Letters of Intent to private foundations. SkillsUSA was invited to submit eight applications to date.
SkillsUSA Foundation and SkillsUSA Inc. Combined

The SkillsUSA Foundation was combined with SkillsUSA Inc. on May 8, 2020, when the merger was approved by the Board of Directors. This merger streamlines financial reporting and supports transparency. This is the major outcome of work the finance and BPD teams have completed with financial consultant John Martin and organizational consultants Campbell & Co.

Raiser’s Edge

The BPD staff is now certified in Blackbaud’s Raiser’s Edge, a cloud-based fundraising and relationship management solution designed for nonprofits. Our data was submitted to Blackbaud and has been converted to Raiser’s Edge. The system will be fully operational by mid-July.

Partners Support for SkillsUSA Chapters

SkillsUSA partners stepped up for student engagement this year through various grants. Some of these programs in FY20 include:

- SkillsUSA and Lowe’s Home Improvement teamed up on a new grant program to support emerging SkillsUSA programs in career and technical education classrooms across the nation. The $100,000 grant from Lowe’s provided 100 eligible chapters with $1,000 each worth of educational materials to support SkillsUSA Framework integration.

- Over 300 SkillsUSA students from across Los Angeles gathered at Rose Bowl Stadium in October for a Lowe’s Generation T “Bunk Build.” The group worked with industry partners to build 100 bunk beds for nonprofit Sleep in Heavenly Peace, an organization dedicated to building, assembling and delivering beds to children in need. Generation T is an effort from Lowe’s Home Improvement to raise awareness for the skilled trades gap in America. Three hundred SkillsUSA California members from 11 schools worked with volunteers from Lowe’s, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Timberland, Samsung, People Ready and Tuft & Needle and the SkillsUSA California staff.
• The global pandemic forced instructors to move their courses to online environments. Thanks to the generosity of several partners who wanted to support online learning, SkillsUSA was able to provide complimentary access to the SkillsUSA Career Essentials suite for 58,064 students. Partners who joined in the effort included CHANNELLOCK, Distribution Contractors Association (DCA), Ferguson Enterprises Inc., Harbor Freight Tools for Schools, Lowe’s Companies, NASSCO, Pella Corporation, Toyota USA Foundation and Volvo Construction Equipment.

• Seventeen high schools from across the country each received grants of up to $2,500 from Harbor Freight Tools for Schools to strengthen local chapters. The grants, totaling $40,000, supported students learning construction trades, transportation and manufacturing. The Harbor Freight Tools for Schools grants allowed the 17 chapters to grow their programs and travel to competitions, career fairs and workplace experiences.

• Harbor Freight Tools for Schools awarded $650,000 in teaching excellence awards to 12 SkillsUSA instructors from across the country in the 2019 Harbor Freight Tools for Schools Prize for Teaching Excellence. The prize, launched in 2017, is open to skilled trades teachers who are faculty members at U.S. public high schools.

Keep CTE Moving Coalition
SkillsUSA has joined with several partners to form the CTE Coalition. The coalition quickly mobilized to create a “Keep CTE Moving” website, a central portal where instructors and students can access hundreds of free online classes, videos and instructional materials in areas such as machining, welding, mechatronics, industry 4.0 and programming. The coalition includes the American Welding Society, Autodesk, camInstructor, Caterpillar Inc., Haas Automation, Lincoln Electric, NC3, NCCER, Sandvik, SkillsUSA and Tooling U-SME. SkillsUSA is the only CTSO (career and technical student organization) represented. SkillsUSA also worked with other partners not represented on the coalition to help publicize additional free instructional materials for students and teachers.
Team Earns Bronze, Four Medallions of Excellence

SkillsUSA set new records for WorldSkills participation in 2019, fielding and training the largest WorldSkills USA team ever for the 45th biennial event. The 22 competitors traveled to Kazan, Russia to compete in 20 skill categories during the event, held Aug. 22-27.

- Ryan Meppelink (Mich.) won Bronze in Heavy Vehicle Technology and Best of Nation for having the highest score for the United States team. Medallions of excellence were received by Paul Danenberg (Idaho) in Automobile Technology, Rebekah Hagberg (Ill.) in Hairdressing, Dylan Wertz (Ohio) in Car Painting and Ryan Fincher (Ga.) in Welding.

- 3M was the lead sponsor of the 2019 WorldSkills USA team. Other proud team sponsors included Ferguson and Lowe’s.

- The SkillsUSA PR team worked with Racepoint Global and Maroon PR to generate 738 stories about the WorldSkills USA team, with a media reach of 163 million and an earned media value of $1.9 million.

- The communications staff undertook the challenging task of building a new microsite for the 2019 WorldSkills USA team and a new online audience from scratch. Over 18 months, views steadily grew, and last year saw 327,327 page views and 341,991 unique page views. This averages to 33,847 monthly page views and 31,090 unique monthly page views. The WorldSkills USA microsite won an APEX Grand Award, the highest recognition in the annual Awards for Publications Excellence competition.
Pavilion Built With Industry Support

A new outdoor pavilion christened “Champions Circle” was dedicated on Sept. 21, 2019, at SkillsUSA's 90-acre campus, the first major construction project since the National Leadership Center was built in 1979. It was constructed through a collaborative effort between more than 80 SkillsUSA advisors and students from four schools who donated their labor, and industry partners who contributed over $100,000 in materials, equipment and labor.

The concept for the Champions Circle came from SkillsUSA Oklahoma director Darren Gibson. State officer Matthew Thomas, a student from Meridian Technology Center in Stillwater, Okla., drew the original plans. The final architectural drawings were prepared by two-time national SkillsUSA medalist Jennifer Sprow, a graduate of Stafford High School in Stafford, Va. Over 500 students, teachers and industry partners attended the dedication ceremony, where a plaque was unveiled in honor of former executive director Tim Lawrence.

New executive director Chelle Travis attended the dedication, along with board members, Washington Leadership Training Institute participants and numerous stakeholders. SkillsUSA recognized the Heavy Construction Contractors Association and its member companies who contributed materials, equipment and labor. Nitterhouse served as the onsite instructional construction supervisor. See the full list of contributors to the Champions Circle project here.