



# NATIONAL LEADERSHIP & SKILLS CONFERENCE

# MEDIA KIT

2023 | Atlanta







## The SkillsUSA Media/PR Team

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**SkillsUSA Media Room B-204**  
**Georgia World Congress Center**  
June 18-23  
Room B204, Hall B in GWCC  
Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Media Room: 404-855-1108

For a complete schedule, download the **SkillsUSA 2023 NLSC app** from Apple or Android. **NOTE: ALL attendees must be badged, including the media.** When you arrive at GWCC, pick up a conference name badge in the AB Registration Hall, then sign in with SkillsUSA Media/PR Team in GWCC B-204 to receive a Media Access Badge. If you did not pre-register, you can register onsite as Media at no charge.

**Visit the new [NLSC microsite](#) for full conference details!**

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## Overall Conference Information and Statistics

SkillsUSA will come to Atlanta June 19-23 for its 59th annual National Leadership & Skills Conference, the nation's largest showcase of skilled trades. Quality career and technical education will be the centerpiece of the conference. An estimated 15,000 students, teachers, education leaders and representatives from 650 national corporations, trade associations, businesses and labor unions will participate. The highlight will be the annual SkillsUSA Championships on June 21-22, with 110 hands-on skill and leadership competitions.

**Dates and Locations**  
June 19-23  
Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC)

**Conference Attendance**  
Estimated attendance for the week: 15,000  
Student contestants: 6,094  
Voting delegates: 455  
National education team members: 100  
Contest technical committee members: 700  
Contest judges: 1,200  
SkillsUSA TECHSPO: nearly 200 exhibitors  
National Courtesy Corps: 70+

**SkillsUSA University Sessions**  
Learn from industry experts (24 sessions)  
Dates: June 20-22  
Location: GWCC

**Academy of Excellence Sessions**  
Advisor professional development (26 sessions)  
Dates: June 20-22  
Location: GWCC

**Opening Session**  
Date: June 20 at 7 p.m.  
Location: State Farm Arena  
Speakers: SkillsUSA graduates Aaron Robles, Laila Mirza and Matt DiBara  
Entertainment: Reza/Edge of Illusion  
Sponsors: *Snap-on Incorporated and Toyota*

**SkillsUSA Championships**  
Date: June 21-22, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Location: GWCC  
*All entrants must be registered and badged*

**Champions Festival**  
Date: June 22, 6 p.m.-9:30 p.m.  
Location: Centennial Olympic Park  
Sponsor: *Frontdoor Inc.*

**Community Service Event**  
Student Bike Build and Sock Collection  
Date: June 23, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.  
Location: Thomas Murphy Ballroom, GWCC  
Sponsors: *State Farm Insurance Companies and Swinerton Foundation.*

**Awards Session**  
Date: June 23 at 5 p.m.  
Location: State Farm Arena

**Also happening:** Delegate business sessions where student leaders conduct the business of the organization and oversee national officer elections, and pre-conference training for advisors and students. For all of the details, download the SkillsUSA NLSC app from the Apple or Android app store.

Hands-on Leadership and Skills on Display

The SkillsUSA Championships are a highlight of the conference. Thousands of outstanding career and technical education students have been practicing all year to compet in 110 different trade, technical, and leadership career competitions. Students will test their skills as they work against the clock and other competitors to prove their expertise in various industries — such as electronics, computer-aided drafting, precision machining, medical assisting, culinary arts and more! Industry partners run these events guided by the competencies that are demanded by their industry. Leadership contestants even showcase their speaking skills or demonstrate how to conduct meetings using parliamentary procedure. **Ready to see what America’s future workforce is capable of? Join us for the SkillsUSA Championships today! [Brief contest descriptions.](#)**

Dates and Locations

The SkillsUSA Championships is held Wednesday, June 21 and Thursday, June 22 in GWCC. The best photo opportunities are Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon or 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Support

Over \$36 million from industry and education is invested in the SkillsUSA Championships. The event requires an immense amount of equipment and materials including 2,000 computers, 12,500 bricks and 1,500 blocks, 60+ stoves and ovens, 25+ refrigerators, 100+ welders, 50+ manufacturing machines and complete laboratories for machining, welding, auto repair and painting.

**Contestants:** 6,094 students

**Contest area covered:** 1.79 million square feet (equivalent to 31 football fields or 41 acres)

**Awards:** 1,250+ gold, silver and bronze medals

**Prizes:** tools of the trade, scholarships and other awards provided by industry

**Lunches:** More than 10,000 box lunches are served during the week

2023 SkillsUSA Championships

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CONTESTS (19)

- Action Skill
- American Spirit
- Chapter Business Procedure
- Chapter Display
- Community Action Project
- Community Service
- Employment Application Process
- Extemporaneous Speaking
- Job Interview
- Job Skill Demonstration A

- Job Skill Demonstration Open
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Opening and Closing Ceremonies
- Outstanding Chapter
- Pin Design (State Conference)
- Prepared Speech
- Promotional Bulletin Board
- Quiz Bowl
- T-shirt Design

OCCUPATIONALLY-RELATED CONTESTS (11)

- Career Pathways Showcase
- Customer Service
- Engineering Technology/Design
- Entrepreneurship
- First Aid/CPR
- Health Knowledge Bowl
- Health Occupations Professional Portfolio
- Medical Math
- Medical Terminology
- Principles of Engineering/Technology
- Related Technical Math

SKILLED AND TECHNICAL SCIENCES CONTESTS (74)

- 3D Visualization and Animation
- Additive Manufacturing
- Advertising Design
- Architectural Drafting
- Audio/Radio Production
- Automated Manufacturing Technology
- Automotive Maintenance and Light Repair
- Automotive Refinishing Technology
- Automotive Service Technology
- Aviation Maintenance Technology
- Baking and Pastry Arts
- Basic Health Care Skills
- Barbering
- Building Maintenance
- Cabinetmaking
- Carpentry
- CNC 2-Axis Turning Programmer
- CNC 3-Axis Milling Programmer
- CNC Programmer
- Collision Damage Appraisal
- Collision Repair Technology
- Computer Programming
- Cosmetology
- Crime Scene Investigation
- Criminal Justice
- Culinary Arts
- Cyber Security
- Dental Assisting
- Diesel Equipment Technology
- Digital Cinema Production
- Early Childhood Education
- Electrical Childhood Education
- Electrical Construction Wiring
- Electronics Technology
- Esthetics
- Firefighting
- Graphic Communications

- Graphics Imaging – Sublimation
- Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration
- Industrial Motor Control
- Information Technology Services
- Interactive Application and Video Game Development
- Internetworking
- Internet of Things (IOT) Smart Home
- Marine Service Technology
- Masonry
- Mechatronics
- Medical Assisting
- Mobile Electronics Installation
- Mobile Robotics Technology
- Motorcycle Service Technology
- Nail Care
- Nurse Assisting
- Photography
- Plumbing
- Power Equipment Technology
- Practical Nursing
- Residential and Commercial Appliance Technology
- Restaurant Service
- Robotics and Automation Technology
- Robotics: Urban Search and Rescue
- Screen Printing Technology
- Sheet Metal
- Team Engineering Challenge
- TeamWorks
- Technical Computer Applications
- Technical Drafting
- Telecommunications Cabling
- Television (Video) Production
- Video News Production
- Web Design and Development
- Welding
- Welding Fabrication
- Welding Sculpture

DEMONSTRATION CONTESTS (6)

- CNC 5 Axis Milling Programmer
- Commercial Roofing
- Commercial sUAS Drone
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Facilithon – Leadership in Facility Management
- Heavy Equipment Operation

Official Contest Rules

The [SkillsUSA Championships Technical Standards](#) is the official career competition guide for all national events. SkillsUSA professional members receive the guide as a free benefit when they register as members.



## Programs to Enhance the NLSC Experience

### **Expedition NLSC Scavenger Hunt**

Members will experience the National Leadership & Skills Conference (NLSC) in a whole new way right from their cellphones with Expedition NLSC, a new digital scavenger hunt! Students will lean into learning moments, create connections with their peers and advisors and engage with exhibitors and official partners to make the most of their NLSC experience. Students can register one to four teammates and earn points as they complete missions. The top team will enjoy a VIP experience at the SkillsUSA Awards Session and leave Atlanta with a prize! See the NLSC app for details.

### **New Advisor Summit**

The new Advisor Summit is an immersive professional development experience held during the NLSC just for SkillsUSA instructors. It is a unique way for professional members to experience the NLSC when not accompanying students for career competitions as a way to focus on their growth as CTE instructors and SkillsUSA leaders. Learning events include the Academy of Excellence and SkillsUSA University as well as a Summit kick-off, guided tour of the SkillsUSA Championships and SkillsUSA TECHSPO, educational resources, raffles and a post-conference learning continuum.

### **New Education, Business and Industry Summit**

The new SkillsUSA Education, Business and Industry Summit will convene stakeholders to focus on industry and education collaboration, work-based learning and workforce development. Held on Tuesday, June 20 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in B213-B214, attendees will hear from engaging speakers, expert panelists and the voices of students and teachers — all centered around leveraging SkillsUSA and career and technical education to meet the needs of career-ready students.

### **Champions Festival**

After a busy week, members will be ready for an unforgettable night of excitement, fantastic food and thrilling games at the highly anticipated Champions Festival in Centennial Olympic Park as they cap their NLSC achievements with games and activities that will keep their adrenaline pumping all night. From heart-pounding challenges to hilarious competitions, there will be something for everyone at this celebration. The SkillsUSA main stage will be lit up with a live DJ, making it impossible to resist the urge to dance. Get ready to party with the champions at the most fun night of the year! *Champions Festival is sponsored by Frontdoor Inc.*



## SkillsUSA National Officers Highlighted at NLSC

These seven students were elected as SkillsUSA National Officers for the 2022-23 school year and traveled and advocated all year for SkillsUSA and career and technical education. They will lead the 2023 SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference:



**First row (l-r):** Lili Valencia, Arizona; Grace Smith, Washington; Abby Vandiver, Oklahoma; **Back Row (l-r):** Hunter Claflin, Massachusetts; Joseph Price, Georgia; Laney Blacketer, Missouri; and Katahdin Javner, Maine.  
[Learn more about the SkillsUSA National Officer team.](#)

## SkillsUSA Graduates to Speak at Opening Session, Reza Illusionist to Entertain Members

The 2023 SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference officially kicks off on Tuesday, June 20 at 7 p.m. in State Farm Arena. The session will be led by the SkillsUSA 2022-23 National Officer team. The Advisor of the Year will be named, other awards will be given and executive director Chelle Travis will give the State of the Union. The session will include remarks from three former members who cite SkillsUSA as a reason they have gone on to professional success. Laila Mirza, Aaron Robles and Matt DiBara will share their SkillsUSA journeys. Entertainment will be provided by Reza Illusionist.

### Laila Mirza

Former SkillsUSA member Laila Mirza graduated from the pre-engineering program at Worcester Technical High School in Newark, Md. and then attended the Georgia Institute of Technology, where she studied Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering. She is a furnace engineer for Owens Corning in Atlanta.

### Aaron Robles

Aaron Robles is a former SkillsUSA member and Graphic Design student from Indiana who is passionate about learning because his career pathway was sparked by a high school educator who really cared about him at Fort Wayne Career Academy. Aaron loves creating design solutions for unique problems and making art that stands out. The passionate entrepreneur owns two businesses, Founders Spark and Hyprova.

### Matt DiBara

Former SkillsUSA member Matt DiBara is at the age of only 30 the CEO of DiBara Masonry, CEO of The Contractor Consultants and founder of The Undercover Contractor. This successful Los Angeles, California-based entrepreneur was a masonry student at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical High School in Massachusetts who won a silver medal at the 2010 SkillsUSA Championships — an experience that solidified his confidence, his career path and a true passion for promoting the skilled trades. Now a successful contractor, he is also a consultant to other contractors — teaching them how to hire employees, leverage digital advertising and efficient systems and run successful, competitive businesses. Matt has a slogan he likes to share. “Wherever you are right now, thank a contractor.”



Featured at the Opening Session: Former members Laila Mirza, Aaron Robles and Matt DiBera along with Reza Illusionist.

### Opening Session Entertainment: Reza Illusionist

Reza John Borchardt, who goes by the stage name Reza Illusionist, will perform for SkillsUSA at the Opening Session. The magician from South Dakota began an interest in magic at age six when he saw a show at his elementary school. At age 15, Reza began performing 18 shows a week in Branson, Mo., for six weeks. Since that time, he has performed hundreds of shows and was voted Branson’s Magician of the Year in 2016 and 2021. Reza currently performs at Branson’s Famous Theatre.

**Opening Session | Tuesday, June 20, 2023**  
**Doors open at 6 p.m. Session starts at 7 p.m.**

**Sponsors:** The Opening Session is sponsored by Snap On Incorporated and Toyota.

- Pre-Session
- CareerSafe Safety Video Presentation
- Opening Ceremony
- National Anthem
- National Officer Welcome
- Advisor of the Year
- Honorary Life Membership
- Hall of Champions
- Session Sponsor Welcome
- Courtesy Corps Recognition
- State of the Association Address
- NLSC Pin and T-Shirt Design Recognition
- Keynote Speaker





National Medals, Recognition for Excellence in Skills

The 2023 SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference wraps up on Friday, June 23 with the Awards Ceremony. Held in State Farm Arena, the event features the announcement of gold, silver and bronze medals for 110 competitions and the announcement of the 2023 Models of Excellence schools as well as the announcement of the newly-elected 2023-24 SkillsUSA National Officer team.



Awards Session | Friday, June 23, 2023  
Doors open at 4 p.m. Session starts at 5 p.m.

- Pre-Session Red Carpet Event
- Session Welcome
- Session Sponsor Welcome
- SkillsUSA Championships Medal Presentations
- Models of Excellence Announcement
- Community Service Recognition
- NET/Technical Committee Recognition
- National Officer Tribute
- National Officer Election Announcement
- Conference Recap Video
- 2023-2024 Membership Theme Unveiling

Outstanding Members and Stakeholders Honored

At NLSC, SkillsUSA will honor these individuals for their outstanding service to the organization.  
***For award descriptions and honoree bios, see the [SkillsUSA Awards and Recognition Book](#).***

Outstanding Career and Technical Educators

- Cynthia Acevedo (Calif.)
- Kathleen Asman (Ariz.)
- John Bell (Fla.)
- Michael Born (Md.)
- Teresa Cantrell (Tenn.)
- Jerry Esparza (Colo.)
- John Lebsock (Ariz.)
- Chris Pilling (R.I.)
- Nikki Gerner-Ritchie (Calif.)
- Daniel Roskiewich (N.J.)
- Roy Shafer (Kan.)
- Shaun Smith (Colo.)
- Ivey Bradley (Ga.)
- Tiescheka Stuart (Washington, D.C.)
- Delphina Yazzie (Ariz.)

Honorary Life Members

- Danny Camden (Ind.)
- Keith Andrews (Ala.)
- Kirstie Christopherson (Ore.)
- Steven Lick (Mich.)

Advisors of the Year

- Region 1 — Peggy Reilly O'Brien (Mass.)
- Region 2 — Steve Icenogle (Ala.)
- Region 3 — Gus Schmid (Ill.)
- Region 4 — Bobbi Jo Linn (Mo.)
- Region 5 — Andrea Barallardos (Ariz.)

Hall of Champions Award

- Nikki Gerner-Richie (Calif.)
- John Lebsock (Colo.)
- Norman Champagne (Ariz.)

Ernie Gary SkillsUSA Championships  
Volunteer of the Year

- Jack Sukala (N.J.)



SkillsUSA Students Build Bikes, Collect Socks to Support Atlanta

On Friday, June 23, an estimated 554 SkillsUSA members from across the nation will serve the Atlanta community by participating in the SkillsUSA “Build Skills – Do Good – Complete the Cycle” community service project. The students will work in teams to build bicycles which will be presented to local children. The day of service will begin with a kickoff rally at 9 a.m. From 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., teams will build bikes. For 20 years, SkillsUSA has hosted a community service event during NLSC to provide our members with a hands-on service opportunity.

Registrants for the community service project were also challenged to donate up to 1,000 pairs of socks that will be given to CHRIS 180, a local Atlanta organization. Socks are one of the most requested clothing items in homeless shelters. CHRIS 180 helps children, young adults and families who have experienced trauma change the direction of their lives to become more productive and self-sufficient members of the community through mental health counseling, training and through safe housing and skill building.



This effort is made possible with support and funding from: State Farm Insurance Companies, the Swinerton Foundation, U.S. Air Force and CBRE.

SkillsUSA and Partner Scholarships Support Further Education

SkillsUSA and its industry partners will award scholarships to some of America’s best career and technical students in conjunction with the SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference. These scholarships support higher education, travel to the national conference or leadership development for students who plan to further their education in community colleges, undergraduate programs or industry certifications. From Sept. 1, 2022 to Aug. 31, 2023, SkillsUSA offered a total of 13 college/postsecondary scholarships working with 12 of our industry partners and supporting organizations, with a total estimated dollar value of over \$1 million. *For 2023 scholarship winners, see the [SkillsUSA Awards and Recognition Book.](#)*

**Aerotek #MakeYourMark Scholarship**

In 2023, Aerotek awarded multiple scholarship awards up to \$5,000 to SkillsUSA members in select pathways to offset the costs of postsecondary tuition at a community college, technical college or certificate program. This scholarship could also be used to offset costs associated with an apprenticeship.

**Bob Westphal Memorial Scholarship**

The Bob Westphal Memorial Scholarship, presented in partnership with North American Oil & Gas Pipelines magazine (published by Benjamin Media Inc.) and Continuum Capital offered four merit-based scholarships of \$2,500 in 2023 to high school or college/postsecondary students continuing their education to pursue a career in energy construction (oil and gas pipelines, gas distribution, solar or wind).

**Clifford H. “Ted” Rees, Jr. Scholarship**

The Clifford H. “Ted” Rees, Jr. Scholarship Foundation, an Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI) Charitable Foundation offered four one-time, merit-based \$2,500 scholarships to SkillsUSA members in 2023. The scholarship is intended to provide tuition support for students pursuing postsecondary education/training in HVACR.

**Fieldpiece #MasteroftheTrade Scholarship**

The Fieldpiece #MasteroftheTrade Scholarship offered seven one-time \$2,500 scholarships to SkillsUSA members enrolled as a high school junior, senior or college/postsecondary student to be applied to HVACR tuition support for the 2022-23 or 2023-24 academic year.

**Fine Homebuilding #KeepCraftAlive Scholarship for Construction Students**

Fine Homebuilding awarded multiple \$2,500 #KeepCraftAlive Scholarships to SkillsUSA high school or college/postsecondary students continuing their education or certification programs in construction-related fields including architectural drafting, carpentry, cabinetmaking, electrical and residential wiring, HVACR masonry, woodworking or plumbing.



**Harbor Freight Tools for Schools NLSC Travel Scholarship**

The Harbor Freight Tools for Schools Scholarship opportunity granted SkillsUSA members up to \$1,500 per student to assist in attending the 2023 National Leadership & Skills Conference (NLSC). Members must be eligible and registered to compete in the SkillsUSA Championships.

**Larry Rash Memorial Scholarship**

The Larry Rash Scholarship awarded two \$2,500 scholarships in 2023 to support SkillsUSA members who will further their education in architectural drafting (or a related field). One scholarship is granted to the best qualified applicant through an application process and a second scholarship is offered to the 2023 national high school gold medalist in Architectural Drafting.

**Marsha Daves Memorial Scholarship**

SkillsUSA offers one annual merit-based \$1,500 scholarship to a state officer for college/postsecondary education in memory of Marsha Daves. The scholarship honors Marsha’s legacy by recognizing how students are empowered by SkillsUSA as better team members, leaders, employees and community members.

**SkillsUSA National Signing Day Scholarships**

In 2023, high school seniors who participated in SkillsUSA National Signing Day on May 4 were eligible for one of 25 available \$1,000 college/postsecondary scholarships. This scholarship award is intended to offset student tuition, or career-entry costs associated with an apprenticeship.

**National Technical Honor Society Scholarships**

The National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) annually awards multiple \$1,000 scholarships to SkillsUSA members who are also members of NTHS. Awards are paid directly to tuition

**Robert Flint Leadership Development Scholarships**

The Robert Flint Foundation provides four SkillsUSA state officers with awards of \$1,300 each to support travel to the Leverage conference at the NLSC. State associations may submit an application for each state officer on their team. The Flint Foundation also offers \$800 awards to four SkillsUSA members to offset the cost of attending the Washington Leadership Training Institute held each September. Only SkillsUSA state association directors may submit these scholarship applications.

**Sharon Melton Myers Memorial Scholarship**

The Sharon Melton Myers Memorial Fund and the McMinn County Tennessee Vocational Center SkillsUSA Alumni Association awards two SkillsUSA high school seniors in any pathway a one-time \$1,000 scholarship to support further education in college or a technical school.

**The Student Research Foundation Community Contribution Scholarship**

The Student Research Foundation Scholarship awards one SkillsUSA student a scholarship for outstanding community contribution. The scholarships range from \$1,500 to \$7,000.

**Overview:** SkillsUSA is America’s proud champion of the skilled trades. Our student-led partnership of education and industry is building the skilled workforce the nation needs with graduates who are career ready, day one. As a national nonprofit membership association, SkillsUSA serves high school, college and middle school students who are preparing for careers or further education in trade, technical and skilled service occupations, including health occupations. SkillsUSA helps each student excel.

**Membership:** SkillsUSA’s membership of more than 340,000 students and instructors encompasses middle schools, high schools and college/postsecondary institutions in every state and three U.S. territories. SkillsUSA has served more than 14.2 million annual members since its founding in 1965. SkillsUSA programming covers 130 trade, technical and skilled service occupations, and is recognized by the U.S. departments of Education and Labor as integral to career and technical education.

**Mission:** SkillsUSA empowers its members to become world-class workers, leaders and responsible American citizens. SkillsUSA improves the quality of our nation’s future skilled workforce through the development of Framework skills that include Personal, Workplace and Technical skills Grounded in Academics.

**Vision:** SkillsUSA produces the most highly skilled workforce in the world, providing every member the opportunity for career success.

**Partners:** More than 650 business, industry and labor organizations actively support SkillsUSA at the national level through financial aid, in-kind contributions and involvement in SkillsUSA activities. Many more support state associations and local chapters. Commitment by industry to the annual national SkillsUSA Championships is valued at more than \$36 million.

**Programs:** SkillsUSA offers local, state and national opportunities for students to learn and practice personal, workplace and technical skills. These three components comprise the SkillsUSA Framework, a blueprint for career readiness. Local chapters conduct a full program of work, and many students also attend a district or state conference. At the SkillsUSA Championships, more than 6,000 students compete in 110 occupational and leadership skill areas each June. These national technical competitions help establish industry standards for job skill training and entry-level workers. SkillsUSA has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Labor as a successful model of employer-driven youth development training.

For more information: [www.skillsusa.org](http://www.skillsusa.org)





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