



SkillsUSA®

NATIONAL *signing day*

EVENT TOOLKIT
For SkillsUSA Chapters

LOWE'S
FOUNDATION

MAY 7, 2024



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SKILLSUSA NATIONAL SIGNING DAY 2024

What is SkillsUSA National Signing Day?

SkillsUSA National Signing Day is a nationwide celebration showcasing our next generation of skilled professionals and the skilled career paths that have been, are and always will be essential to America's future. Local SkillsUSA chapters are encouraged to host a Signing Day event at school and invite business partners, school administrators, teachers, elected officials, SkillsUSA alumni, family and friends to honor students as they sign letters of intent for a job offer, apprenticeship or advanced technical training.

Date

Tuesday, May 7, 2024

Eligibility

Signing Day is for all SkillsUSA high school seniors and college/postsecondary members who have committed to pursuing a career as a professional in any of the skilled trades. Registration is open from March 13-April 23, and chapters that register by March 29 will receive free swag (while supplies last), chapter grant opportunities and more. Learn more and register on our [National Signing Day webpage](#).

Support

Questions? Contact the SkillsUSA Customer Care Team at 844-875-4557 or customercare@skillsusa.org.

SkillsUSA National Signing Day is supported and sponsored by



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**Download Local Chapter
Signing Day Resources Here**

Be sure to REGISTER your school for an opportunity to receive free merchandise, grants or prizes plus national recognition! Register at signingday.skillsusa.org starting March 13.

MESSAGING AND TALKING POINTS

Use this messaging to help prepare presenters and speakers at your event.



About SkillsUSA National Signing Day

- **SkillsUSA National Signing Day is Tuesday, May 7, 2024.**
- SkillsUSA National Signing Day is a nationwide celebration showcasing our next generation of skilled professionals and the skilled career paths that have been, are and always will be essential to America's future.
- Local SkillsUSA chapters are encouraged to host a Signing Day event and invite business partners, school administrators, teachers, elected officials, SkillsUSA alumni, family and friends to honor students as they sign letters of intent for a job offer, apprenticeship or advanced technical training.

About SkillsUSA

SkillsUSA is the #1 workforce development organization for students. We empower students to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members.

Our mission is accomplished through the [SkillsUSA Framework](#) of Personal Skills, Workplace Skills and Technical Skills Grounded in Academics, which is integrated into classroom curriculum.

SkillsUSA serves more than 380,000 career and technical education students and instructors in middle schools, high schools and college/postsecondary institutions nationwide. SkillsUSA has served more than 14.6 million annual members since its founding in 1965. For more, visit www.skillsusa.org.

Key Talking Points

- The U.S. has a critical need for skilled tradespeople to keep pace with infrastructure, home repair, labor demands and more in our communities, but the skilled trades workforce is not keeping up with demand. That's the skills gap.
- 88% of contractors report trouble finding skilled trades workers according to the Associated General Contractors of America.
- In 2024, for example, the construction industry will need to attract an estimated 501,000 additional workers on top of the normal pace of hiring to meet the demand for labor. The same types of needs can be found in numerous skilled careers.
- There is a critical need to change the perception of skilled trades careers. It's time we celebrate them and encourage students to pursue them. That's what SkillsUSA National Signing Day and the Lowe's Foundation "Trades Stars" campaign are all about.
- SkillsUSA and its partners — including National Signing Day Partners The Lowe's Foundation, State Farm and Constellation — are committed to closing the skills gap.
- The skilled trades represent the skills that have been, are and always will be essential to America's future.

MESSAGING AND TALKING POINTS

Continued



- Skilled trades career pathways offer affordable, accessible and inclusive opportunities for individuals from all backgrounds.
- The skilled trades offer fulfilling and lucrative careers, not just jobs. For instance:
 - » Skilled trades workers such as plumbers and electricians generally earn higher salaries than the average American.
 - » Skilled trades training can be far less costly than four-year degrees and with far less debt.
 - » When asked about their careers, construction workers have reported high levels of job satisfaction, happiness and purpose.
 - » Most skilled tradespeople report working with innovative, cutting-edge technology.
- The Lowe's Foundation is supporting innovative and scalable skilled trades training programs across the country to create a sustainable infrastructure of skilled trades education and training.

Invitation Tips

When developing your SkillsUSA National Signing Day event invitation list, consider reaching out to the following groups and stakeholders:

- Family and friends of students participating in the event
- Business partners students are signing with
- Colleges/universities/technical colleges students are signing with
- SkillsUSA alumni
- School administrators
- Teachers — ask to spread the word to family/friends
- School career advisors and high school counselors
- Local elected officials, government officials, county boards/city councils, etc.
- Local networking/professional groups
- Local community organizations
- Local veterans' organizations/military recruiters
- Local industry groups
- Local unions (carpenters, plumbers, steelworkers, electricians, etc.)

JOIN THE “TRADES STARS” CAMPAIGN!

SkillsUSA and the Lowe’s Foundation are partnering to launch the “Trades Stars” campaign, held in conjunction with National Signing Day! Join the campaign starting April 24 to celebrate YOUR Trades Stars!



SkillsUSA and the Lowe’s Foundation are partnering to launch “Trades Stars,” a national campaign celebrating our students committing to skilled trades career pathways or postsecondary education.

We Want All Our Students to Feel Like Stars!

Introducing the “Blue Carpet Experience” – a special way to highlight our students and make them the stars of National Signing Day! There are a number of ways that you can join us in celebrating our incredible students:

Ways to Participate

- Use the “content capture kit” (right) to record and share stories, interviews or profiles of each student and what makes them a Trades Star.
- Pose with the props available in the “Trades Stars” section of the [SkillsUSA social media toolkit](#)
- Conduct “blue carpet” interviews with your Trades Stars, their supporters and their teachers to share their stories.
- Post on social media with the hashtag #SkillsUSANationalSigningDay, and tag @SkillsUSA and @LoweFoundation. After April 24, please add the #TradesStars hashtag to your posts.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The “TradesStars” campaign will launch publicly on April 24. We ask chapters not to include references to TradesStars in their social posts or media outreach until after that date. Thank you!

Content Capture Kit

Capturing Images We Love

- Take high-resolution photos of the individual(s), including photos of them in action and close-ups.
- If the photo is being taken on a phone, hold the device vertically to get a clear, full-length image for social media.
- Look for ideal lighting (natural light, indoor lights) and avoid using a flash.
- Use simple or plain backgrounds to emphasize the focus on your subject. It’s also important to ensure that there are no other individuals in the background who have not signed our photo release waiver.
- Look your subject in the eye to help build a connection between the subject and the viewer.



JOIN THE “TRADES STARS” CAMPAIGN!

Continued

Blue Carpet Experience Checklist

- ✓ Backdrop (Tip: Use simple or plain backgrounds to focus on the subject)
- ✓ Photo and Video Cameras (anything from a camera phone to a professional photographer will work)
- ✓ Blue carpet or runner
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Tokens of appreciation
- ✓ Signing table with documents and pens
- ✓ Balloons/decorations
- ✓ Event swag from Lowe's and SkillsUSA
- ✓ Light snacks and refreshments

Roles and Responsibilities

- ✓ Photographer to take pictures of Trades Stars
- ✓ Interviewer



Example interview questions for students

- Can you please share your name, your age and the name of the program you're in?
- Please tell me about your background. What was your first exposure to the skilled trades?
- What made you feel like the skilled trades would be a promising career path for you?
- Why did you choose the program you're in/entering?
- What are you hoping to get from your chosen program/education?
- Fast forward three years. What do you think your life will be like given the skilled trades path you're choosing?
- What do you imagine your life will be like 20 years from now?
- If you could say one thing to a friend who might be thinking about a career in the trades, what would you say?

Example interview questions for parents, guardians and supporters

- Can you please share your name and which student you are supporting?
- What program/career pathway is [student's name] pursuing?
- How did you support [student's name] as they decided to pursue this career?
- What makes you most excited when you think about this next chapter for [student's name]?
- What do you hope this next chapter brings for [student's name]?
- Is there any advice you would like to give to [student's name]?

EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST

If you're planning a SkillsUSA National Signing Day event, this checklist will help you get started.



Six Weeks Out

- Determine the date, time and format of the event.
- Recruit volunteers and assign roles as applicable (invitations, setup, food, social media posting, communications, registration table, publicity, etc.).
- Order SkillsUSA event supplies from the [SkillsUSA Store](#).

Five Weeks Out

- Reserve a location for the event, such as a school gym or auditorium.
- Coordinate audiovisual needs, tables and chairs or other furnishings and supplies.
- Develop an invitation list and registration list (see Invitation Tips on [Page 5](#)).
- Begin gathering information for promotional use and sending e-vites to attendees. **We ask that chapters not reference the Trades Stars campaign or share content related to the campaign publicly until after the national press release on April 24.**
- Plan and invite speakers for your event, including school administrators, SkillsUSA advisors, chapter officers, a state or national officer, community leaders or industry supporter.

Four Weeks Out

- Develop agenda for the event, including talking points, handouts, one-pagers and PowerPoint presentations, if needed.
- Incorporate the SkillsUSA National Signing Day logo into your promotional materials. Find those logos and many more resources on our [Signing Day Resources Hub](#).

- Inform your school community of the event through announcements, signs/posters, school newsletter, social media and at meetings. **We ask that chapters not reference the Trades Stars campaign or share content related to Trades Stars publicly until after the national press release on April 24.**
- Send personal invitations to family and friends of each student participating in the event, business partners students are signing with, schools students are signing with, SkillsUSA alumni, school administrators, teachers, school career advisors and high school counselors.
- Plan and invite speakers for your event, including school administrators, your SkillsUSA advisor, chapter officers, a state or national officer, community leaders or industry supporters.

Three Weeks Out

- Plan food/beverage needs for the event.
- Track and confirm event RSVPs.
- Refine speaker materials needed (talking points/presentations).
- Determine required safety equipment, if applicable.
- Post on social media using the #SkillsUSANationalSigningDay hashtag, and be sure to tag @SkillsUSA and @LoweFoundation. **We ask that chapters not reference the Trades Stars campaign or share content related to Trades Stars publicly until after the national press release on April 24.**

EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST

Continued

Two Weeks Out

- Send invitation reminder to attendees who have not responded.
- Coordinate an internal planning group to review event materials and confirm roles and responsibilities for day-of.
- Post on social media using #SkillsUSANationalSigningDay and be sure to tag @SkillsUSA and @LoweFoundation. **After April 24, begin incorporating the #TradesStars hashtag into your social posts as well.**
- Share a press release about your event with local media. [See Page 15](#) for a sample release. **We ask that chapters wait to share their releases to media until after the national release on April 24.**

One Week Out

- Confirm details and logistics with speakers (e.g., travel plans, special needs, etc., allotted time for speech, etc.).
- Practice presentations with SkillsUSA chapter members.
- Share final event materials with event speakers.
- Finalize attendee list.
- Post on social media using #SkillsUSANationalSigningDay and #TradesStars hashtags and tag @SkillsUSA and @LoweFoundation.
- Review the Trades Stars campaign “Content Capture Kit” on [Page 6](#) to make sure you’re ready to capture powerful content!

Four Days Out

- Send reminder to confirmed attendees.
- Hold event run-through, including facility tours if applicable.
- Print and organize deliverables/handouts, name tags, etc.
- Post on social media using #SkillsUSANationalSigningDay and #TradesStars hashtags and tag @SkillsUSA and @LoweFoundation.
- Review the Trades Stars campaign “Content Capture Kit” on [Page 6](#) to make sure you’re ready to capture powerful content!

Day Before

- Set up event space.
- Complete and print SkillsUSA National Signing Day Letters of Intent for each student participating.
- Final run-throughs of presentations if needed.
- Post on social media using #SkillsUSANationalSigningDay and #TradesStars hashtags and tag @SkillsUSA and @LoweFoundation.
- Review the Trades Stars campaign “Content Capture Kit” on [Page 6](#) to make sure you’re ready to capture powerful content!

Day of Event

- Host event!
- Post on social media using #SkillsUSANationalSigningDay and #TradesStars hashtags and tag @SkillsUSA and @LoweFoundation.
- Share your event details, photos and videos to SkillsUSA using our [2024 Signing Day Brag Form](#).

Three Days Post-Event

- Send thank-you to panelists/speakers and all attendees.
- Follow up on any questions raised during the event.
- Post on social media using #SkillsUSANationalSigningDay and #TradesStars hashtags. Tag @SkillsUSA and @LoweFoundation.
- Share your event details, photos and videos to SkillsUSA using our [2024 Signing Day Brag Form](#).
- Evaluate the event internally. What went well? Where can you improve for next year?



**Download Local Chapter
Signing Day Resources Here**

TEMPLATE: SAMPLE EVENT AGENDA

This sample agenda and mock run of show is to serve as a guideline for your event and should be tailored to your specific event activities, industry, speakers and guests.

7:30 – 8 a.m.	Registration Opens and Networking Begins Attendees sign in.
8:00 – 8:05 a.m.	Opening Remarks and Welcome Event introduction made by the emcee (chapter officer, advisor, business leader, local government official, etc.). Be sure to thank our National Signing Day sponsors: Lowe's Foundation, State Farm and Constellation.
8:05 – 8:30 a.m.	Presentation Keynote speakers should present about the impact of SkillsUSA programs and the value of the skilled trades while highlighting Signing Day and the Lowe's Foundation "Trades Stars" campaign as great examples of elevating the perception of the skilled trades. They can also share best practices and tips for businesses, success stories, program updates and more.
8:30 – 8:45 a.m.	SkillsUSA National Signing Day Member Spotlight SkillsUSA National Signing Day participants are given the opportunity to share future plans while explaining how SkillsUSA and the skilled trades have impacted their lives.
8:45 – 9:00 a.m.	Speaker Q&A Emcee takes and directs questions about the SkillsUSA program; the role of SkillsUSA in communities; how individuals, companies and organizations can become involved with the SkillsUSA chapter and more.
9:00 – 9:05 a.m.	Transition Emcee directs event attendees to their next activity.
9:05 – 9:30 a.m.	Facility Tour and Skills Exhibition Emcee and other business leaders and/or keynote speakers take guests on a tour of the local SkillsUSA facility, highlighting the tools and resources available in their SkillsUSA program. They may also exhibit the skills and successes of members. Designated photographers should use the tour as an opportunity to capture content for the "Trades Stars" campaign and general promotion. See Page 6 of this guide for content capture guidelines.
9:30 – 9:45 a.m.	Closing Remarks and Questions Emcee thanks presenters, speakers, guests and NSD partners (Lowe's Foundation, State Farm and Constellation) while closing the event. The emcee reminds attendees to visit their organization's website and social channels and share their SkillsUSA National Signing Day experience using the hashtags #SkillsUSANationalSigningDay and #TradesStars.
9:45 – 10:15 a.m.	"Trades Stars" Recognition Emcee announces it's time to celebrate our future "Trades Stars" as part of the Lowe's Foundation Trades Stars campaign. Designated photographers and/or chapter members should begin taking photos of Signing Day participants, conducting interviews and capturing content using the guidelines in the Content Capture kit on Page 6 . Hand out swag and other tokens of appreciation to participants and capture the celebratory energy!

TEMPLATE: SAMPLE EVENT INVITATION

Use this template to create the invitation to your SkillsUSA National Signing Day event.

[Download this template and more from the Signing Day Resources Hub.](#)

YOU'RE INVITED! JOIN OUR SKILLSUSA NATIONAL SIGNING DAY EVENT

Dear [insert name],

Our SkillsUSA chapter is hosting an inspiring, pride-fueled SkillsUSA National Signing Day event on Tuesday, May 7, 2024, and you're invited to join us!

Date: [insert]

Time: [insert]

Location: [insert address + city, state]

Contact: [insert email and phone number]

The event is part of a nationwide celebration of our next generation of skilled professionals and the skilled career paths that have been, are and always will be essential to America's future. During our National Signing Day event, [insert number] students will sign letters of intent committing to pursue skilled career paths, just as thousands of others will be doing in their own Signing Day events across the country. We hope you'll be one of the many in attendance cheering them on while hearing inspired messages from a variety of passionate skilled voices!

Special thanks to Lowe's Foundation, State Farm® and Constellation for sponsoring this year's National Signing Day! By empowering the next generation of skilled professionals and career-ready leaders, SkillsUSA and our committed partners are closing the skills gap while highlighting the amazing opportunities that exist in fulfilling, lucrative and in-demand skilled careers.

We're also excited to participate in the national "Trades Stars" campaign from Lowe's Foundation, held in conjunction with National Signing Day. The Trades Stars campaign officially launches on April 24, and it's designed to celebrate our students even further while making them feel like stars through "Blue Carpet Experiences" at five select Signing Day locations, social media shout-outs and more! Get all the details about SkillsUSA National Signing Day at signingday.skillsusa.org.

We hope you'll join us in celebrating our career-ready students on May 7 as they prepare to shape America's future! We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,

[Insert Name]

[Insert Signature and Contact Information]

MEDIA AND PUBLICITY

This section provides resources and information to generate local media coverage for your SkillsUSA National Signing Day event. Local media coverage will enable you to tell the public — and internal and external stakeholders — who you are, what you're doing and why they should attend your event.

How to Use Local Media to Promote Your Event

There are three key elements to building a media story:

1. Media List
2. Media Pitches and Media Alerts
3. Creative Assets

Media List

As a first step, you need to create a media list. A media list includes the reporter's name, email address, outlet name and relevant notes. Here are the steps to building a media list:

1. Compile a list of local newspapers, magazines, websites, blogs, radio and television stations.
2. Create a spreadsheet that includes a contact person, phone number and email address for each outlet. See if anyone has done a story about your SkillsUSA chapter in the past.
3. Call each outlet to ask for these details to ensure you do not have outdated information.
 - Newspapers: When possible, ask for the contact who covers education, workforce development, local events, careers and/or business.
 - Magazines: Ask for the business, workforce development or education writer.
 - Radio: Ask for the news director.
 - TV: Ask for assignment desk or daytime producer.

SkillsUSA Advocacy Site

[The SkillsUSA Advocacy site](#) is a great source for local media contacts. Put in your zip code to find contacts in your area. You can contact media right through the site or view their contact information and website to build your custom list.

Pitching Your Story to the Media

Pitches are short emails that describe something new and interesting in order to gauge a reporter's interest in writing about it for a story online, in print or on TV. Pitches are personalized to each reporter's beat/interest areas and include important details about your event.

Use the pitch template as a starting point and update the [highlighted areas] with relevant information. This format is primarily used for print media.

To reach local television affiliates, you should use a "media alert." This slightly different format helps highlight specific visuals that may be available for camera crews.

Creative Assets

When possible, it's always a great idea to provide images and videos to reporters when pitching to help them visually tell the story. You should avoid attachments when you send pitches, as this could cause the emails to get caught in spam folders. (Also, some reporters do not open attachments as a matter of practice.) Instead, use Dropbox, Google Drive or another file sharing platform and share a link to relevant images and videos. Examples to include:

- National Signing Day and SkillsUSA logos
- Lowe's Foundation fact sheet, skilled trades infographic and skilled trades job value proposition handout
- Photos of your school and SkillsUSA members
- Photos of your classroom or labs
- Links to previous news articles about your chapter and school

Find logos, fact sheets and infographics referenced above on our [National Signing Day Resources hub](#).

MEDIA PITCH TEMPLATES

Local Print/Online Media Pitch Template
[Download this template and more from the Signing Day Resources Hub.](#)

SUBJECT: [SkillsUSA Chapter Name] Hosts SkillsUSA National Signing Day Celebration Event

Dear [insert name],

On [insert date and time], [insert entity name] will be holding a SkillsUSA National Signing Day event at [location].

This event is part of a nationwide celebration showcasing our next generation of skilled professionals and the skilled career paths that have been, are and always will be essential to America's future. During our National Signing Day event, [insert number] students will sign letters of intent committing to pursue skilled career paths, just as thousands of others will be doing in their own Signing Day events across the country.

We'll also be participating in the national "Trades Stars" campaign from Lowe's Foundation, held in conjunction with National Signing Day. The Trades Stars campaign officially launches on April 24. It's designed to celebrate our students even further while making them feel like stars through "Blue Carpet Experiences" at five select locations (where they'll be interviewed, photographed and treated like celebrities), social media shout-outs and more! Get all the details about Signing Day at signingday.skillsusa.org.

Special thanks to Lowe's Foundation, State Farm® and Constellation for sponsoring this year's National Signing Day!

We hope you'll join and share the celebration of our proud students while learning more about how our SkillsUSA program makes a difference in our community, state and nation. If you are interested in attending or speaking with someone from our organization to learn more, please let me know.

Best,

[Insert Name]

[Insert Signature and Contact Information]



**Download Local Chapter
Signing Day Resources Here**

MEDIA PITCH TEMPLATES

Local Broadcast Media Alert

[Download this template and more from the Signing Day Resources Hub.](#)

SUBJECT:

Media Alert: [SkillsUSA Chapter Name] Hosts SkillsUSA National Signing Day Celebration

MEDIA ALERT

[TITLE]

WHAT: [Insert a short description of your event. Include details like number of attendees, the type of activities that will be available, notable speakers, etc.]

WHERE: [Insert location name and address]

WHEN: [Insert the time and date of the event]

VISUALS: Local students publicly signing letters of intent to pursue skilled career pathways while being celebrated and encouraged by their families, teachers, industry partners, community leaders and more; students participating in "Blue Carpet Experiences" in five select locations (where they'll be interviewed, photographed and treated like celebrities) as part of the "Trades Stars" campaign from Lowe's Foundation; local community leaders and dignitaries speaking and supporting the event; SkillsUSA students speaking, networking and celebrating

Share Your Signing Day photos and stories! Right after Signing Day, [submit your chapter photos and a brief story](#) for a chance to be featured on SkillsUSA's national social media or in [SkillsUSA Champions magazine](#). Also, make sure your chapter participates in the "Trades Stars" national campaign from the Lowe's Foundation (launching April 24) to gain even more visibility for your chapter! After April 24, use hashtags [#SkillsUSANationalSigningDay](#) and [#TradesStars](#) on your social posts and tag [@SkillsUSA](#) and [@LovesFoundation](#).



**Download Local Chapter
Signing Day Resources Here**

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

A press release is another effective method to gain media attention for your event. It can be shared with local media, shared by your industry partners or sent to key stakeholders. Use the template below as a guide to develop your own customized release.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please do not share your press release until AFTER the national press release from SkillsUSA and the Lowe's Foundation on April 24.

NEWS RELEASE from [Name of School]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Name:

Phone:

Email:

**Local SkillsUSA Students Participate in National Signing Day
on May 7 to Celebrate Skilled Careers**

Event recognizes students pursuing a career in the skilled trades



[City, State] — Students and teachers at [NAME OF SCHOOL] have teamed up with SkillsUSA and its industry partners — Lowe's Foundation, State Farm® and Constellation — to celebrate SkillsUSA National Signing Day on May 7. SkillsUSA National Signing Day is a nationwide celebration of the next generation of skilled professionals and the skilled career paths that have been, are and always will be essential to America's future.

During our event, [insert number of students] students will be recognized by administrators, teachers, elected officials, advisors, family, friends and more as they sign letters of intent committing to pursue skilled career paths, just as thousands of other high school and college/postsecondary SkillsUSA students will be doing in their own Signing Day events across the country.

In addition, students will be participating in the "Trades Stars" national campaign from the Lowe's Foundation, held in conjunction with National Signing Day. Trades Stars is designed to celebrate our students even further while making them feel like stars through "Blue Carpet Experiences" at five select locations (where they'll be interviewed, photographed and treated like celebrities), social media shout-outs and more!

By empowering the next generation of skilled professionals and career-ready leaders, SkillsUSA and our committed partners are closing the skills gap while highlighting the amazing opportunities that exist in fulfilling, lucrative and in-demand skilled careers.

"We want to thank our community for supporting SkillsUSA National Signing Day," says [school administrator NAME, TITLE]. "This program celebrates our career and technical education students and acknowledges their commitment to skilled career pathways. Signing Day and the Lowe's Foundation Trades Stars campaign are powerful examples of programs that elevate the perception of skilled careers for the incredible opportunities they offer our students, both personally and professionally."

Learn more about SkillsUSA National Signing Day and the Lowe's Foundation Trades Stars campaign at signingday.skillsusa.org.

About SkillsUSA

SkillsUSA is the #1 workforce development organization for students. We empower students to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members. SkillsUSA serves more than 380,000 career and technical education students and instructors in middle schools, high schools and college/postsecondary institutions nationwide. SkillsUSA has served more than 14.6 million annual members cumulatively since its founding in 1965. For more, visit www.skillsusa.org.

About Lowe's Foundation

The Lowe's Foundation, an independent 501(c)(3) organization founded by Lowe's Companies, Inc. (NYSE: LOW), is developing a community of skilled tradespeople to build and revitalize our homes, neighborhoods and infrastructure for the future. From 2023 through 2028, the Lowe's Foundation is investing \$50 million to help prepare 50,000 people for skilled trades careers through grants to community and technical colleges, community-based nonprofit organizations and national nonprofit partners with a strong local presence. To learn more about the Lowe's Foundation, visit Lowes.com/Foundation and follow on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/LoweFoundation), [Facebook](https://facebook.com/LoweFoundation) and [LinkedIn](https://linkedin.com/company/LoweFoundation).

###



EMAIL MARKETING AND TEMPLATES

Email is an easy, effective way to reach attendees. Use the sample content below to start planning. Use a platform like Constant Contact or Mailchimp for a professional look. (Your school may already have an account.)

[Download these templates and more from the Signing Day Resources Hub.](#)

Sample Email Calendar

TIMING	TYPE	SUBJECT
7 Weeks Out	Save-the-Date	Save the Date: SkillsUSA National Signing Day
6 Weeks Out	Invitation	You're Invited! Celebrate our Future Skilled Professionals on SkillsUSA National Signing Day!
4 Weeks Out	Event Details	Celebrate the Next Generation of Skilled Professionals on SkillsUSA National Signing Day!
1 Week Out	Event Reminder	Ready to Celebrate Our "Trades Stars" on SkillsUSA National Signing Day?
1 Day Out	Event Reminder	SkillsUSA National Signing Day is here! Time to Celebrate Our "Trades Stars!"

Sample Email Content: Save-The-Date

Subject: Save the Date: SkillsUSA National Signing Day

Join [SkillsUSA Chapter Name] to celebrate SkillsUSA National Signing Day on May 7, a nationwide celebration of the next generation of skilled professionals and the skilled career paths that have been, are and always will be essential to America's future. Celebrate our students as they sign letters of intent committing to pursue skilled career paths, just as thousands of others will be doing in their own Signing Day events across the country. At our event, you'll also learn more about SkillsUSA and the life-changing difference it makes every day in the lives of our students, both personally and professionally.

In addition, we're excited to participate in the "Trades Stars" national campaign from the Lowe's Foundation, held in conjunction with National Signing Day. The Trades Stars campaign officially launches on April 24. It's designed to celebrate our students even further while making them feel like stars through "Blue Carpet Experiences" at five select locations (where they'll be interviewed, photographed and treated like celebrities), social media shout-outs and more! Get all the details about SkillsUSA National Signing Day at signingday.skillsusa.org.

Special thanks to Lowe's Foundation, State Farm® and Constellation, our national sponsors for Signing Day!

We hope to see you on [insert date, time and full location address here] as we celebrate America's future! Please reach out with any questions!

[Insert name]

[Insert signature and relevant contact information]

EMAIL MARKETING AND TEMPLATES

Continued

[Download these templates and more from the Signing Day Resources Hub.](#)

Sample Email Content: Invitation

Subject: You're Invited! Celebrate our Future Skilled Professionals on SkillsUSA National Signing Day!

Dear [insert name],

Join [SkillsUSA Chapter Name] to celebrate SkillsUSA National Signing Day on May 7, a nationwide celebration of the next generation of skilled professionals and the skilled career paths that have been, are and always will be essential to America's future. Help us celebrate our students as they sign letters of intent committing to pursue skilled career paths, just as thousands of others will be doing in their own Signing Day events across the country. At our event, you'll also learn more about SkillsUSA and the life-changing difference it makes every day in the lives of our students, both personally and professionally.

In addition, we're excited to participate in the "Trades Stars" national campaign from the Lowe's Foundation, held in conjunction with National Signing Day. The Trades Stars campaign officially launches on April 24. It's designed to celebrate our students even further while making them feel like stars through "Blue Carpet Experiences" at five select locations (where they'll be interviewed, photographed and treated like celebrities), social media shout-outs and more! Get all the details about SkillsUSA National Signing Day at signingday.skillsusa.org.

Special thanks to Lowe's Foundation, State Farm® and Constellation, our national sponsors for Signing Day!

We hope to see you on [insert date, time and full location address here] as we celebrate America's future and our next-generation Trades Stars! Please reach out with any questions!

[Insert name]

[Insert signature and relevant contact information]

Sample Email Content: Event Details

Subject: Celebrate the Next Generation of Skilled Professionals on SkillsUSA National Signing Day!

Dear [insert name],

SkillsUSA National Signing Day is only one month away. Please join [SkillsUSA chapter name] on May 7 to celebrate our students as they sign letters of intent committing to pursue skilled career paths, just as thousands of others will be doing in their own Signing Day events across the country. Our event will also feature [insert any specific information here, e.g., speakers, activities, etc.].

In addition, we're excited to participate in the "Trades Stars" national campaign from the Lowe's Foundation, held in conjunction with National Signing Day. The Trades Stars campaign officially launches on April 24. It's designed to celebrate our students even further while making them feel like stars through "Blue Carpet Experiences" at five select locations (where they'll be interviewed, photographed and treated like celebrities), social media shout-outs and more! Get all the details about SkillsUSA National Signing Day at signingday.skillsusa.org.

Special thanks to Lowe's Foundation, State Farm® and Constellation, our national sponsors for Signing Day!

We hope to see you on [insert date, time and full location address here] as we celebrate America's future and our next-generation Trades Stars! Please reach out with any questions!

[Insert name]

[Insert signature and relevant contact information]

EMAIL MARKETING AND TEMPLATES

Continued

[Download these templates and more from the Signing Day Resources Hub.](#)

Sample Email Content: Event Reminder #1

Subject: Ready to Celebrate Our “Trades Stars” on SkillsUSA National Signing Day?

Dear [insert name],

SkillsUSA National Signing Day is May 7, just one week away! We hope you’re ready to join [insert SkillsUSA chapter name] in the celebration of our student “Trades Stars” as they sign letters of intent committing to pursue skilled career paths, just as thousands of others will be doing in their own Signing Day events across the country. This inspirational, pride-fueled event will also feature [Insert any specific information here, e.g., speakers, activities, etc.].

In addition, we’re excited to participate in the “Trades Stars” national campaign from the Lowe’s Foundation, held in conjunction with National Signing Day. Trades Stars is designed to celebrate our students even further while making them feel like stars through “Blue Carpet Experiences” at five select locations (where they’ll be interviewed, photographed and treated like celebrities), social media shout-outs and more! Get all the details about SkillsUSA National Signing Day and the Trades Stars campaign at signingday.skillsusa.org.

Special thanks to Lowe’s Foundation, State Farm® and Constellation, our national sponsors for Signing Day!

We can’t wait to see you next week on [insert date, time and full location address here]. Together, we’ll celebrate America’s future and our next-generation Trades Stars!

[Insert Name]

[Insert Signature and Contact Information]

Sample Email Content: Event Reminder #2

Subject: SkillsUSA National Signing Day is here! Time to Celebrate Our “Trades Stars!”

Dear [insert name],

SkillsUSA National Signing Day is tomorrow, May 7! We’re so excited to have you join [SkillsUSA Chapter Name] to celebrate our student “Trades Stars” as they sign letters of intent committing to pursue skilled career paths, just as thousands of others will be doing in their own Signing Day events across the country. This inspirational, pride-fueled event will also feature [Insert any specific information here, e.g., speakers, activities, etc.].

We’re also excited to participate in the “Trades Stars” national campaign from the Lowe’s Foundation, held in conjunction with National Signing Day. Trades Stars is designed to celebrate our students even further while making them feel like stars through “Blue Carpet Experiences” at five select locations (where they’ll be interviewed, photographed and treated like celebrities), social media shout-outs and more! Get all the details about SkillsUSA National Signing Day and the Trades Stars campaign at signingday.skillsusa.org.

Special thanks to Lowe’s Foundation, State Farm® and Constellation, our national sponsors for Signing Day!

We can’t wait to see you tomorrow on [insert date, time and full location address here]. Together, we’ll celebrate America’s future and our next-generation Trades Stars! Please reach out with any questions, and feel free to share any photos or videos of the event on social media. If you do, please use the hashtags #SkillsUSANationalSigningDay and #TradesStars, and please tag @SkillsUSA and @LoweFoundation.

[Insert name]

[Insert signature and relevant contact information]

WEBSITE/BLOG

Use the content below for websites, blogs and internal newsletters to promote your event.
[Download this template and more from the Signing Day Resources Hub.](#)

Sample Web Content

NOTE: We ask that chapters wait until after April 24 to reference the Trades Stars campaign in web and social posts.

Join [SkillsUSA Chapter Name] in celebrating SkillsUSA National Signing Day on May 7, a nationwide celebration of the next generation of skilled professionals and the skilled career paths that have been, are and always will be essential to America's future. Celebrate our students as they sign letters of intent committing to pursue skilled career paths, just as thousands of others will be doing in their own Signing Day events across the country.

In addition, we're excited to participate in the "Trades Stars" national campaign from the Lowe's Foundation, held in conjunction with National Signing Day. Trades Stars is designed to celebrate our students even further while making them feel like stars through "Blue Carpet Experiences" at five select locations (where they'll be interviewed, photographed and treated like celebrities), social media shout-outs and more! Get all the details about SkillsUSA National Signing Day at signingday.skillsusa.org.

Special thanks to Lowe's Foundation, State Farm® and Constellation, our national sponsors for Signing Day!

By empowering the next generation of skilled professionals and career-ready leaders, SkillsUSA and our committed partners are closing the skills gap while highlighting the amazing opportunities that exist in fulfilling, lucrative and in-demand skilled careers.

Date: [insert]

Time: [insert]

Location: [insert address + city, state]

Who: [insert information on who should attend]

Why: [insert information about what's happening at your event and why people should attend]



SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT AND GUIDANCE

Social media is an effective and efficient way to raise awareness for your event.

Social Media Toolkit

The National Signing Day Social Media Toolkit features an array of resources, including pre-written captions, plug-and-play graphics and hashtags. Designed for use before, during and after the event, this toolkit aims to highlight your students, generate excitement for your programs and celebrate the future of the skilled trades. Lowe's Foundation will provide additional templates and resources to the toolkit to help your chapter participate in the "Trades Stars" campaign.



[Access our Signing Day Social Media Toolkit here.](#)

Official Hashtags

The official hashtag for SkillsUSA National Signing Day is **#SkillsUSANationalSigningDay**. After April 24 (when the national press release will be shared), please begin to incorporate the **#TradesStars** hashtag into your posts as well.

Include these hashtags in social posts to drive the conversation and support the commitment of your chapter members. Tag @SkillsUSA and @LoweFoundation in your posts!

Social Media Best Practices

- Be concise and to-the-point so audiences can quickly understand the value of your post.
- Make your content visual by including photos, videos and quotes.
- Ask questions to engage your audiences.

Social Media Content Ideas

Share your success:

Show the positive benefits of SkillsUSA and skilled trades by sharing stories of SkillsUSA members who have benefited from the program.

Share a picture or video:

Post a photo or short video showcasing your SkillsUSA chapter events or program highlights.

Educate users with shareable assets:

Create sharable posts for Facebook and Instagram that educate your community about the impact of SkillsUSA.

Ask/answer a question:

Throughout the event, many SkillsUSA chapters, members, businesses and government leaders will be watching the **#SkillsUSANationalSigningDay** and **#TradesStars** hashtags. Ask questions to engage audiences, and answer questions when possible.

Follow the "Trades Stars" Campaign Content Capture Guide:

When capturing content, follow the guidelines on [Pages 6-7](#) of this toolkit, where you'll find best practices for photos and video, sample questions you can ask in interviews and more. However, we ask that chapters not reference the Trades Stars campaign or share content related to Trades Stars until after the national press release on April 24.



**Download Local Chapter
Signing Day Resources Here**

TEMPLATE: THANK-YOU MESSAGE

This sample thank-you note should be distributed following your SkillsUSA National Signing Day event. Encourage students that participated in the event to hand-write the note.

Dear [Insert Name]:

Thank you so much for attending our SkillsUSA National Signing Day event and helping us celebrate our student Trades Stars! We so appreciate your support of our SkillsUSA members and chapter, and we'd welcome any feedback you'd like to share.

We believe initiatives such as SkillsUSA National Signing Day and the Lowe's Foundation "Trades Stars" campaign are powerful and important ways to elevate skilled career pathways while fostering more meaningful partnerships between education and industry.

We are so thankful to Lowe's Foundation, State Farm and Constellation for sponsoring SkillsUSA National Signing Day this year and making those partnerships happen. We're also incredibly thankful to you for standing alongside us and helping us spread the word. Your support is valued and appreciated by all of us more than you know.

We welcome you to stay in touch and be part of our program's solution to the skills gap, and thank you again for attending our Signing Day event.

[Insert name, title, relevant contact information]

[Insert school name]



WHAT PARTICIPANTS ARE SAYING

Quotes from SkillsUSA Students Who Participated in the May 2023 SkillsUSA National Signing Day

"SkillsUSA National Signing Day is a great way for students like me to be recognized in front of my peers, teachers, and industry partners."

"I felt so proud of myself for sticking to this program. Times before I had felt like quitting, but my dad had forced me to stick with it, and I'm happy I did. I would have never thought in a million years that I would sign with an electrical company and pursue my dreams."

"Signing Day was a realization of my goal to attend college to pursue my career goals with the transferable skills learned through SkillsUSA."

"Being recognized at the signing day event in front of my parents, peers and school administration made me feel seen. That is something many students who are going into a career and not playing a college sport do not feel — being seen."

"Today was awesome. Thank you for giving us an opportunity to celebrate the work we did and the accomplishment of taking the first step into our careers."

"Joining SkillsUSA was one of the best decisions I made in high school. From the day I signed up to commit to attending college for education, I have enjoyed every minute of my journey."

"My teacher made this very special for me! SkillsUSA is the best choice I have made in a long time!"

"I can't believe I am going to college."

"I can't believe I got this scholarship! This is so cool!"

"The recognition was nice given the work we've put into the program, and to hear the heartfelt words from the teachers was the highlight of my educational experience."

"Today is a day of recognition I will remember for the rest of my life."

"I felt honored to go on stage in front of my mother."

"The values and the mottos behind the skills we have learned are well chosen and have played a role in how I present myself today."

"Our school recently held a College Decision Day event and following that with a full reception celebrating the trades students was a powerful message. Our superintendent loves this opportunity and we will be moving this event to the evening in future years and inviting parents, business partners and our students' employers."

"Today was a great day. I got to meet so many people that were supporting my choice to enter the trades."

"This day made me feel appreciated for my accomplishments."

SkillsUSA

NATIONAL
signing day

SkillsUSA National Signing Day is supported and sponsored by:



NATIONAL *signing day*

Reach out to SkillsUSA's Customer Care Team if you need help or have questions
at 844-875-4557 or customercare@skillsusa.org.

WWW.SKILLSUSA.ORG

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