



2021 MODELS *of* EXCELLENCE

FOR EXCELLENCE IN
PERSONAL, WORKPLACE
AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

MODELS *of* EXCELLENCE

Summer 2021

Dear SkillsUSA Advocates,

It is my pleasure to share the exemplary work of our 2021 Models of Excellence (MOE) chapters. This award celebrates the highest level of our Chapter Excellence Program (CEP), which recognizes chapters nationwide for outstanding application of the SkillsUSA Framework in developing the personal, workplace and technical skills demanded by industry.

The work by this year's MOE recipients is especially impressive considering all that has transpired in the past year with the evolving pandemic landscape. Some schools were in-person most of the year, some used hybrid models and some were completely online. Despite various learning environments and the continual challenges placed on both advisors and students, our chapters achieved amazing results! Most importantly, the focus on career readiness and hands-on skills application did not waver. SkillsUSA advisors and members persevered, often using virtual tools and creative programming, to continue down the path of intentional learning and mastery of high-demand skills. They have proven that closing the skills gap and providing communities with capable leaders and skilled employees must go on, no matter the situation.

Not only did our MOE chapters demonstrate meaningful and interactive engagement, but they provided much needed support to their communities. You will see inspiring examples of career-oriented service, personal generosity, thoughtful ingenuity, collective teamwork, justice-seeking workshops and uplifting resilience. The persistence of every MOE chapter is testament to the value of SkillsUSA and the power of turning uncertain situations into purposeful opportunities.

It is with joy that we move forward into normalcy with gratitude for the many lessons we've learned this past year.

Sincerely,



Chelle Travis
SkillsUSA Executive Director



chapter excellence
program

THE CHAPTER EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

The Chapter Excellence Program (CEP) is the best way to build a successful SkillsUSA chapter.

Every chapter is encouraged to participate in CEP and there are three award levels to recognize program involvement. The first two levels are acknowledged by a chapter's state association and the third level is recognized nationally through Models of Excellence. Each level is designed to give chapters a benchmark for success and future improvement, leading to stronger chapters and more prepared students. The more a chapter applies the Framework in a meaningful and measured way, the greater the chance for CEP honors.

CEP recognizes achievement as it relates to the integration of the SkillsUSA Framework in chapter program of work activities. As a chapter's yearly action plan, the program of work is at the heart of student learning and employability development. By using the Framework as a guide, chapters have a blueprint for creating relevant activities that encourage participation and foster an understanding of student learning attained during each activity. The Framework's focus on intentional learning turns the SkillsUSA Program of Work (PoW) into more than just a planning tool. Using the Framework, the PoW becomes the vital conduit that links students to the application of **personal**, **workplace** and **technical** skills demanded by industry.

Within the personal, workplace and technical skills areas, there are 17 specific Essential Elements. These Essential Elements are high-demand employability skills as defined by industry, and the benchmark for measuring student success during an activity. If students learn the Essential Element of responsibility during a personal skills activity, the Framework requires that a chapter be specific regarding **how** and **why** students learned responsibility. This conscientious approach gives added meaning to the valuable experience gained by students in the planning, organization and implementation of activities. Most importantly, this approach actualizes SkillsUSA's mission to "empower members to become world-class workers, leaders and responsible American citizens" on the chapter level.

2021 MODELS OF EXCELLENCE RECIPIENTS

Personal Skills

Colorado	Thomas Jefferson High School
Maryland	Dorchester Career & Technology Center
Massachusetts	Greater Lowell Technical High School
New Mexico	Deming High School
New York	Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES
South Carolina	Center for Advanced Technical Studies
Wisconsin	Elkhorn Area High School
Wyoming	Cheyenne Central High School

Workplace Skills

Arizona	Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education
Georgia	Savannah Technical College
Illinois	Indian Valley Vocational Center
Massachusetts	Lynn Vocational Technical Institute
Missouri	New Madrid Technical Skills Center
Nebraska	Louisville Public School
Ohio	Upper Valley Career Center
West Virginia	Brooke High School

Technical Skills Grounded in Academics

Georgia	Apalachee High School
Georgia	Forsyth Central High School
Georgia	Lanier Technical College
Massachusetts	Cape Cod Regional Technical High School
North Carolina	Catawba Valley Community College
New Jersey	Sussex County Technical School
Oklahoma	Gordon Cooper Technology Center
Washington	Oak Harbor High School





LUNCH FOR HOMELESS WOMEN

ADAPTABILITY/FLEXIBILITY



Thomas Jefferson High School, Colorado

SkillsUSA members at Thomas Jefferson High School identified the pandemic's staggering impact on Denver's homeless population and acted upon it. The chapter worked with Capitol Hill United Ministries and the Women's Homelessness Initiative to provide bagged lunches to women and children. Students were diligent about COVID-19 protocols during each phase of the project; wearing masks and gloves at all times, ensuring surfaces were properly sanitized, checking temperatures and remaining socially distanced. They also had to formulate a backup plan for lunch assembly since lunches could not be packed any earlier than two days before delivery. Due to bad weather, they had to use a chapter officer's home for lunch preparation rather than assembling lunches outdoors at school. Members set a budget, created a menu for each lunch, purchased food items from Sam's Club, packed each lunch, and delivered lunches at a designated time to a specific location. The chapter met their goals of providing 60 bag lunches, having eight members participate, and adhering to COVID safety guidelines.

Members demonstrated **adaptability/flexibility** by showing resilience in coming up with a plan to serve Denver's homeless population despite pandemic restrictions. They embraced calculated change by coming up with alternate plans ahead of time, such as identifying another location for lunch assembly, to ensure they could meet their bagged lunch commitment and timeline. They demonstrated resilience by strictly adhering to pandemic safety protocols, including multiple safety measures while working in a small group. Most importantly, they served those in need during an extraordinarily difficult time. Well done!

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PANEL DISCUSSION



WORK ETHIC



Dorchester Career & Technology Center, Maryland

The phrase, “see one, do one, teach one,” is an ideal descriptor for the Chamber of Commerce panel discussion hosted by SkillsUSA at Dorchester Career & Technology Center. This annual activity exposes students to positive role models while reinforcing desired skills for potential employment. The event is always well-received due to direct contact between professionals and students. Dorchester is located in a marginalized rural area, limiting student exposure to career opportunities and professional work behaviors. By interacting with adult role models, students witness the importance of Framework skills such as good work ethic, which was the focus of this activity. Students then model these traits for their peers, sharing what they have learned in an influential way. Due to COVID, the event was virtual, but still very effective! Six Chamber of Commerce members led the discussion with 25% of the chapter participating and exhibiting excellent work ethic.

This activity validated the need for verbal and visual reminders of a what strong **work ethic** looks like in the workplace. Qualities such as being self-directed, meeting deadlines and demonstrating punctuality are lessons often taken for granted. By visiting with professionals, hearing about their responsibilities and expectations, students learned firsthand about the rewards of working hard. They were also able to observe how professionals presented themselves and what it takes to have a successful career. Students completed a survey to verify what they learned and provide feedback. The results were overwhelmingly positive!



"CANDY FOR KINDNESS" LOLLIPOP BOUQUETS

ADAPTABILITY/FLEXIBILITY



Greater Lowell Technical High School, Massachusetts

What do you do when your fundraising events get canceled due to COVID and you have a surplus of lollipops? For SkillsUSA officers at Greater Lowell Technical High School, you turn disappointment into community service. With remote learning, new COVID protocols, and changes in school policy, the chapter found themselves in an impossible situation of needing to distribute or sell 800 lollipops. Rather than let the lollipops go to waste, officers chose to donate them by creating and delivering lollipop bouquets to local agencies of their choice. Officers rallied via virtual meetings and a shared Google folder to identify obstacles such as transportation and supply costs, share bouquet design ideas, distribution timelines, photos and more. The team exceeded its goal by delivering 12 lollipop bouquets to members of the community. Even though some deliveries did not go as planned due to spikes in COVID, the officers identified other venues for distribution. In addition, the team filmed a video about the project to document the importance of adaptability and flexibility.

Throughout this effort, officers demonstrated creativity, resilience and calculated change. They identified the reasons they struggled with **adaptability/flexibility** when things did not go as planned and offered solutions for improvement. Officers excelled in how they supported each other during team discussions and addressing concerns. One member created a Google Form to improve communication, while others led virtual brainstorm sessions. Each participant also submitted two or more photos depicting their bouquet, the delivery, or the recipient. Officers turned a challenge into a positive act of kindness that was much appreciated by essential workers.



FRAMEWORK RELATED TO INTERNSHIPS

RESPONSIBILITY



Deming High School, New Mexico

Creativity with online learning turned into a valuable exercise on responsibility for SkillsUSA members at Deming High School. In preparation for spring internships, students participated in Zoom sessions focused on four responsibility skills as outlined by the SkillsUSA Career Essentials Assessments (Career-Ready Blueprint). The four skills included: completing assignments at a high-degree of quality; seeking assistance on difficult tasks, prioritizing tasks for a completion plan and honoring commitments. Led by the chapter president, students set forth content standards and an outline to meet the instructional strategies of the unit. They chose specific content using the scaffolding method, took part in facilitating different concepts, led group discussions and used assessments to measure understanding. Officers and members were able to work on their presentation skills, evaluate and discuss the needs of the community, and gain a thorough understanding of the application of responsibility in the workplace.

The results of this activity speak volumes. Members saw a 50% increase in everyday life skills as demonstrated by their Zoom activities and assignments. This included a 20% boost in students obtaining part-time jobs. Moreover, there was a 100% participation rate in the Zoom sessions for all presentation days. Because of this, it's no surprise that members attained 90% accuracy when evaluated on the four **responsibility** skills outlined at the onset. This was demonstrated by their active involvement in Zoom sessions, accountability for assignments, showing their on-task skills, and following through with all commitments.



DISTRACTED DRIVING PRESENTATION

RESPONSIBILITY



Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES, New York

Educating others about distracted driving is always a good idea. In the fall of 2020, SkillsUSA officers at OHM BOCES used Zoom to deliver a life-saving message to 426 students and 51 faculty and staff members, from 16 career and technical programs. Officers invited distracted driving awareness advocate and speaker, Karen Torres, to give the presentation. Ms. Torres had spoken at their center before, but due to COVID protocols, had to present in a virtual format. Officers promoted the presentation to all programs at their center, worked with Ms. Torres to identify a date and time, and created meeting links to connect participating classes. Since so many students were attending school remotely, officers were skeptical about participation. However, the attendance numbers proved them wrong. Ms. Torres, whose father was killed by a distracted driver, pointed out that distracted driving is an issue for both adults and teens. She specifically focused on the dangers of using a cellphone while driving.

This presentation used a relatable and serious issue to emphasize **responsibility**. Officers demonstrated a commitment to personal well-being for themselves and fellow members by coordinating the program. All participants were reminded of their own personal responsibility every time they get behind the wheel. Officers measured the impact of Ms. Torres' message by surveying members. An impressive 97.37% of students answered "yes" to the question, "Did today's presentation have enough impact on you that you will now think twice about using your phone while driving?" Furthermore, 87.5% answered "yes" to the question, "After hearing today's presentation, would you speak up to convince family and friends to not use their phones while driving?" This was a win for safety.



VIRTUAL TOY DRIVE AND PACK-A-SMILE DONATIONS

RESPONSIBILITY



Center for Advanced Technical Studies, South Carolina

Lifting others up with meaningful action is what members at the Center for Advanced Technical Studies accomplished with their virtual toy drive and “Pack-a-Smile” activity. The activity was threefold in its approach, serving families at the Ronald McDonald House, the Prisma Health Children’s Hospital and hospital workers in Columbia, S.C. Chapter members established committees, timelines and volunteer responsibilities to achieve each facet of the project. For the Ronald McDonald House, members collected donations of nonperishable items and assembled 450 individually-packed meals to support families in distress. Members established an Amazon wish list to conduct a virtual toy drive for the children’s hospital, collecting over \$1,100 in toys. In an expression of gratitude, culinary program students put together 10 fruit baskets with thank-you cards for hospital staff. Chapter officers provided leadership every step of the way. They created assessments to measure member growth, coordinated donation drop-offs, established safety guidelines for assembling meals and worked with committees to ensure a smooth process.

The chapter focused on the Framework skill of **responsibility** for each aspect of this collaborative effort. Members demonstrated commitment, dependability and follow-through in fulfilling their given tasks. This involved extensive community outreach, advocacy and marketing efforts, and diligence in meeting each identified goal. All participating members were able to define responsibility, and had a working knowledge of what it means to be personally responsible. Their efforts led to 85 community service hours, with 36 chapter members participating and 20 community members involved. Even better, they delivered smiles to a lot of grateful faces.



WATERSTEP SHOE DRIVE

RESPONSIBILITY



Elkhorn Area High School, Wisconsin

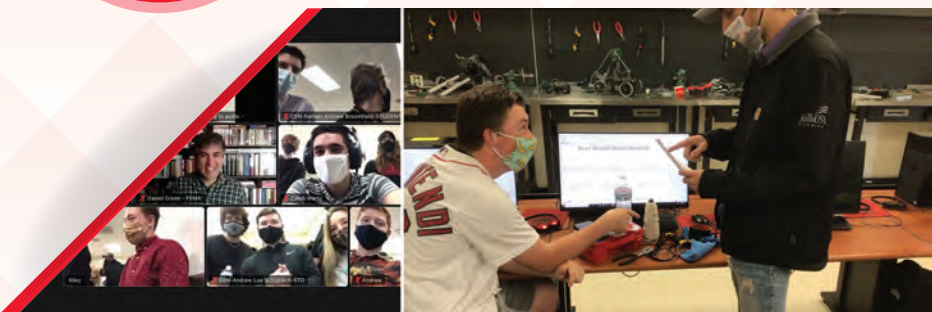
SkillsUSA members at Elkhorn Area High School engaged the Framework skill of responsibility by supporting WaterStep, an organization that funds drinking water projects worldwide. The majority of financing for WaterStep projects comes from shoe donations. The organization accepts gently worn shoes, which are sold to an exporter. The proceeds are then used to finance clean water. Members embraced this chance to build awareness of global water issues during SkillsUSA Week while increasing the chapter's presence in the community. A leadership team spearheaded the effort by promoting the shoe drive and WaterStep's mission. This included flyers, daily school announcements, emails and social media outreach. The chapter placed collection bins at local schools, collected four bags of shoes and made presentations to eighth graders. Members exceeded their publicity goals and expanded their presentation skills by spreading awareness of WaterStep and SkillsUSA to future members.

The focus on **responsibility** was evident throughout the project. Members identified a global need—clean water—and took responsibility for educating others while being a catalyst for change. Every student who participated contributed to the activity's success, going above and beyond expectations without being asked. Students demonstrated dependability by creating publicity ideas and presentations and engaging multiple audiences. Members held each other accountable during individual and group tasks. They exceeded their publicity expectations with the number of posts made on four social media platforms. Most importantly, they shared the good news of SkillsUSA!



FEMA YOUTH PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

ADAPTABILITY/FLEXIBILITY



Cheyenne Central High School, Wyoming

As we learned during the pandemic, clear communication between federal agencies and specific audiences is vital. What works for one audience may not work for another. The SkillsUSA chapter at Cheyenne Central High School supported their local FEMA agency by evaluating and making suggestions to emergency preparedness lessons. Connecting with FEMA representatives via Zoom, chapter members transformed adult-oriented instruction into fun, interactive lessons for middle school and high school students. Chapter officers led the activity by contacting FEMA representatives, creating a schedule for lesson review, establishing criteria for constructive criticism and making presentations back to FEMA. The chapter reviewed, edited and provided feedback on three lessons. Members learned about creating presentations, editing existing work and delivering constructive advice. They also achieved their goal of developing quality suggestions to make lessons more understandable for teen audiences. FEMA representatives appreciated the feedback and were impressed with member professionalism and leadership. SkillsUSA members learned more about different STEM careers within FEMA, adding to the project's impact.

Adaptability/flexibility was central to this activity as members developed new ideas, embraced change and demonstrated maturity in establishing criteria for constructive feedback. Members adhered to timelines and adapted based on the availability of FEMA representatives. The chapter modified the presentations over a three-week period, editing and reporting back on one lesson before moving on to the next. They also held a Socratic Seminar to discuss the importance of adaptability/flexibility in completing this project. All members gained a solid understanding of this valuable Framework skill while FEMA gained youth-inspired lessons.



CVAA WELL HOUSE PROJECT

PLANNING, ORGANIZING AND MANAGEMENT



Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education, Arizona

Protecting the water supply for a community-based horse and livestock arena is important, especially in the high desert of Arizona. SkillsUSA members at the Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education partnered with the Camp Verde Arena Association (CVAA) to build a structure for housing well system components. Members met with CVAA Board representatives to discuss design ideas and a timeline for project completion. Chapter officers assigned project committees to address various phases of construction and to oversee budgets, materials, and fabrication details. In addition, the chapter worked with industry training and credentialing organizations, Ives and NCCER, for members to attain scissor lift operator certification. Members excelled in all aspects of the project, building several parts at the same time to meet construction goals while also adhering to COVID guidelines. In fact, 100% of the chapter participated in the project, including the completion of a 10-question assessment to evaluate Framework learning. A total of 90% of participating students achieved the scissor lift certification.

Planning, organizing and management was central to student efforts due to several moving parts. Members had to handle everything from structural design to materials procurement, and adhere to a set timeframe. They demonstrated attention to detail, followed standards of quality and expectations, set priorities for each project phase, and remained on-task. They strengthened hands-on carpentry proficiencies and gained certifiable heavy equipment skills. They also benefited by improving communication and teamwork skills. The project was so successful that plans are underway for more projects with CVAA.



ALL LIVES MATTER: APPROACHING WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

MULTICULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND AWARENESS



Savannah Technical College, Georgia

Recognizing the value of open and honest workplace discussions, SkillsUSA members at Savannah Technical College hosted an interactive diversity workshop. The chapter invited a diversity and inclusion speaker to present the workshop and provide training on perceptions, bias and cultural diversity. To identify areas of most concern, the chapter conducted an anonymous pre-workshop assessment. Once completed, the results were sent for inclusion in workshop materials and to customize the presentation. During the workshop, the speaker helped members navigate the successful exchange of ideas and information in the workplace, while recognizing tension triggers and disrupters such as personality, attitude, approach and message confusion. Students practiced skills for encoding, highlighting, sharing differences, effective listening and understanding. This was followed by a post workshop assessment to determine progress. The results were apparent as members and advisors noticed greater collaboration among all groups during fundraisers and projects. Cultural cliques dispersed, and teams improved listening and communication skills. The pre and post surveys also revealed a positive shift by members in reducing personal bias by self-reporting bandwagon bias, ostrich effect and confirmation bias.

The chapter's decision to focus on **multicultural sensitivity and awareness** connected well with the many social justice, political, and global events of 2020. Students were able to learn about their own biases while having transparent discussions with peers in a comfortable atmosphere. They gained perspective on tolerance for diverse opinions and cultures, had to demonstrate the ability to be personable and professional, and gained knowledge that will help each of them make their workplace environment better.



chapter excellence
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PUBLIC SAFETY CAPTURE THE FLAG

COMMUNICATION



Indian Valley Vocational Center, Illinois

SkillsUSA members in public safety programs at Indian Valley Vocational Center practiced life-saving communication skills by playing capture the flag. Students in the EMS, fire science, and law enforcement sections created a Framework-focused, public safety version of this timeless game to practice radio etiquette and clear communication. Members organized committees to set rules, identify boundaries and provide refreshments. Each section created its own unique flag, made color-specific shirts for each team and worked together to establish strategies of play. To ensure fairness, the rules and boundaries committee had the school's National Guard recruiter referee the game. They also used the school map to outline equal-sized areas for each team's protected territory. The refreshment committee organized drink donations and s'mores supplies, and fire science students built a bonfire to celebrate after the game. The event was a huge success! More than 60 students from the three sections attended. The game has evolved into an ongoing activity with the certified nursing assistant classes also forming a team.

Public safety personnel work closely in the field, so this was an excellent way for students to apply collaborative **communication** and etiquette when using handheld radios. It also taught the importance of strategic planning and professional protocol. Students had to effectively communicate with teammates, comprehend and apply game rules, and work with other teams throughout the process. Every participant had to apply skills in listening, speaking, writing and reading. This communication exercise will continue because there is yet to be a winner. No class has been able to collect and keep all of the flags!



"WE CARE. WE SHARE THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING TOLERANCE AND INCLUSIVITY."

MULTICULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND AWARENESS



Lynn Vocational Technical Institute, Massachusetts

SkillsUSA members at Lynn Vocational Technical Institute have been hosting student-led workshops to broaden perspectives on tolerance and inclusivity in the greater Lynn community and beyond. They sought to expand conversations about race, bias, injustices and privilege beyond the classroom. Student leaders spearheaded the development of a 90-minute workshop to promote dialogue regarding microaggressions, empathy, implicit and explicit bias, and other pertinent topics through activities, reflection and discussion. The workshop included a PowerPoint, videos with students and alumni discussing various issues, and educational information around inclusivity and tolerance. Students also developed worksheets for participant reflection, and used Zoom for workshop delivery due to remote learning. Workshops began within the chapter and quickly moved outward into the community and beyond! As of this writing, members have reached nearly 500 people encompassing SkillsUSA groups, school administrators and teachers, non-profit organizations, churches, the local teacher's union, racial justice groups and others across the nation.

The workshop has had a powerful impact on chapter members as well as outside participants in promoting **multicultural sensitivity and awareness**. Using a series of interactive activities and opportunities for reflection, participants of all ages have had to confront their own biases, and process how their biases impact others. Student presenters have built rapport with their fellow presenters, handling challenging and important conversations with professionalism and understanding. The chapter seized on a critical moment to address awareness related to race, bias, and privilege and how these elements contribute to tolerance and inclusivity. The goal was purposeful caring for a better tomorrow.



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EAGLE CHRISTMAS

PLANNING, ORGANIZING AND MANAGEMENT



New Madrid Technical Skills Center, Missouri

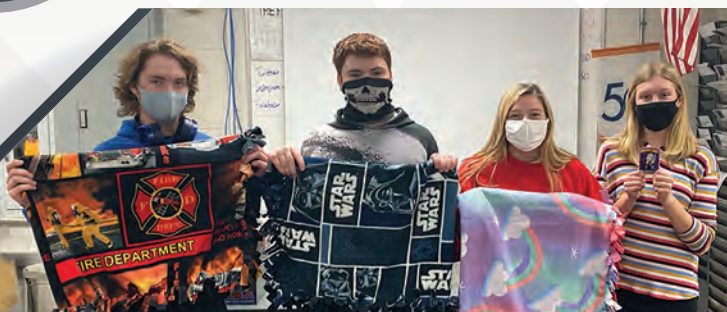
For SkillsUSA members at New Madrid Technical Skills Center, the eagle is more than a majestic mascot; it represents noble ideals. These ideals were put into action with “Eagle Christmas” as chapter members collaborated to support low income children. Beginning in October of 2020, students presented a plan of action at a chapter meeting, established committees and assigned tasks to members and staff. The social committee met with school counselors to make a list of students lacking food and necessities. The public relations committee designed flyers for distribution to local business, posted information on social media sites, and placed an ad in the local newspaper to inform the community about the effort. The community service committee held regular reviews to ensure goals were being met with checklists for each task including due dates. All members took the Quizlet Live pre-test and post-test to evaluate their application of planning, organizing and management. Member’s inspired others as school organizations, 145 sponsors, and several business owners fulfilled every child’s need on the list. In total, 164 at-risk children received clothing, hygiene products, school supplies and Christmas gifts. More than 300 families received holiday meal boxes provided by the local food bank and grocery stores.

The size and scale of this initiative reflects outstanding application of **planning, organizing and management**. Students were diligent in their preparation and implementation of this initiative. They exhibited attention to detail, perseverance in completing tasks, and ongoing prioritization to achieve desired results. They also applied professionalism and confidentiality in serving youth in their community. Moreover, they used their skills to model generosity and cooperation.



PROJECT LINUS

PLANNING, ORGANIZING AND MANAGEMENT



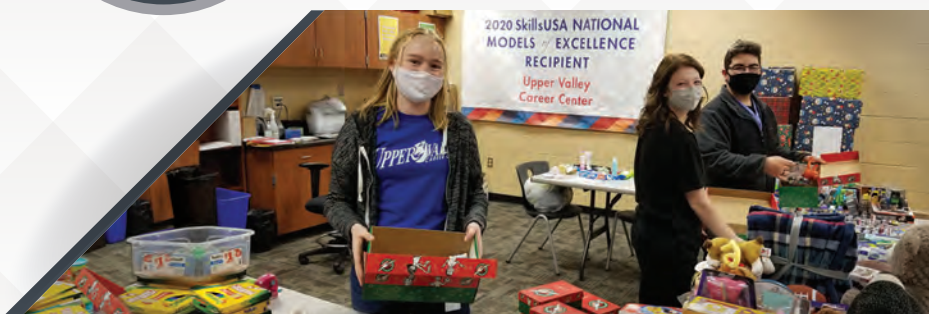
Louisville Public School, Nebraska

Bringing comfort to others is always a worthwhile endeavor. SkillsUSA members at Louisville Public School partnered with Project Linus to make fleece tie blankets for children in need. The chapter set a goal of raising \$1,000 to purchase fabric with the intent of making 150 blankets. Chapter officers and the community service team employed a well-coordinated plan to oversee this multi-month effort. They created a schedule for chapter members to tie blankets, including organized time slots and designated classrooms. The chapter drafted informational letters and emails, created publicity posters, and made phone calls to community members to request financial support. To keep everyone informed and connected while also managing school schedules, the chapter used digital apps and text messaging. A total of 90% of chapter members took part in the activity, with 90% also demonstrating the application of planning, organizing and management skills during a self-reflection of participation. The chapter fell short of their \$1,000 fundraising goal, but is continuing to work toward completion of 150 blankets.

Planning, organizing and management has been key in keeping the chapter engaged and focused with so many members involved. Chapter leaders implemented the project within a desired timeframe, followed standards of quality and expectations in making blankets, set priorities in accomplishing multiple tasks and are committed to achieving their fundraising goal to complete blankets. This will be easier now that members can meet with local business partners in person. The chapter also had a few community members make blankets to help. There is no doubt this dedicated crew will reach their goal!

SKILLSUSA REACHING OUT TO THOSE IN NEED: OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

MULTICULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND AWARENESS



Upper Valley Career Center, Ohio

Based on results from the Framework Essential Elements Self-Assessment, SkillsUSA members at Upper Valley Career Center realized they needed to strengthen the workplace component of multicultural sensitivity and awareness. Officers also felt this was important because there are so many new members in their SkillsUSA program. Many had not yet been exposed to the necessity of this skill in the workplace. To engage members at all levels, the chapter partnered with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes to host a Christmas gift drive to support children worldwide. To say that chapter leaders mobilized their classmates is an understatement. Using schoolwide teamwork and multiple communication channels including flyers, emails and announcements, the chapter collected 492 items to fill 53 boxes! Over 700 students representing 22 technical programs participated. Each program was required to explore the needs of children receiving donations, and each student was challenged to make a personal contribution. In addition to awareness created by supporting children in various countries, the activity spurred classroom discussions about different cultures and promoted peer-to-peer understanding and relationship-building.

The chapter's focus on **multicultural sensitivity and awareness** for this activity demonstrated the value of self-assessment. They identified an area that needed improvement and selected a cause that would increase exposure to diverse cultures while also providing an opportunity to build rapport with each other. Students expanded their knowledge of culture, race and religion and learned to appreciate different opinions. Members demonstrated their ability to be personable and professional during the drive, and worked well as a team to accomplish a sizeable goal. This was a successful operation indeed.



LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION IN THE WORKPLACE TRAINING

LEADERSHIP



Brooke High School, West Virginia

When three quarters of your SkillsUSA chapter leadership is graduating, it's time to prepare future leaders! Chapter officers at Brooke High School took it upon themselves to motivate members to run for office by providing in-house leadership training. The leadership development committee went to work developing a presentation, identifying SMART goals and putting together a plan of action for the leadership training. A date and time was set and students were invited to the event using the Remind platform. Approximately 40% of chapter membership attended and students from three programs expressed interest in running for office. Officers felt the training would have had even higher attendance had the presentation been advertised more, and had it not been held the same week as mock job interviews. They also appreciated the constructive criticism provided from their state director, chapter advisor and a SkillsUSA alumni member to improve the presentation prior to the event. All in all, it was a successful venture as 100% of non-senior attendees expressed interest in running for a chapter office.

The theme of self-directed **leadership** was well-suited for this activity. Chapter officers recognized the importance of building relationships in supporting the future well-being of the chapter. They created a presentation based on characteristics for effective leadership such as trust, and informed future chapter leaders of job-specific duties and responsibilities as officers. By doing so, they mobilized individuals and resources to accomplish a goal, effectively coached others, and articulated their enthusiasm around the importance of running for chapter office. This team was passing the torch by example!

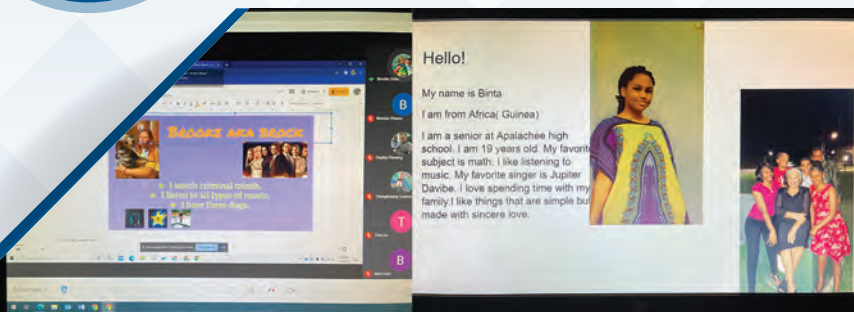


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VIRTUAL VISION BOARDS AND CULTURE SHARING

COMPUTER AND TECHNOLOGY LITERACY



Apalachee High School, Georgia

SkillsUSA members at Apalachee High School used a virtual learning experience to gain valuable computer skills while advancing chapter unity. Creating vision boards is something the chapter has always done, just not virtually. What once involved cutting photos out of magazines to tell a story transitioned into a technology literacy opportunity using Google Slides and Google Meet platforms. Students welcomed the challenge to gain new skills while also adding a cultural awareness component. Each participant had to prepare and present a virtual presentation that included a personal photo, music representative of their cultural heritage, favorite foods, two short-term goals and one long-term goal. Nine students and one instructor participated, representing seven different cultures. These included American, Cherokee Indian, Latino, South African, Vietnamese, French and African American. As an added bonus, this activity helped students prepare for their SkillsUSA Georgia State Leadership and Skills Conference contests.

Knowledge of **computer and technology literacy** was apparent in the quality of each student's presentation content and individual delivery. This was validated by their ability to use features such as "share presentation" and in being able to upload photos and videos from cellphones to Google Slides. Members learned how to give professional virtual presentations in a set format, and how to adapt to unforeseen technical obstacles. Not only did students become skilled at using Google applications, but they had a great time learning more about each other — especially with music sharing! It was such a success, the chapter plans to do it again next year.



SHOWCASE VIDEOS

JOB-SPECIFIC SKILLS



Forsyth Central High School, Georgia

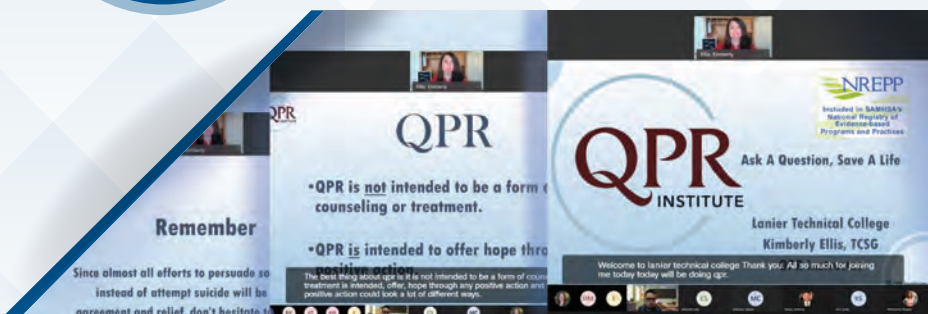
What better way to promote career and technical education and SkillsUSA than with showcase videos starring SkillsUSA members! This is exactly what students at Forsyth Central High School did by having their audio visual program create promotional videos for the automotive and cosmetology programs. Audio visual students developed a timeline for filming and editing each video, focusing on key skill sets within each technical area. The automotive program dismantled a 2003 Chevy Cavalier, showing correct tools and procedures for disassembling a car and preparing it for scrap. The cosmetology program demonstrated using hair color on money pieces (face-framing hair pieces dyed a lighter shade than the rest of one's hair) using a current industry technique. This went so well that the audio visual program created their own video by using footage of their students editing the automotive and cosmetology videos. Not only did students demonstrate important industry skills, but now the chapter has custom videos to promote their programs to feeder schools!

Job-specific skills were front and center in all aspects of this project. Each group of students — audio visual, automotive and cosmetology — demonstrated their knowledge of tools, equipment and materials. They abided by quality standards for products and services, and demonstrated essential knowledge and skills required for the job. Students shared their academic and practical knowledge with each video, adhering to timelines and expectations set forth by the audio visual team. They had a great time promoting programs they actively participate in while showcasing in-house talent.



SUICIDE PREVENTION VIRTUAL TRAINING

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Lanier Technical College, Georgia

Depression and suicide rates escalated with pandemic restrictions and lockdowns. According to a study conducted by Boston University's School of Public Health, the prevalence of depression symptoms more than tripled during the pandemic. SkillsUSA members at Lanier Technical College recognized this startling trend and took preventative action. The education committee within the allied health program planned and developed a virtual suicide prevention training, enabling students to become QPR Suicide Prevention Certified. Members secured a certified trainer and date, created marketing materials, sent event reminders to all SkillsUSA members, and set up the presentation link via Webex. A total of 75 students from various technical programs attended, with 98% of attendees surveyed saying they now understand how to recognize and reduce suicidal behavior. Participants received the Suicide Prevention Certification to add to their résumés, and are prepared to potentially save lives in the future. The training was a timely safety and health exercise for allied health students as well as those in different technical programs.

Professional development was central in coordinating the training and in students attaining a professional certification. Having 75 students participate illustrated the training's value, especially since student involvement across all college activities was down during the pandemic. Members showed an openness to learning about an important issue and growing professionally. They applied appropriate resources in promoting the event, and by using the Webex platform to connect participants. The allied health program has decided to host this workshop every semester, equipping even more students with valuable suicide prevention skills as they enter the workforce.



BICYCLE DRIVE FOR HABITAT OF HUMANITY OF CAPE COD

SERVICE ORIENTATION



Cape Cod Technical High School, Massachusetts

During the pandemic, cycling gained renewed interest as a fun outdoor activity. SkillsUSA members at Cape Cod Technical High School noticed their community was impacted by a bicycle shortage, with many people wanting bikes but unable to afford them. This prompted chapter members to lead a bicycle drive and refurbishing effort to serve local families through Habitat of Humanity. Students did not have specific bicycle repair skills, but embraced the opportunity to learn these skills while using skills they would normally apply within their occupational shops. Tasks like using solvents to clean chains, prepping bikes for painting, and removal and replacement of broken parts were all part of the process. The chapter applied OSHA standards to ensure health and safety; established a timeline for bicycle collection, repair and delivery; created an inventory of repairs and parts needed; and enlisted the talents of five bike shops. They challenged each participating shop to “adopt” bikes with a central focus of using transferable skills to serve others. The chapter collected 15 bikes during January and February of 2021, refurbishing all but one, which was used for parts. Bicycles were completed just in time for spring break and nicer weather.

Students demonstrated a thoughtful understanding of **service orientation** by responding to a local need, developing a well-coordinated plan and optimizing human and material resources for completion. They responded internally through a collaborative effort to meet timelines and perform quality bicycle repairs. They responded externally by providing a valuable service to benefit their community. Thanks to their efforts, more families are happily riding the local bike trails this year.



ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS PROGRAM PARTNERS WITH HABITAT OF HUMANITY

JOB-SPECIFIC SKILLS



Catawba Valley Community College, North Carolina

The Catawba Valley Community College (CVCC) SkillsUSA chapter provided a feel-good pandemic story by partnering with Habitat for Humanity on a residential home wiring project. The instructor of CVCC's electrical systems program and 16 students volunteered for much-needed home electrical services. Upon agreeing to project terms and protocols with Habitat for Humanity, students put their electrical knowledge and skills to the test. Prior to wiring the home on-site, they reviewed and practiced wiring in class. They also became well-versed on safety protocols related to construction and pandemic guidelines. At the job site, students demonstrated proficient electrical expertise in completing assigned duties while performing other tasks to support home completion. This initiative was such an inspiration to the community that the local Lowe's store manager (a former SkillsUSA member), donated 10 tool bags to ensure students had the right tools for the job. In addition, Lowe's gave participating members \$50 gift cards to purchase supplies for future projects.

The application of **job-specific skills** was commendable as students demonstrated knowledge of tools, equipment and materials. Students abided by quality standards for products and services, demonstrated essential knowledge and skills required for the job, applied academic knowledge, and followed the expectations set forth by their SkillsUSA instructor and Habitat for Humanity. Construction safety and COVID protocols were adhered to at all times, and students wired an entire home in a professional manner. It was such a success, they will be expanding the scope of their work for their next project!



CULINARY ARTS WEEKLY DONATIONS: WARM FOOD, WARM THOUGHTS

JOB-SPECIFIC SKILLS



Sussex County Technical School, New Jersey

SkillsUSA members in the culinary arts program at Sussex County Technical School used job-specific skills to reduce hunger in their community. Their student-run bakeshop was unable to serve customers due to pandemic restrictions, but they did not want meals to go to waste. They also knew that many people, including some of their own families, were struggling financially. Hot meals go a long way in supporting the community. Chapter members researched area food banks and identified one called “Pass It Along” as a partner. Since November of 2020, the chapter has provided Pass It Along with an average of 76 meals each Friday. Members have been diligent in wearing PPE and preparing food according to professional standards. They have increased overall health and safety standards by cleaning more often, wearing gloves, masks and shields. Every Friday, members deliver food to a drop point, load food as required, and provide an invoice of items included in the donation. Members have worked with Pass It Along volunteers on their customer service skills, and have consistently achieved quality control standards of 80–90% for each delivery.

Job-specific skills have been at the forefront as students exhibit their mastery of culinary arts and in using various cooking tools. They have been committed to quality standards for meals and customer service, applying classroom learning on the job. In addition to providing a service appreciated by their community, they have demonstrated a commitment to eliminating food waste. The project has gone so well, it has grown! Since this spring, the chapter has expanded operations to serve three additional local organizations.



A MURDER IN NEGALLIA

JOB-SPECIFIC SKILLS



Gordon Cooper Technology Center, Oklahoma

A murder mystery game for learning job-specific skills? Now that's resourceful! It's exactly what SkillsUSA members at Gordon Cooper Technology Center did with their creation of "A Murder in Negallia." Students used a methodical process to develop the storyline, establish character roles, design the game atmosphere, and solve the case. Job-specific skills were incorporated directly into the plot. These skills took the form of special powers or traits to help each player find clues. However, players had to work as a team for their powers to be of maximum benefit. Students created a timeline, wrote a script, brainstormed a materials list, developed player identities, gathered costumes, built props and more. They decorated the classroom as the medieval village of Negallia and had a dress rehearsal. When it was game-time, 15 students took part with a cast of nine actors and six players. The actors wore costumes and had a themed work space. Each cast member had a specific script describing their abilities along with a prop so others could identify their job skills. In the end, the murderer was identified and all was well in Negallia again!

Every aspect of the game required students to use **job-specific skills**. Game designers strategized to develop a detailed plot that solved problems in a systematic way. The characters and storyline were complex, inspiring students to work together and communicate. Game participants continually engaged critical thinking and applied the job-specific skills they were assigned in order to assemble clues and reach a solution. Members also had to learn how to overcome budget constraints by using props and supplies they had at home, and putting together costumes from items found at the thrift store. This was purposeful fun!



MONTANA MASK PROJECT

JOB-SPECIFIC SKILLS



Oak Harbor High School, Washington

SkillsUSA members at Oak Harbor High School wanted to ensure frontline medical workers in their Whidbey Island community were protected. The chapter's engineering and technical design competition team approached their advisor about borrowing 3D printers from school to make Montana-style masks from home. Montana masks seemed a viable option since they are reusable and easy to sanitize. Members also decided to merge their efforts with the school's robotics team, which was already making masks. Students obtained a free online mask design, but took it a step further by altering the design to accommodate different face sizes. They quickly realized that meeting production goals was going to be difficult since it took six hours to produce each mask. Through communication with their advisor and each other, they were able to change 3D printer settings to make two masks per printer every 10 hours. From March 23 to April 15, 2020, they produced 140 masks, exceeding their 100 mask goal, and adding to the 850 masks produced by the robotics team. Masks were distributed to essential workers in four communities on their 45-mile long island.

Students used several **job-specific skills** during this endeavor. Computer and technology literacy was applicable in saving time, adjusting mask sizing, and in overcoming 3D production obstacles. The project involved collaboration between two school groups, increasing their leadership skills and providing an opportunity to mirror the teamwork that occurs between engineering and robotics personnel in the workplace. Team members also learned the value of communication. They relied on their advisor and each other to work through challenges while producing a professionally made life-saving product.



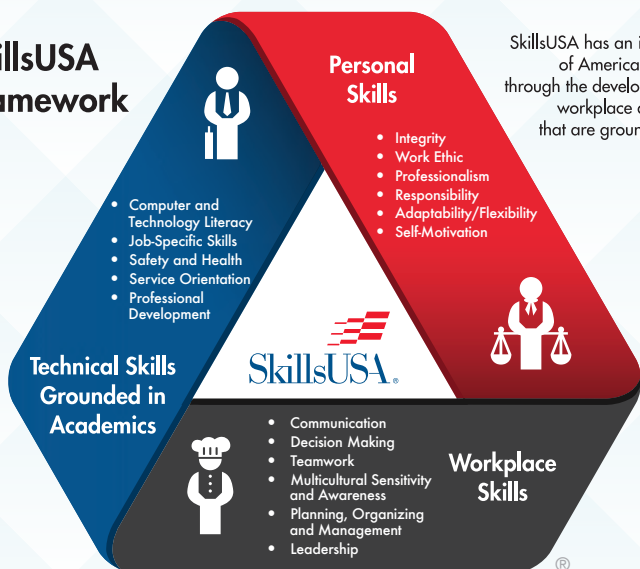
chapter excellence
program

THE SKILLSUSA FRAMEWORK — BUILDING FUTURES, CHANGING LIVES

Career and technical education and SkillsUSA exist because we believe every student deserves career success. It's that simple. We're in the business of ensuring students are ready to excel in the workplace and as leaders of their communities. It's an awesome responsibility, but one to embrace because it defines our legacy of positively influencing student lives and supporting our nation's economic future.

What do students need for career readiness? The answer resides in the SkillsUSA Framework for developing **personal**, **workplace** and **technical** skills. This trifecta of student success centers on industry demand and builds the foundation for relevant and intentional student learning and leadership development. Innovative programming, quality instruction and industry partnerships focus on equipping students with the necessary leadership, technical, communication and management skills to succeed at work and in life. When it all comes together, students have the opportunity to explore and experience high-demand, high-skilled, high-wage careers. Together, we can address the skilled labor gap while empowering our members to succeed in school, work and life.

SkillsUSA Framework



SkillsUSA has an impact on the lives of America's future workforce through the development of personal, workplace and technical skills that are grounded in academics.

Thank You for Supporting Chapter Excellence!



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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.

www.skillsusa.org