



NEW DIRECTIONS

Fall 2023 Edition - Connecting New Jersey, One Chapter At A Time



PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

By: **Isabella D'abbenigno** President

Dear New Jersey FCCLA Members, Advisers, and Alumni:

Thank you all so much for your enthusiasm and dedication during the National Leadership Conference. Your hard work truly paid off. New Jersey walked away with 64 gold medals, 42 silver medals, and 7 bronze certificates with 28 teams placing in the top 10. Congratulations, you should be proud of yourselves! Students and participants were also able to attend a number of workshops about leadership roles, fundraising, community service, and more. New Jersey even had our very own workshop at NLC called "Common Ground." Adedoyin Ayeni, Diya Pottangadi, and Lucais Romo spoke out on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. New Jersey's Emma Larsen and Lucais Romo received recognition for completing and passing the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens Leadership course through FranklinCovey. We also said goodbye to our NJ National Executive Council officer, Gianna Debrun, VP of Competitive Events. We wish you good luck on your post-secondary journey. Congratulations to Amanda Chen on her amazing accomplishment of being elected as the NEC President! We wish you much success.

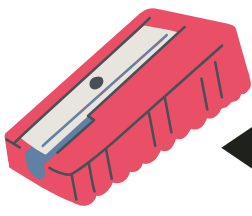
I would like to welcome you back to the start of another incredible year. I can not wait to see everyone getting involved whether it is with competitive events, networking, national programs, community service, or fundraising. FCCLA truly has something for everyone. We have a great year planned, so make sure that you attend the Fall Leadership Connection, Leadership Bootcamp, and the State Leadership Conference. There will be plenty of workshops and competitive events along with leadership growth opportunities throughout the year. For more information, be sure to visit our website at njfccla.org and follow us on Instagram @njfccla.

As a chapter, it's super important to follow the three R's of membership: Recruit, Retain, and Recognize. At the beginning of the year, Recruit is the biggest of the R's. Without members, there would be no organization so make sure to get the word out about FCCLA to students. One of my favorites includes bringing a buddy to the 1st chapter meeting. Speaking of chapter meetings, if you ever want NJ officers to visit a chapter meeting, just email njfccla@gmail.com. We will be happy to help!

Transitioning back into the school mindset and saying goodbye to another summer is a bittersweet feeling. As hard as it is to say goodbye, it is also important that we welcome and recognize a new beginning. School brings new growth and knowledge. It is also a great time to set goals for yourself and your chapter as well. Whatever your goals may be, stay strong and don't lose focus of who you are. On behalf of the New Jersey State Executive Council, we wish you a fantastic school year!

Best wishes,
Isabella





Back to School: Sharpen the Saw!

By Amanda Chen, National President

As summer comes to an end and a new school year begins, it is important to take care of ourselves as we take on different responsibilities. From being students to FCCLA members, we hold many roles within our families and communities, making it important to be able to practice self-care and successful time management. If we neglect our basic needs and happiness, we become at risk for burnout, which can negatively impact our lifestyle and well-being. The book, **The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens** by Sean Covey, explores seven habits that will help guide your interpersonal skills and lead an effective lifestyle.

Habit 7, “Sharpen the Saw,” covers the concept of daily self-renewal, where you maintain a healthy balance between work and taking care of yourself! Sharpen the Saw oversees four core areas: body, heart, mind, and spirit. With an emphasis placed on mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional health, this habit encourages you to take care of all aspects of your life in order to be your best self. With the adjustment of a new learning environment, it can be challenging to constantly handle different situations. Ensuring that you are taking care of yourself will help you produce positive results in your life and have the energy to give back to others.

The first core area of this habit is focused on the body, including topics such as exercise, nutrition, rest, and stress management. It is necessary to physically take care of yourself in order to function! Taking the time to exercise everyday, eat nutritious meals, and find ways to destress are essential to allowing your body the time to rejuvenate and provide energy to accomplish your goals. Each person has a unique way of caring for physical health, so it is important to find methods that work best for you. Whether you enjoy going on a walk or taking the time to practice breathing exercises, there are a wide range of activities that can help you achieve a healthy lifestyle. With the return to school, it is especially important to gain proper rest, as your morning may begin early and cover a variety of various tasks throughout the day.

Next, focusing on the heart will help you sharpen the saw! It is important to make regular positive contributions into the lives of others in order to build trusting relationships, which can appear through the concept of an emotional bank account (EBA). By engaging in proactive acts that show you care for others, you create “deposits” into a healthy relationship, which boosts your overall support system. While you can “withdraw” from someone’s EBA and hurt relationships, taking the initiative to build trust positively impacts both others and yourself.

With the return to school, learning is at the forefront as students. However, it is important to continue to learn even after the school day to sharpen the mind! Through activities such as reading, writing, learning, and study, finding a love for learning and passion for different topics can help you grow as an individual. Reading for a minimum of thirty minutes a day can boost reading comprehension, strengthen writing skills, and provide an outlet for relaxation. Making learning fun by finding topics of interest can help you increase knowledge and relax!

Last, the area of spirit can help you strengthen the saw by focusing on your local community and surroundings. Giving back through service, engaging in meditation, and exploring nature are some ways to feel positive about making an impact! The best feeling of giving back is knowing that you have made a difference in the lives of others, thereby increasing your overall well-being in the process.

Maintaining a healthy balance in your life will help you manage your responsibilities and reduce stress as you approach the new school year! Remember that organizing your priorities and taking the time to care for yourself will ultimately lead to a happier and more productive lifestyle. Understand that there are always people that love and support you - we want you to succeed! On behalf of New Jersey FCCLA, we wish you a successful school year as we embark on **“The Ultimate Journey!”**



Conquering "Senioritis": Strategies to Stay Motivated in Your Final Year of High School



By: Emma Larsen, VP of Communication

Senioritis is a phenomenon commonly experienced by high school students in which a decline in motivation and academic performance plagues high school seniors as the end of their high school journey approaches. It can be tempting to succumb to the allure of senioritis, but it's essential to finish strong and make the most of your final year.

- **Set Clear Goals**
 - Clearly define what you want to accomplish to ensure that you stay on track
 - This will help alleviate stress as your next steps can be easily outlined from this process.
- **Stay Engaged in Classes**
 - Limit distractions that will prevent you from staying focused.
 - Really learning in class can help minimize the time spent relearning the information later.
- **Explore New Subjects and Activities**
 - Finding new hobbies can be a great way to stay motivated.
 - Learning new subjects (languages, art, music) can help relieve stress and unleash a new creative side of yourself.
- **Create a Study Routine**
 - Having certain times blocked out of the day for school work will help you manage time.
- **Seek Support from Peers and Mentors**
 - Create a support system with people who have similar goals to you.
- **Celebrate Achievements**
 - Take pride in important milestones and share your successes to your peers to remind you of your accomplishments.
- **Take Care of Yourself**
 - Remember that it is also vital to take care of your mind and body to prioritize your needs.

With these tips in mind, it can be easier to beat Senioritis and learn new things about other subjects and yourself! All in all aiding in ending senior year strong by creating new habits and strategies along the way!



Staying Organized this School Year

By: Isabella D'abbenigno President



A new school year can be exciting and intimidating at the same time! Many students often struggle with completing tasks, keeping track of tests, projects, and quizzes, managing and prioritizing their time, and keeping up with extracurriculars. What if I told you there was an easy solution?

I believe that the first step to success is organization. It's much easier to have a planner, calendar, app, or to-do list to refer back to instead of trying to remember everything. It's just a matter of finding what works for you!

Physical Planner/Calendar:

Having a physical planner is a solution that you have probably heard of but be sure not to overlook it. What many people fail to realize is that there are different kinds of physical planners. One of the most popular is called a bullet journal. These often have blank pages with grid dots. Bullet journals leave room for a lot of creative freedom! You can make it as simple or detailed as you would like. It also allows you to adjust your planner as you need. If one setup does not work for you just change it up! There is also the option of buying a planner that is already set up. You can find these almost everywhere. Pre-made planners are perfect for people who need a little help with getting organized. In addition to having a planner, I recommend adding a to-do list. You can place your to-do list in your planner, on little sticky notes, or on a whiteboard! Anywhere that works for you! And remember the only way a planner is going to work is if you take it out and look at it daily.

Digital Planners and Apps:

Lucky for us, we live in a time when technology is at the forefront. There are a plethora of different apps that can help you stay organized. A classic one is the calendar app. This is a great place to keep track of meetings, appointments, and due dates. It's a good start, but I would suggest an app that is a little more detailed. I recommend "Todoist: To-Do List & Planner." It is a planner and to-do list all in one. What is nice about this app is that it is user-friendly and has a super simple design. If you are looking for a creative planner app, I suggest "Planner & Journal - Zinnia." It allows you to have control over what your planner looks like and how you use it! These are just 2 apps that I personally like but there are hundreds on the App Store!

I know that it can be hard to start off a new school year but try to start out strong! Keep a planner either digital or physical for at least a month and be sure to use it every day. I can promise you that staying organized will set you up for an awesome year!

State Officers Share: First Meeting Ideas

By: Malav Shah, VP of Community Service

These are our helpful tips and tricks into ensuring your first chapter meeting is a big success!

As school slowly starts to roll in, the New Jersey State Executive Council is determined to start off the year with a bang! First chapter meetings can be a great way to try something new and different, network with others, and explore what other endeavors our incredible organization has to offer. While having fun, it is also equally as important to participate and be active, so you can get the full FCCLA experience!

Here's what the 2023-2024 SEC had to say about first chapter meetings:

Amanda Chen (National President): "The first chapter meeting of the year is always an exciting time! From reuniting with returning members to seeing prospective members, I love the enthusiasm of a new year and the possibilities it brings. We encourage participation through fun icebreakers, and then teach the foundational information about FCCLA to give members another reason to affiliate. We also encourage officers to share their own personal experiences through photos and videos!"

Isabella Dabbenigno (State President): "I love the first meeting of the year where new and old faces join together. We usually start off with our expectations of the year, so members get an understanding about the chapter and how it functions. To increase comfort, we do a lot of icebreakers, such as an FCCLA kahoot along with a web search. At the end of the meeting, we invite members to grab a snack or a treat and hang out. We also encourage them to ask questions as FCCLA is a lot to take in at first."

Emma Larsen (VP of Communications): "The first chapter meeting is one of my favorite moments in being a member of FCCLA. My first meeting as a prospective member began with chapter officers making a lasting impact on us members with their own experiences. One way to encourage members to participate would be to have returning members share their favorite moments. Explain how FCCLA provides endless opportunities for members to grow and have a great time!"

Lucais Romo (VP of Membership): "A beginning of the year chapter meeting is a key time to establish confidence, responsibility, and empathy amongst your chapter! We especially gain membership by plugging in our social media on all fronts, to keep our members updated with our communication networks."

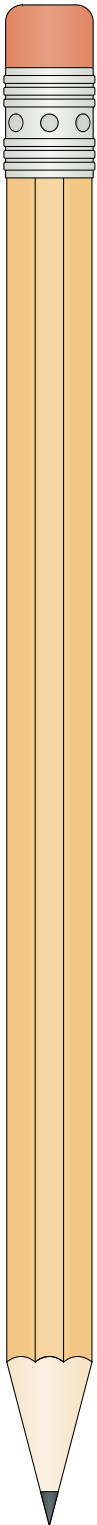
Malav Shah (VP of Community Service): "The first meeting is a great opportunity to gain membership, so emphasize the opportunities that FCCLA provides, through member recognition, competitive events, conferences, etc. The desire to learn from members is always inspiring."

Stuti Shah (VP of Public Relations): "The first chapter meeting is a great time to address FCCLA's opportunities and focuses. Icebreakers open our meetings that bring our current and potential members together and allow connection between everyone."

Hitha Srinivas (VP of Parliamentary Law): "The first chapter meeting of the year is always filled with lots of excitement. Creating an agenda and Program of Work for the year is always successful in our chapter."

Brian Muirhead (Committee Chair): "Some of my favorite memories are actually from the first meeting, where I was able to see all the new and excited faces of our returning members. We host a get-to-know-you game with prizes, because who doesn't love a good reward?"

Fatima Ponnawalla (Committee Chair): "The biggest key to having a successful first meeting is captivating the interest of the audience. I personally enjoy getting to know members one-on-one, to strengthen and build relationships. Having a great first meeting is not only thrilling but an essential part of having a successful year!"



Ideas for a Fresh FCCLA Chapter Meeting

By: Hitha Srinivas, VP of Parliamentary Law



School day start with the familiar routine of alarm clocks and school buses, it's hard to ignore the sense of excitement in the air. A new school year brings with it a wave of possibilities, a chance to turn a fresh page and set new goals. There's another event that marks the beginning of FCCLA—the first general FCCLA meeting. A fresh start reminds us that this new year holds the promise of endless opportunities and the power to shape our futures through FCCLA.

Here are some new ideas to introduce in your first general meeting of the year!

1. Set new goals

Setting goals is crucial for individuals as it provides a clear direction and purpose. It helps members focus their efforts and energies towards personal growth, skill development, and making a meaningful impact within the organization. Specifically, have members make a list of goals they want to accomplish by the end of the year. By the last general meeting of the year, members will get to reflect upon the success in reaching their goals and be recognized for it!

2. Reflect

Through self-reflection, individuals gain insight into their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for development, allowing them to set meaningful goals and make necessary adjustments to enhance their contributions to the organization. This can be introduced through an ice-breaker, where individuals make a poster together with words and statements embodying their reflections within and out of FCCLA.

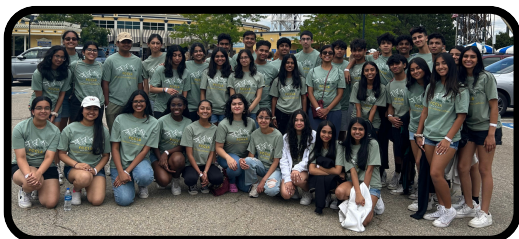
3. Chapter Calendars

Creating a calendar for the chapter with estimated events and fundraisers provides members with a valuable tool for organization and success. It allows individuals to plan ahead, allocate their time effectively, and prioritize their involvement in various activities. With a clear overview of upcoming events, members can prepare themselves adequately, contribute meaningfully to each initiative, and ensure a well-coordinated and impactful presence throughout the year.

4. Fall Leadership Conference

As the Fall Leadership Conference approaches, there are several exciting aspects for which to look forward. To prepare, consider researching the Fall Competitive events found on the NJ FCCLA website, and setting personal goals for what you hope to achieve.

First meetings are an incredible way to introduce new members to the wonders of FCCLA, to provide information about upcoming fundraisers, community service projects, and chapter meetings. Create a dynamic and transparent communication plan. This will help in maintaining or growing membership and in creating a well run chapter!



Having a Social Media Presence this School Year

By: Emma Larsen, VP of Communication



As the school year begins, it's the perfect time to revamp your chapter's social media strategy and leverage these platforms to connect with students.

Choose the Right Platforms:

Identify the social media platforms that are most popular among your target audience. NJ FCCLA uses Instagram, Facebook and Twitter to share information. Focus your efforts on those platforms to maximize your reach and impact.

Create Engaging Content:

Develop a content strategy that aligns with your chapter's goals and catches your audience's attention. Share visually appealing images, videos, and graphics that showcase your chapter's activities, events, and achievements. Craft engaging captions that are informative, entertaining, and encourage interaction.

Consistency is Key:

Maintain a consistent posting schedule to keep your audience engaged. A regular flow of content ensures that your chapter remains visible and relevant. Create a content calendar to plan your posts in advance and ensure a varied mix of content types. This can include promoting events in your chapter, member of the month spotlights, behind-the-scenes glimpses, educational posts, or even interactive polls and challenges.

Encourage Member Engagement:

Encourage chapter members and followers to share their experiences, photos, and stories related to your chapter. You can create dedicated hashtags to collect and showcase members. By featuring members on your chapter's social media accounts, you not only increase engagement but also make your followers feel valued and included.

Interact:

Social media is a two-way communication channel. Encourage your chapter members to engage with followers by responding to comments, messages, and mentions promptly. Actively participate in discussions, ask questions, and seek feedback from your audience. By fostering meaningful interactions, you can build stronger connections and make followers feel that their opinions and contributions are valued.

Track and Analyze Insights:

Regularly monitor social media metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of your efforts. Platforms offer insights to reach engagement, and audience demographics. Analyze these metrics to identify trends, understand which content performs best, and adapt your strategy accordingly. Use this data to refine your content, posting times, and engagement techniques for optimal results.



Freshmen Involvement

By Brian Muirhead, Committee Chair



Every FCCLA chapter needs freshmen to grow and thrive. Their early engagement as the organization's future leaders assures a steady flow of talent and ideas and helps them grow personally and as leaders.

Freshmen infuse the chapter with new vitality and passion, assuring its endurance and durability. The chapter builds a solid basis for future leadership and sustained success by incorporating freshmen from the start. Freshmen bring new ideas and views to the discussion. Their diverse perspectives and experiences add to the chapter's conversations and decision-making processes, encouraging originality and creativity. Entering freshmen in FCCLA gives them outstanding leadership and personal development opportunities. Freshmen can improve their communication, cooperation, and problem-solving abilities by participating in various events, including competitions, workshops, and volunteer work.

Here are some ways to get freshmen involved:

- 1. Freshman Leadership Roles:** Establish leadership roles open only to freshmen, such as committee members or representatives. These positions allow new members to participate actively in the chapter's decision-making processes, encouraging a sense of ownership and pride.
- 2. Collaborative Projects:** Provide chances for freshmen to work on projects, initiatives, and competitive events. This encourages collaboration and allows newcomers to learn from current members, develop partnerships, and mentorship possibilities. FCCLA also has State and STAR events where members can compete with various events at a state or national level, some events encouraging collaboration.
- 3. Recognize and Celebrate Freshmen Efforts:** Highlight freshmen's accomplishments and efforts at school-wide activities and inside the FCCLA chapter. To increase their confidence and encourage continuing involvement, highlight their achievements in newsletters, social media posts, and public acknowledgments.
- 4. Promote Social Gatherings:** Many teenagers, especially freshmen, rely heavily on social media. More freshmen would know about chapter meetings and initiatives if your chapter advertises itself on social media.

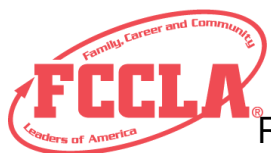
Freshmen involvement in FCCLA is essential to the chapter's expansion and success. FCCLA chapters may develop the potential of freshmen and equip them to become future leaders by involving them in September, offering specialized assistance, and encouraging a feeling of belonging. Freshmen who join FCCLA will gain from participating by developing their leadership and personal growth and strengthening and expanding the organization.

2024 NJ FCCLA Fall Leadership Connection

Monday, November 20, 2023

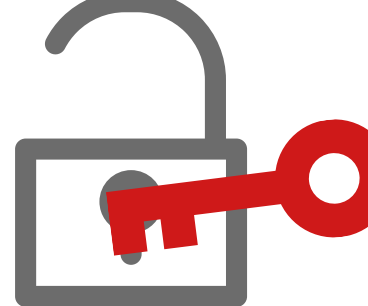
Pines Manor in Edison, NJ

Registration information is on the NJ FCCLA website.





UNLOCKING YOUR LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL



By: Hitha Srinivas, VP of Parliamentary Law

In a world where constant demands and overwhelming pressures are the norm, the concept of wellness has emerged as a beacon of hope, guiding individuals towards a balanced and fulfilling life. As the demands of leadership grow more complex, the importance of prioritizing wellness becomes paramount. These are some steps to enhance wellness and cultivate leadership qualities within you:

Prioritize Self-Care:

Wellness starts with taking care of yourself. Establish a routine that includes proper sleep, regular exercise, and a balanced diet. Remember to make time for activities you enjoy and to manage stress effectively. By prioritizing self-care, you will have the energy and focus to excel in your role as a leader.

Cultivate Emotional Well-Being:

Actively engage with your emotions and understand their impact on your thoughts and actions. Practice empathy, active listening, and constructive communication to build meaningful relationships.

Set Meaningful Goals:

Create a clear vision for the upcoming year. Set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals that align with your values. By setting goals, you can stay motivated, track your progress, and contribute to the success of your chapter and its initiatives.

Foster Teamwork:

Leadership is not a solo endeavor; it thrives on effective teamwork. Encourage collaboration and respect among others, recognizing that everyone brings unique strengths to the table. Embrace diversity and create an inclusive space where every voice is heard and valued.

Develop Problem-Solving Skills:

Familiarize yourself with the problem-solving process, which involves identifying the issue, gathering information, brainstorming solutions, evaluating options, and implementing the best course of action.

Communicate Effectively:

Practice active listening, clarity in speech, and effective non-verbal communication (ig. body language, facial expressions, use of objects, etc). Develop your public speaking skills to confidently present ideas and motivate others.

Being a positive role model by consistently demonstrating integrity, accountability, and a strong work ethic, are all qualities of a leader. Maintaining your health and wellness allows you to be a role model for younger members to look up to! By recognizing and investing in their own well-being, leaders can unlock their full potential and inspire those around them to do the same.

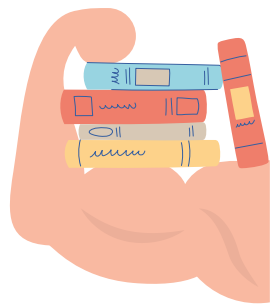
2024 NJ FCCLA LEADERSHIP BOOTCAMP

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 2024

VIRTUAL WATCH PARTY FROM YOUR SCHOOL!

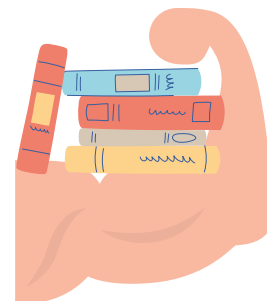
REGISTRATION COMING SOON!





Good Health for a Great School Year!

By: By: Malav Shah, VP of Community Service



The transition between summer and the start of school is always rough with the launch of new experiences. To help teens in these situations, FCCLA has established Student Body, one of the eight national programs, that promotes responsible and informed decision making about physical and mental health. By informing yourself of the four units, The Healthy You, The Fit You, The Real You, and The Resilient You, you can manage and organize your routine to better fit your lifestyle.

Start off by understanding Student Body's units:

- **The Healthy You:** Empowering teens to make wise food and lifestyle choices.
 - Eating a balanced meal can help nourish the growing teen body by providing all of the right nutrients. An energizing meal should predominantly consist of vegetables and fruits. A quarter of the meal should be carbohydrates or grains. The other quarter should be a healthy protein, such as fish, poultry, legumes, eggs, tofu, or red meat. Remember to include dairy if possible. Incorporating healthy fats, such as olive oil, avocados, or nuts can help reduce inflammation caused by stress. Following this balanced meal plan is a gateway to good health, but remember to eat in moderation!
- **The Fit You:** Empowering teens to take charge of their health and fitness.
 - With demanding school and social schedules, finding time to improve your well-being is difficult. Physical exercise can especially help in living a fitness forward lifestyle. The stress from school can have a tremendous effect on eating habits and in physical exercise. So, by consistently incorporating time for fitness into your schedule, you reduce the many heart related diseases, high blood pressure, and weak bones and muscles. By routinely practicing fitness, you can improve your mental health while also conditioning your physical body. Initiating a healthy lifestyle is the key to a happy and functional body!
- **The Real You:** Empowering teens to maintain positive mental health
 - Going into school with an open mindset to learn is important as it will inevitably help you in the long run. To maintain a positive mindset, you must have a high self-esteem while reflecting on body, mind, and abilities in a positive manner. The stress of school can be overwhelming, so time management and organization are key to relieving stress. Creating a routine and schedule to fit your necessities can help alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression, by dividing time to different priorities. This schedule establishes a set routine which improves efficiency, and reduces factors leading into stress to ensure a positive attitude.
- **The Resilient You:** Empowering teens to build emotional health
 - The last unit of Student Body, focuses on the effects of a healthy, positive, and responsible lifestyle. Maintaining an emotional health system depends on proactive decision making. Understanding that everyone is different but, when making decisions about your self-esteem and mental/physical health play a huge role. Being environmentally aware affects how you cope and adapt, making it essential to any situation. This is why flexibility and adaptability are quintessential in deciding your success!

With these steps, you can strive towards an incredibly successful and powerful school year. Being proactive with your decision making will make all the difference in school, and will certainly help elevate and enhance the experience. By implementing the Student Body units into your life, school is easily going to become even more enjoyable.

2024 NJ FCCLA State Leadership Conference

Wednesday- Thursday, March 20-21, 2024

DoubleTree Hotel in Cherry Hill, NJ

Registration information coming soon!



Know Your State Officers' Favorite Icebreakers



By: **Lucais Romo, V.P. of Membership**

This is an exciting time to unite old and new members and to set your sights on a successful year. An essential for running a great chapter meeting, and, more importantly, growing a unified chapter, is by beginning with icebreakers. Here are the favorite icebreakers of your state officers to get you started:

Amanda Chen, National President

Title: Similarities Game, first played in English class

How To Play: With your chapter in teams and a five minute timer set, have your team race against the clock to form a list of as many shared interests as you can. At the end of five minutes, teams will take turns sharing their similarities from their list. If any match, then you must cross them out. Unique answers are the key and will help your chapter form niche connections and begin to learn about one another's past surface level commonalities. The team with the most unique shared interest wins.

Isabella Dabbenigno, President

Title: 20 Seconds, first played in her Personal Finance class

How To Play: This goofy activity is fast-paced! Have every team member stand in a circle. In order everyone will have 20 seconds to share something about themselves. When 20 seconds is up, the member will conclude by saying, "I have spoken!" Everyone must respond with enthusiasm to this personal pitch: "Woah!", "Yeah!", "Awesome!" The cycle repeats for everyone.

Lucais Romo, Vice President of Membership

Title: Hot Seat, first played at youth group

How To Play: This activity can be completed over the course of many meetings. The object of this activity is to practice public speaking skills through a testimonial and for audience members to practice networking and building relationships. One member will share a success story, learning experience, or anecdote. This can be FCCLA-related for a chapter meeting or can be personal. After they are finished sharing a part of their story, the chapter will speak an encouraging word or identify a way in which their identities are connected. This activity asks for sincerity but, like many other fun-filled games, deep relationships will form.

Malav Shah, Vice President of Community Service

Title: Balloon Keep It Up, first played in Gianna DeBruyn's workshop at the State Leadership Conference

How To Play: To begin, have your members each blow up a balloon. Have a facilitator begin the game by splitting the chapter into smaller groups or gathering everyone together. The game begins when everyone sends their balloons into the air simultaneously. The goal of this icebreaker is to try and keep not only your balloon from hitting the ground, but all other balloons for about five to seven minutes. If a balloon does hit the floor, that balloon's owner is out of the circle. This icebreaker will encourage timid members to step out of their comfort zone.

Hitha Srinivas, Vice President of Parliamentary Law

Title: Hand Clap Name Game, first played at the state officer transition meeting

How To Play: This game can be played by everyone gathering in a circle. One lucky member is chosen to stand in the center of the circle. This icebreaker begins when someone from the circle calls out the name of another member. The center must try to catch that named member's hand before they can call out another name. The goal of the circle is to keep the center chasing a new member without being caught yourself. In the event the center catches a member, they trade places and the activity begins again. This is an exhilarating game that will surely have everyone familiar with the first key to the identity of a member; their name!

Emma Larsen, Vice President of Communications

Title: Waffles or Pancakes, first played at a state officer chapter visit with Adedoyin Ayeni

How To Play: Someone in your team will start the activity by posing the question, "Pancakes or waffles?" That person must choose to keep one and consequently erase the other from existence. They then replace the gap with a new food, item, or concept and ask the question to the next member. Take turns asking and choosing, and see where the team takes the activity.

Brian Muirhead, Committee Chair

Title: Find Someone Who Selfie Challenge, played at the 2023 state leadership conference

How To Play: This is one of few icebreakers that can utilize cell phones for the purpose of meeting new people. A facilitator will start this activity by calling out a command like "Find someone who has the same color eyes as you!" Team members will identify their match and snap a selfie together. Facilitators can get creative and have their commands match the topic or subject the chapter meeting will be covering. Save some new memories with your matches.

Icebreakers offer way more than fun and games to lift the spirits of a chapter. They can begin friendships, bring together teammates, and help solve problems. Will you use any of these at your next chapter meeting?



Incredible Fundraising Ideas for Your Chapter This School Year

By Brian Muirhead, Committee Chair

We are thrilled to share with you some exciting fundraising initiatives that could be implemented within your FCCLA chapter. These initiatives contribute to your FCCLA chapter's financial strength and bring members together, fostering a sense of unity and collaboration. Each fundraiser plays a vital role in supporting your chapter. Here are the details of a few fundraising initiatives.

1. WeHelpTwo: Extending Our Reach, Changing Lives

WeHelpTwo is a fundraising project for your FCCLA chapter that focuses on improving the lives of others. Every year, WeHelpTwo chooses a service initiative. “Club Foot” is a group WeHelpTwo is partnering with this year. Find out how you may participate in their service project this year by speaking with your adviser. FCCLA and WeHelpTwo are working together to generate money through the Clubfoot Repair initiative so that 150 babies in India can run without a handicap. Through this fundraiser, your chapter will gain profit, but you will also be giving back to those in need.

2. Apple Cider Sale: Embracing the Autumn Spirit

As the fall season approaches, you can spread some fall spirit by having an Apple Cider Sale. Treat yourself/ or your peers to the delicious taste of freshly pressed apple cider while supporting your FCCLA chapters endeavors.

3. Chocolate Sale: Satisfy Your Sweet Tooth

Calling all chocolate lovers! Indulge in the finest selection of chocolates while supporting your chapter's fundraising efforts. Whether you prefer dark, milk, or wafer chocolate, your chocolate sale has something for everyone. World's Finest Chocolate and Gertrude Hawk are two of many chocolate providing fundraising opportunities. Take advantage of the opportunity to satisfy your sweet tooth and contribute to a great cause!

4. Valentine's Cookie Decorating Fundraiser: Spreading Love and Joy

Love is in the air! Join your chapter in celebrating Valentine's Day by participating in your chapter's Cookie Decorating Fundraiser. This event offers a delightful opportunity for families and friends to come together, decorate cookies, and share their love. All proceeds from this event will support your FCCLA initiatives.

5. First Aid Kits: Ensuring Safety First

Safety should always be a priority! Help your chapter equip your school/organization with essential first aid kits. RightResponse is an organization that can help you with this fundraiser. By participating in this fundraiser, you are ensuring the well-being of your community.

6. Snap Raise: Unlocking Opportunities Through Crowdfunding

Snap Raise, an online crowdfunding platform, is another excellent option for chapters to use as a fundraising tool. With Snap Raise, you can expand your fundraising efforts and reach a wider audience. You can easily contribute to our cause through this innovative platform and help your chapter make a significant impact.

7. Cupcake Sale: Sweet Treats, Sweet Success

Indulge your taste buds with your chapter's Cupcake Sale! Have your talented FCCLA members prepare a variety of mouthwatering cupcakes that will delight you. If your school has dances try to sell cupcakes at your school dance and or event. By encouraging your friends and peers to purchase these sweet treats, you can contribute to your chapter's fundraising goals and experience a moment of pure culinary bliss.

8. My Intent Bracelets: Empowering Personalized Accessories

Express yourself and make a difference with My Intent Bracelets. These personalized accessories allow you to choose a word or phrase with a special meaning. By purchasing a MyIntent Bracelet, you support our initiatives while wearing a daily reminder of your intentions.

Fundraising is a great way to support your FCCLA chapter and spread the word about FCCLA. These unique fundraising ideas can help your chapter generate money to support your members and help them go “towards new horizons” through attending conferences and learning more about FCCLA!





Community Service Efforts to Give Back with Your Chapter

By: Malav Shah, VP of Community Service

The 2023 Fall Leadership Connection is right around the corner, which means competing, community service initiatives, member recognition, motivational speakers, and workshops. This is a great opportunity to become even more immersed into the FCCLA experience. Take a step and become an active member by contributing to our community service initiatives. This year NJ FCCLA is looking forward to collecting non-perishable food items, pull tabs, gently used shoes, donations from the cupcake challenge for Covenant House, and the sale of WeHelpTwo Socks.

As a member of our state delegation, you can help by...

Donating Non-Perishable Food Items

- These food items will be donated to the Middlesex County Food bank that serves 80 local pantries that include two cities. Local food pantries work to provide shelf stable necessities to people and families in need. Donate everything from canned fruit and veggies, and tuna to, dry pasta, cereal, and peanut butter,

Donate Pull Tabs

- Collect pull tabs (found on the top of canned items), to help us reach our goal of collecting 1 Million pull tabs for the state. These pull tabs work towards our goal in helping the Ronald McDonald house, which is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to support and and directly improve the health of children.

Donate Gently Used Shoes

- There are shoes that are hiding in closets all over the state that could be used to help people across the globe. Stop contributing to our landfills, donate shoes and help those in need.

Purchase socks from WeHelpTwo.

- A pair of cool socks cost only \$6 and this sale will help children in India who suffer from having clubfoot to get the necessary surgery they need.

Donate Money for the Cupcake Challenge

- Support NJ FCCLA & the Cupcake Challenge Participants by purchasing 6 cupcakes for \$5 you will be helping homeless teens in New Jersey through support of the Covenant House.

There are many ways your chapter can get involved in preparation for Fall Leadership Connection to give back to your community! Immersing your chapter in activities led by the state organization is a great way to create more participation from members.



Lunch Making 101

By: Malav Shah, VP of Community Service

Creating a new lunch every day to satisfy any teen is tough, especially in the early morning when there is zero motivation. This routine process can be creative and fun, while aiming to please a picky eater. However, there just happens to be some tips and tricks to make this experience more appealing, fun, and appetizing for the eater.

Homemade lunches, can be customized and a great way to use leftovers! By putting in a little more effort, they can be healthy and delicious.

Here are some tips and tricks to make this experience more appealing, healthy and appetizing:

1. Plan ahead;

- a. Look at the supermarket flyers to get ideas of foods you like to make a list of what you need to make a nutritious lunch. Don't forget to include all of your food groups!
- b. Use leftovers to limit food waste.

2. Taste the Rainbow!

- a. Choose a vibrant and colorful variety of foods, especially with fruits and vegetables. Not only does this provide a visual appeal, but will include the many essential nutrients your body needs to function.

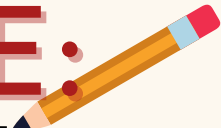
3. Keep it fresh!

- a. Avoid artificially made and manufactured juices and resort to homemade or simply drink water. Milk is also great for boosting calcium levels with the right amount of fat.
- b. Limit salt and fat intake which could keep you from getting that pep in your step.

Keep Calorie count in mind. Portion sizes reasonable.

These simple steps will really help in making lunchtime satisfying and soon your friends will be asking you to make their lunch too!

BREAK THE CYCLE:



HOW TO BREAK BAD HABITS AND START THE SCHOOL YEAR STRONG

By: Stuti Shah, VP of Public Relations

Summer is a great time for relaxation and is often a much needed break from the school year. Getting back into the swing of a routine can be helpful for productivity! Habits are known as patterns that are repeated so often, they become automatic. Breaking bad habits can seem intimidating, but with a few simple strategies, it can easily be done. Starting the school year strong is a great way to get a good grip on school work and is prime time to establish strong habits to help you continue the year on a good note!

Here are a few tips to help break bad habits:

Identify Why

Evaluate what that habit brings to your life and the negative impact they have. This requires awareness of your daily routines, so writing down what you are accomplishing daily is helpful!

Next Steps

Effective study habits go a long way in ensuring a strong school year! Finding what works for you can be hard, so here are some of the most effective study habits:

1. Spreading out material to different days

a. This is especially useful as this prevents “cramming” and allows you to fully learn the material! Spread out information so it is not intimidating, making it easier to learn and continue studying.

2. Making Study Resources

a. There are many great ways to make study resources, such as flashcards and quizzes, using websites like Quizlet and Knot. Turning facts into questions and using repetition are amazing ways to test your knowledge and make studying more engaging!

3. Handwrite Your Notes

a. Studies have shown that handwriting notes increase the amount of information you remember. This is perfect for content heavy classes like history or biology. As a bonus, this can help cut down study time, because you will remember more!

4. Find a Study-Buddy

a. Studying with a partner can help keep consistent study habits. In addition, having a partner can help you learn from each other, quiz each other, and cover more content. As a bonus, studying with a friend can make the activity more fun and social!

How to Maintain Positive Habits

Consistency is key! Making time to study difficult subjects and time for friends and family can be hard, but using a planner can ease a lot of the stress that comes with this. Planning out time for all your activities helps ensure you complete them all and stay organized, avoiding the overwhelmed feeling that comes with being busy!

All in all, maintaining good study habits is essential to limiting stress and getting good grades. This is perfect for keeping a balanced lifestyle and making time for all the activities you love, on top of being a student!

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS!

By Brian Muirhead, Committee Chair

This year the National FCCLA theme was IncREDible! There were so many incREDible things that took place at the 2023 National Leadership Conference held in Denver, Colorado. From networking with other chapter members from different states to attending some incREDible workshops, there was something for everyone! Here are your New Jersey State Executive Council highlights from NLC.

Amanda Chen, National Executive Council, President: “My favorite part of attending the National Leadership Conference was attending various leadership training sessions! FCCLA provided many opportunities to learn from workshop presenters and the Leadership Training Team, which helped us enhance our leadership skills!”

Isabella Dabbenigno: State President: “My favorite part of NLC was seeing the whole state of New Jersey coming together. I got to know many of our members individually and in chapters, and I could not ask for a better state organization.”

Emma Larsen: Vice President of Communications: “My favorite part of NLC is networking with members nationwide. Seeing the diversity and uniqueness of our members firsthand in a new place is an incredible experience!”

Malav Shah: Vice President of Community Service: “As the 2023 National Leadership Conference came to a close, I knew that Amanda’s election as National President would be my most cherished memory of the conference.”

Stuti Shah: Vice President of Public Relations: “I enjoyed the State Officer Training and networking with people in other states. NLC offered many ways to network, and getting out of my comfort zone was a great way to make the most of what they offered.”

Hitha Srinivas: Vice President of Parliamentary Law: At the National Leadership Conference, I enjoyed networking with other state officers and gaining information such as tips and pointers on the several responsibilities that a state officer holds. Listening to and seeing the numerous workshops allowed me to collect ideas that I can apply to my chapter. Overall, it was an incREDible experience as I learned so much and truly got a chance to grow as a person.

Lucais Romo: Vice President of Membership: “My favorite part was the Common Ground workshop where we discussed diversity, equity, and inclusion, empowered the voices of all members present, and heard some incREDible ideas that will be brought back to chapters!

Brian Muirhead: Committee Chair: “One of my highlights at the National Leadership Conference, was being able to connect and talk to people from all over the country. Another highlight at the National Leadership Conference was building stronger connections with our state chapter members. Connecting with our state chapter members and advisors is extremely important because New Jersey FCCLA wouldn’t happen without them.”

Looking ahead, FCCLA will be hosting its next National Leadership Conference in Seattle, WA, from June 29 to July 3, 2024. For those interested in getting involved as a student, sponsor, or supporter, please contact your chapter adviser



Jump Starting Student and Chapter Motivation After the Summer

By: Emma Larsen, VP of Communication

After a long summer break, it can be easy for your FCCLA chapter to slip into a decline of engagement and motivation. New Jersey FCCLA is here to help! With some effective strategies and efficient planning, you can revitalize your chapter and create an exciting atmosphere that motivates students to get involved.

Reflect on the past and Set for the Future:

Use the “Rose, Bud, Thorn” mindset to pinpoint challenges (thorn), achievements (rose), and something to look forward to (bud). Identify the “thorns” or areas that can be improved and the “roses” or positive aspects of your previous school year. After reflecting on that, use it to find your chapter’s “bud.” Set goals for the upcoming school year and involve your members in this process to ensure they feel like they have a voice and ownership in your chapter’s direction.

Plan an Engaging First Chapter Meeting:

Organize a special welcome back meeting to create excitement and attract prospective members. Ensure the event is inclusive and designed to make everyone feel comfortable and welcome. Use this opportunity to introduce upcoming events, showcase past accomplishments, and build energy for the year.

Diversify Activities:

Offer a variety of activities within your chapter to cater to different interests and learning styles. Consider organizing state officer visits, hands-on workshops, team-building exercises, membership competition brackets, or community service projects. By providing diverse experiences, you can capture the attention of a wider range of students and keep them engaged throughout the year. Regularly survey chapter members to understand their preferences and incorporate their feedback into activity planning.

Recognize Members:

Acknowledge the efforts and accomplishments of your chapter’s members as much as possible. Recognize students who have shown exceptional commitment or made notable contributions. Consider creating an “achievements wall” or a “Member of the Week” to highlight the successes of your chapter’s members. Celebrating achievements not only boosts motivation, but also reinforces a sense of inclusion and pride within the chapter.

Leverage Technology:

Create a social media presence to share information, updates, and resources. Encourage members to actively participate in online discussions, polls, or challenges related to chapter activities. Utilizing technology will ensure you reach members and motivate them to participate.

Mentorship and Leadership Opportunities:

Pair experienced members with newcomers to provide guidance and support. Allow students to take charge of specific projects or initiatives, empowering them to develop leadership skills and take ownership of their roles. By offering mentorship and leadership opportunities, you can foster a sense of responsibility and personal growth, motivating students to actively participate and contribute.

Remember, an engaging chapter is one that inspires its members and provides them with valuable experiences that extend beyond the classroom.

The Steps to Starting a New Chapter!

By Amanda Chen, National President

Welcome to the Ultimate Leadership Experience! If you are looking to join our empowering organization, we are excited to invite you with open arms to the world of possibilities in FCCLA! Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) is an intracurricular career and technical student organization that provides quality personal growth and leadership development opportunities. Students grades six through twelve are inspired to enhance college and career readiness skills by applying learning from Family and Consumer Sciences classes into the real world! There are numerous benefits for members, advisers, alumni, and supporters to be a part of FCCLA. From lesson plan resources for advisers to competitive events for members, FCCLA provides a variety of resources for everyone to develop quality leadership experiences, helping to prepare students for the workforce and strengthen their preparation for adult life.

Starting a chapter is the first step in beginning your FCCLA journey! A chapter consists of a minimum of twelve members, an adviser certified to teach Family and Consumer Sciences education, and support from school administration. To start a chapter, you can first contact our state adviser, Mrs. DiGioia-Laird, or our state director, Mrs. Dworzanski, at njfccla@gmail.com. By doing so, you will receive the necessary information and materials to begin! You will also want to ensure that your local school administration understands what FCCLA is and the exciting benefits of being involved. You can begin by gaining support from your local school community and encouraging your students to become involved. There are many membership recruitment strategies that can raise awareness, such as organizing a booth at a school club fair or hosting an open interest meeting. FCS teachers can also promote FCCLA within their classes and create bulletin board displays!

To affiliate a chapter, registration occurs on the FCCLA portal located on the national website, fcclainc.org. The FCCLA chapter portal allows you to affiliate members and contains access to materials such as competitive events, national programs, and scholarship opportunities. Located on the national website, resources such as the new chapter checklist, adviser handbook, and various membership packages can assist you in the registration process. There are a variety of packages available to chapters to pay affiliation dues, which help to support FCCLA’s programs, conferences, and initiatives. Additionally, New Jersey FCCLA hosts three conferences throughout the year: the Fall Leadership Connection, Leadership Bootcamp, and State Leadership Conference! Participating in one of these events is a great first goal towards encouraging your members to become active and learn more about our organization.

The State Executive Council is excited to welcome you to FCCLA! Our state association has a strong network of chapters and advisers that can assist in mentorship, as well as our state officer team that is excited to engage in chapter visits and assist you in getting started. We hope you embark on the ultimate journey with us by creating your chapter today!



PUBLIC RELATIONS: SPEAKING OUT ABOUT FCCLA TO YOUR SCHOOL!

By: Stuti Shah, VP of Public Relations

Spreading the word about FCCLA is a great opportunity to share all of the great opportunities our organization offers its members. Speaking out for FCCLA can be an effective way to gain membership and advertise what this amazing organization has to offer! Public Relations is all about communication, which fits hand in hand into speaking out about FCCLA! Communicating the benefits of being an FCCLA member is a great start to gaining support at your school. Using social media can be an effective tool to communicate all that FCCLA has to offer, and also the perfect opportunity to pitch FCCLA to a potential member.

This is where using an elevator speech comes to play! Using pitches like these during your school's club fair or even just socializing can be an exceptional way to educate others about FCCLA. Explaining what the acronym FCCLA means as well as the opportunities the organization has to offer is a great way to teach more people about the organization! Here is an example of what to say in these situations:

The Family Career and Community Leaders of America also called, FCCLA. It is an organization in which helps members become college and career ready. In addition, FCCLA focuses on leadership, skill development, and critical thinking. This introduction to FCCLA allows people around you to gain an understanding of the organization!

Using your school's newspaper can also be a great way to gain outreach and speak out for FCCLA! Writing articles about events such as the upcoming Fall Leadership Connection or highlighting your chapter's success. Spotlighting your chapter's initiatives can help get students attention and attract more members to your chapter!

In short, there are many ways you can speak out for FCCLA and increase outreach to benefit YOUR chapter this Fall. From taking advantage of Activity Fairs and regular daily conversations to using your school paper, and publicizing community service initiatives, outreach is possible. Doing this can help ensure your chapter has an incredible school year!

Guide to Power of One

By Isabella Dabbenigno, State President

Power of One is a National Program that focuses on improving different aspects of one's life. It helps students learn how to set goals and work to achieve them. I highly recommend this National Program. It is very flexible and can easily fit into a busy schedule. This program lets participants choose the difficulty and rigour of completion. It promotes career exploration and self-growth. There is also the opportunity for State and National recognition.

There are five units that must be completed: **A Better You, Family Ties, Working on Working, Take the Lead, and Speak Out For FCCLA.**

A Better You focuses on areas in one's personal life that they may want to improve. For example, making the bed every morning, eating healthier, or starting a journal. The second unit, **Family Ties**, focuses on strengthening family bonds and participants' roles in their families. **Family Ties** projects can include improving family relationships or scheduling time to help with household chores. **Working on Working** involves thinking about careers or life in the workforce that might be of interest. **Working on Working** can focus on job applications, career research, job shadowing, and researching college or postsecondary schools. Unit four, **Take the Lead**, involves strengthening leadership skills. Think about areas in your leadership style that might be lacking and go from there. Examples include volunteering, participation, competitive events, or leading a chapter project. The final unit, **Speak Out for FCCLA**, asks you to think about people who you wish knew more about this organization. You could explain FCCLA to your peers, start a chapter scrapbook, or inform your administrators about FCCLA. All of the examples explained above are just some ideas to get you thinking. We encourage you to reflect on your life and pick areas within the units that interest you.

Steps to complete Power of One:

1. **Pick a topic within one of the five units.** This topic should be something you're interested in and a skill you want to strengthen.
2. **Create a SMART goal to help guide your project.** A SMART goal is a specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely goal.
3. **Use the planning process sheet to plan out your project.** Use it just like you would when you do a competitive event. It can be found on the NJ FCCLA page and ask your adviser any questions.
4. **Once you complete part one of the planning sheet, have your adviser sign it.**
5. **Work to accomplish your goal/projects**
6. **Complete part two of the planning process sheet and get it signed by your advisor**
7. **Repeat for each unit you complete**

Tips: *** You can find more information about Power of One on the [FCCLA National Website, www.fcclainc.org](http://www.fcclainc.org) by clicking [Engage>National Programs>Power of One](#).

NLC WORKSHOP REVIEW

By: Stuti Shah, VP of Public Relations

Part of the Ultimate Leadership Experience at the 2023 National Leadership Conference, was the variety of workshops that were offered throughout the week! Workshops are a great way to gain knowledge about community service, fundraising, inclusivity, overall ways to benefit your chapter, and even learning about college and career readiness aspects of FCCLA. Here are 4 interesting workshops from the NLC, summarized, so you can easily take this information back to your chapter!

Common Ground

Common Ground is a workshop centered around Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), presented by NJ FCCLA State Executive Council Members, Adedoyin Ayeni, Lucais Romo, and Diya Pottangadi. In this workshop the presenters summarized the importance of diversity, which promotes cultural awareness, a broader view of the world, and introduces others to new skills and ways of life. This workshop also addressed the issue of affirmative action by talking about the importance of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement. In addition to providing information about DEI, they included how to promote DEI in your FCCLA chapter; For example hosting a cultural day, a mixer for your chapter, and ensuring that everyone has adequate resources to succeed. Attendees found the Common Ground workshop to be enlightening and educational. This workshop address relevant concerns that teens deal with today.

Leadership Potential

This workshop focused on unleashing your leadership potential, by providing tips to becoming a better leader. The presenters talked about how important it is to be personable, because you want to make new members feel welcome and valued. They used examples such as inviting body language, knowing your audience, and speaking from the heart. Furthermore, the hosts talked about leading by example to inspire and motivate others around you to fulfill their leadership potential. They also addressed the importance of communication in being a good leader. Communication is essential to maintaining transparency with those around you, and can also be used in project settings to work in harmony. This workshop focused on the qualities of a leader and how you can inspire others to do the same!

FCCLA to College Success

This workshop was held by a member of the Leadership Training Team, and it focused on applying skills acquired through FCCLA to college experiences. The presenters emphasized the “normalcy of nerves” when finding roommates and registering for classes. But when it came time to discuss the anxiety many people have about finding friends, the host used networking strategies used in FCCLA and related them to making friends. It was an incredibly dynamic and engaging workshop.

Learning to Appreciate Life and Everyone Around You by Practicing Gratitude



By: Emma Larsen, VP of Communication



In our fast-paced and often demanding world, it's easy to get caught up in the pursuit of success and overlook the blessings that surround us. However, by practicing gratitude, we can shift our focus and learn to appreciate life and everyone around us more deeply.

Recognize the Gift of Life:

Take a moment each day to reflect on the joys of life. Remember to be thankful for the small things. Acknowledge the privilege of being alive and embrace gratitude for the simple fact of existence.

Start a Gratitude Journal:

Keep a gratitude journal to record the things you are thankful for each day. Set aside a few minutes in the morning or evening to reflect on your day and write down a few things you are grateful for. They can be big or small, such as a kind gesture from a friend, a beautiful sunset, or a personal achievement. Writing them down reinforces positive emotions and trains your mind to seek gratitude in daily life.

Practice Mindful Appreciation:

Engage in mindful appreciation by fully immersing yourself in the present moment and savoring the experiences and people around you. Whether it's a delicious meal, a conversation with a loved one, or a walk in nature, pay attention to the details, and embrace the beauty and joy in these moments.

Express Gratitude to Others:

Take the time to express your gratitude to the people who enhance your life. Write a heartfelt note, send a thoughtful message, or simply say "thank you" to those who have made a positive impact. Genuine expressions of gratitude not only uplift others, but also strengthen your connections and foster a sense of appreciation and mutual support.

Find Lessons in Challenges:

Embrace a mindset that sees challenges as opportunities for growth and learning. Instead of dwelling on setbacks, search for the lessons and silver linings within them. Even in difficult times, there are often valuable experiences and insights that can shape our character and strengthen our resilience. Practicing gratitude for the lessons learned helps us grow and appreciate the journey, both the ups and downs.

Engage in Acts of Kindness:

Engaging in acts of kindness amplifies gratitude in everyone. Look for opportunities to extend kindness to others, whether through a small act of service, a helping hand, or a listening ear. Acts of selflessness foster a sense of community and remind us of the importance of giving.



Grateful!



Selection to Success: Chapter Officer

By: Hitha Srinivas, VP of Parliamentary Law

The process of selecting chapter officers for FCCLA is an essential and exciting endeavor that plays a crucial role in shaping the success and direction of the chapter. FCCLA empowers students to become leaders in their families, careers, and communities. The selection of chapter officers is a thoughtful and deliberate process aimed at identifying individuals who possess the qualities, skills, and dedication required to lead their peers towards achieving the organization's goals. Through a comprehensive evaluation and selection process, chapter officers are chosen based on their passion for service, strong leadership potential, and commitment to promoting the mission and values of FCCLA.

As the chapter officers represent the backbone of the organization, their role extends far beyond their title, as they serve as role models, visionaries, and catalysts for positive change within and out of the FCCLA community.

When it comes to selecting chapter officers for FCCLA, several specific criteria and steps are taken to ensure a thorough and fair selection process. First and foremost, active membership and participation in FCCLA events and fundraising activities are essential prerequisites for individuals aspiring to become chapter officers. This requirement ensures that candidates have a genuine commitment to the organization. In some chapters, candidates are asked to complete the national program Power of One. This program focuses on personal growth and skill development in five areas: A Better You, Family Ties, Working on Working, Take the Lead, and Speak Out for FCCLA.

When it comes to the number of officers, it varies based on the specific chapter and its size. In larger chapters NJ FCCLA positions might include President, First Vice President, VP of Membership, VP of Finance, VP of Community Service, VP of Communication, VP of Public Relations, VP of Conferences, and Historian.

Maintaining officers' motivation to lead effectively requires a multi-faceted approach. First, fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where officers feel valued and heard is crucial. Regularly recognizing and appreciating their contributions, both individually and as a team, helps boost morale and encourages continued dedication. Providing opportunities for personal and professional growth through leadership development programs, workshops, or conferences helps officers enhance their skills and stay engaged. It is crucial to establish and communicate clear goals both for the chapter as a whole and for each officer's specific position. By setting meaningful and attainable goals, officers can have a clear sense of purpose and direction, which in turn fosters their motivation to lead effectively. By combining these strategies, chapter leaders can nurture a motivated and empowered officer team, driving their effectiveness in leading the FCCLA organization.

2023 National Leadership Conference in Review

By Amanda Chen, National President

Our state association enjoyed numerous learning opportunities through workshops. Three of our very own state officers held an impactful workshop session on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, titled "Common Ground". Adedoyin Ayeni (Past VP of Membership), Diya Pottangadi (Past VP of Public Relations), and Lucais Romo (VP of Membership) delivered important discussions that empowered attendees to bring ideas back to their chapters to foster accepting environments for all members. With the strength of our diverse state association, encouraging these conversations will make a difference in the lives of many!

While learning was facilitated through workshops and competitive events, there were also many interpersonal interactions as members strengthened their understanding of teamwork and collaboration. Our FCCLA family had an exciting time cheering on each other's accomplishments and showing off our New Jersey spirit. We were able to explore the EXPO center to speak with various FCCLA sponsors and partners, network and pin-trade with members of different state associations, and share fun memories together at our state meeting and recognition session. There were also a variety of fun opportunities to explore in the city of Denver! From FCCLA's Elitch Gardens outing to seeing the Colorado Rockies Baseball Game with an incredible fireworks display and the NLC After Party, New Jersey had a wonderful time at excursions.

As the conference concluded, we congratulated our national officer, Gianna DeBruyn, on a successful term as the Vice President of Competitive Events. We thank her for representing our state association with pride and enthusiasm in every aspect throughout the year! During a bittersweet closing session, I was honored to be elected as the 2023-2024 National President alongside nine passionate, intelligent, and inspiring individuals from across the nation. Gianna and I thank you for your endless support, as we know that the love from New Jersey FCCLA inspires us daily to give back to this organization.

The State Executive Council and I would like to congratulate everyone on a job well done, and we hope to see you at next year's National Leadership Conference in Seattle, Washington! Until then, we invite you to embark on the ultimate journey with another exciting school year in FCCLA!



Excited to get into the Fall spirit? Check out these Fall Wordles!

-Fatima Zohra Poonawalla, State Committee Chair

<https://mywordle.strivemath.com/?word=hsrypw>
<https://mywordle.strivemath.com/?word=wqfuy>
<https://mywordle.strivemath.com/?word=doiypwp>



Chapter Visits

By: **Lucais Romo, V.P. of Membership**



Is your chapter having a hard time finding your groove this year? Is your chapter eager to learn more about the New Jersey state association they belong to? Regardless of your chapter's age or size, chapter visits are a valuable resource. If your chapter could benefit from a visit, the state officers are ready and willing to help. A team of officers can help provide valuable insight and help you motivate your chapter. Let's learn how to schedule one!

1. Visit the New Jersey FCCLA website, njfccla.org
2. Open the "Membership" tab
3. Select "Request a Chapter Visit"
4. Fill out the provided form
5. We'll respond shortly to help schedule a date, time, and team to visit YOUR chapter!

This past year, state officers visited John Adams Middle School, Thomas Jefferson Middle School, Herbert Hoover Middle School, and Hunterdon County Polytech. Every school benefits when we work together as a state to support one another. Chapters can find new and interesting ways to motivate their members.

Chapter visits are a great way to introduce members to new opportunities in FCCLA or help support existing chapters. Every chapter no matter how old or new can benefit from a visit. We can help with planning for a conference or a new initiative. And, we can all have a bit of fun!



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NJ FCCLA

Time to Reach for the Stars... and the Red Rose Chapter Award!

By: **Fatima Zohra Poonawalla, State Committee chair**

Looking for ways to expand the community outreach in your chapter? Aiming to gain more members through a variety of fundraising experiences? Hoping to gain state recognition for your chapter at the State Leadership Conference? Look no further than the Red Rose Chapter Award, a truly incredible accolade that will inspire your members to keep reaching for the stars!

There are a total of 20 points a chapter must earn to get this award! This is to be done by completing a variety of tasks and accomplishing goals that revolve around different aspects of your chapter. The unique part of the Red Rose Award is that, while there are specific duties that must be completed, chapters can express their creativity by picking and choosing the final tasks to meet the point requirement.

While all of this may seem overwhelming at first, don't worry! The key to success is having a clear and manageable schedule to ensure that your chapter does not miss important deadlines and isn't scrambling to finish all the tasks last minute. First, set the foundation for a plan on how your chapter will achieve all of the mandatory tasks, then work to set a plan to achieve the additional 20 points. Check in with your adviser regularly. Organization and productivity are key!

The 2023-2024 Red Rose Application will open on August 1, 2024. Check out the [Go For The Red](#) on the state website to get more information!

Pumpkin Crumb Cake Recipe

Submitted by: Malav Shah, VP of Community Service

Recipe By: Broma Bakery



A recipe by Broma Bakery that delivers a satisfying and flavorful bite every time. This revamped, fall version of a typical crumb cake encapsulates all of the sweet and warm flavors craved during the fall season. Enjoy with a cup of coffee or tea to wash it down, and enhance all of the fall flavor with each bite!

Ingredient List:

Pumpkin Cake:

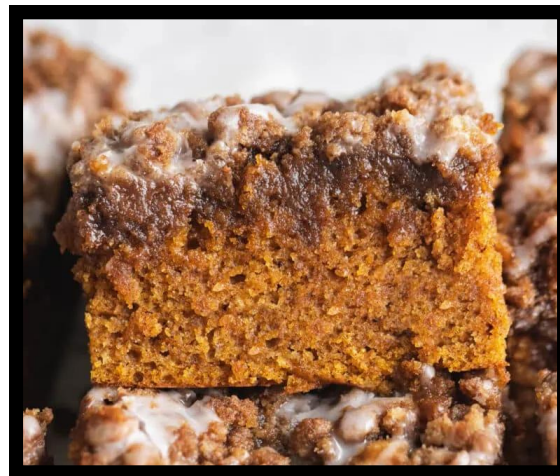
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon cloves
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1/2 cup canola (or vegetable) oil

Crumb Topping:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, room temperature

Maple Cream Cheese Glaze:

- 2 tablespoons cream cheese
- 1 tablespoon heavy cream
- 2 tablespoon maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- pinch of salt
- 1 cup confectioners sugar



Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and line a 9 x 9 pan with parchment paper. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, mix together flour, sugar, baking soda & powder, salt, nutmeg, cinnamon, and cloves until combined.
3. Make a well in the center of your dry ingredients. Pour in eggs, oil, milk, vanilla, and pumpkin puree. Whisk together the wet ingredients for about 30 seconds, then fold them into the dry ingredients until just combined.
4. Pour the batter into your prepared pan and set aside to make the topping.
5. In a large bowl. Mix together the flour, cinnamon, nutmeg sugar, and salt. Using a pastry blender, cut in the butter until the mixture starts to clump together. Pour the crumble on top of the pumpkin batter, spreading out evenly to the edges.
6. Bake for 30-40 minutes, or until a knife inserted in the center of the pan comes out clean. Allow to cool.
7. While the cake cools, make the cream cheese glaze. In a small saucepan over medium heat combine the cream cheese, heavy cream, and maple syrup, whisking until everything is melted. Add the confectioners sugar, salt and vanilla and whisk to combine. If the icing is too thick, add a little bit more cream; if it's too thin add some more powdered sugar.
8. Once the cake is cool, drizzle with icing, slice into 16 pieces and serve!





What to Expect at the Fall Leadership Connection

By: Isabella D'abbenigno President

The Fall Leadership Connection is fast approaching and we are so excited to host you at the Pines Manor on November 20th! This is the 1st Leadership event that New Jersey FCCLA will host for the 2023-2024 school year. There is a lot to look forward to including Competitive Events, keynote speakers, workshops, community service initiatives, and networking with other FCCLA members within the state!

Keep in mind this is a single-day conference which will include a packed schedule so make sure you get enough rest the night before! When you arrive at the conference center, there will be a continental breakfast and we encourage you to help yourselves. There will be time before the opening general session for you to set up your competitive events, drop off community service materials that your chapter may have participated in, network with others, and find seats in the general session room.

During the general session you will hear from the State Executive Council followed by amazing keynote speakers. From there we will dismiss you into workshops. These workshops will be led by student and adult leaders. I suggest bringing a notebook and pen to these sessions so that you can take notes and ideas back to your school or chapter. Some of the advice can also be used in your personal life so I would definitely try to pay attention.

There will be time to purchase cupcakes that are on display from the Cupcake Challenge Competitive Event. The money from the sales gets donated to support the Covenant House. Be on the lookout for other community service events we will have at FLC. Follow us on Instagram @njfccla for updates. When the break concludes, you will be directed back into your workshop room.

Then we hold an awards/closing ceremony session to finish off a wonderful day! This session gives us the opportunity to recognize event participants along with outstanding advisers. You will then be dismissed for lunch. Lunch will be provided and you will sit with your chapter.

That is the end of a very busy day. We encourage you to make the most out of this conference and compete in one of the many competitive events offered. There is something for everybody with events in career research, child development, education, fashion, interior design, leadership, culinary, and pastry. For a full list of events, visit the NJ FCCLA website under the competitive events tab. Click on Fall Leadership Connections to view the event guidelines for this conference. Ask your adviser for the password to access the guidelines. All events are available on the NJ FCCLA website. This is a great conference to compete in to get a sense of what a competitive event looks like!

We are so excited to see all of you there! Come prepared with a full 8 hours of rest, a positive attitude, and an open mind to get the most out of this conference! See you all soon!