



NEWS RELEASE

For additional information, please contact Chelsey Greene by phone (402-471-4337) or email (chelsey.greene@nebraska.gov) or Kristin Vest (402-471-4814) or email (kristin.vest@nebraska.gov) or David Jespersen by phone (402-471-4537) or email (david.jespersen@nebraska.gov).

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NEBRASKA FCCLA MEMBERS RECOGNIZED WITH SUCCESS AT VIRTUAL NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) held the organization's first-ever Virtual National Leadership Conference since the organization was founded in 1945. Instead of gathering in-person and rocking red blazers in the nation's capital as planned, students logged on to an online platform on July 7-9, 2020, which blended virtual reality and gamification technology to transform FCCLA's National Leadership Conference into a dynamic, "on-demand" virtual experience. This year's historic Virtual NLC was filled with keynote speakers, breakout sessions, leadership trainings, an EXPO, Competitive Events, networking opportunities, adviser professional development, and more!

More than 5,400 attendees from across the nation took part in FCCLA's Virtual NLC. Nebraska had over 300 students and advisers attend FCCLA's Virtual NLC. "The Virtual National Leadership Conference was an outstanding example of how we can adapt the 'Ultimate Leadership Experience' to a virtual format. From the general sessions and Red Talks to the EXPO and networking, the conference provided countless opportunities for personal growth," said Alexis Richmond, 2020-2021 Nebraska State President.

This year's conference theme encouraged members to write "Your Story," as well as reflect back over the past 75 years on how each member's story has helped write the organization's collective story. As the year has progressed and the impact of COVID-19 drastically altered the planned pages of the stories originally envisioned, FCCLA was excited to be able to offer members an opportunity to continue to provide students with the Ultimate Leadership Experience they anxiously anticipate and prepare for all year.

“FCCLA’s 2020 Virtual National Leadership Conference was an unforgettable experience filled with leadership trainings, virtual professional skill demonstrations led by national experts, adviser professional development opportunities, and a celebration of the FCCLA class of 2020,” said Sandy Spavone, Executive Director of FCCLA. “This National Leadership Conference was a great success thanks to the National Board of Directors, National Staff, National Executive Council and their advisers, as well as the students, advisers, and organization’s supporters.”

Alexis Cherry from Twin River High School was one of 37 National Officer Candidates vying for a position on the 2020-2021 National Executive Council. After taking an FCCLA knowledge test, participating in virtual interviews and speeches, having her resume and application evaluated by the nominating committee, Alexis was one of the top 20 candidates selected to move on in the election process. Following the second round of networking interviews and speeches, unfortunately Alexis was not one of the top ten candidates selected to serve as a national officer during the upcoming year. However, the experience of serving as a National Officer Candidate should still be recognized. Britton Andreasen serves as the Twin River High School Chapter Adviser.

Nebraska also had three Chapters selected as National Program Award winners. The Boyd County FCCLA Chapter’s Community Service project was selected as 1st place in the high school division receiving a \$1,000 award for their efforts in bringing awareness to ALS within their school and community. Additionally, the Howells-Dodge FCCLA Chapter’s FACTS (Families Acting for Community Traffic Safety) National Program project was selected as runner-up receiving a \$500 award for their efforts of increasing seat belt usage in their community. The Twin River FCCLA Chapter also received runner-up and a \$500 award for their Financial Fitness National Program project which included hosting a Money Smart fair for area schools.

The 2020 Spirit of Advising Award was given in memory of Lisa Groth, Family and Consumer Sciences teacher at Boone Central Public School, who was killed in a vehicle accident in October 2019. This is an honor bestowed on only one FCCLA Chapter Adviser from each state. This award is based upon the ability to recognize chapter advisers who are constantly faithful and often quietly working behind the scenes to ensure the success of their students.

Nicki Pedeliski, Family and Consumer Sciences teacher at Platteview Public Schools was recognized as an Adviser Mentor Award during the conference. FCCLA’s Adviser Mentor program recognizes outstanding experienced Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) educators who excel within FCS and FCCLA. These skilled FCS teachers train, assist, and familiarize new FCCLA Advisers as they adjust to their new role and responsibilities within FCCLA.

Chelsey Greene, Family and Consumer Sciences teacher at Ewing Public Schools was recognized as a Master Adviser during the conference. The Master Adviser program recognizes advisers who have been successful in leading an FCCLA Chapter for at least three years. These advisers promote the organization, operate and integrated chapter with a balanced program of work and facilitate youth-centered activities while keeping abreast of issues in their field.

Adviser Academy is a five-track certificate program open to any adviser with fewer than five years of experience. The Adviser Academy is comprised of four professional development tracks to be hosted by national FCCLA and one tract completed at the state level within one year. Those Chapter Advisers participating in Adviser Academy this year include:

- Valerie Hinrichs, Aurora High School
- Julie Wilcox, Lincoln Southeast High School

Three Chapter Advisers graduated from FCCLA Adviser Academy during the National Leadership Conference. Chapter Advisers graduating from Adviser Academy this year include:

- Jennifer Cramer, Kearney High School
- Amy Mach, Millard West High School
- Kim Nolte, Falls City Public Schools

In addition to the many learning and networking experiences offered at the conference, more than 30 Family and Consumer Sciences related competitive events, also known as STAR (Students Taking Action with Recognition) Events. Events aim to support student development of knowledge and skills by enhancing the classroom experience and career pathway initiatives by equipping students with employable skills and industry insights needed to thrive in the 21st century. FCCLA members choose what STAR Event they would like to compete in, events vary from Early Childhood Education, Entrepreneurship, and Sports Nutrition to Fashion Design, Job Interview, and Culinary Arts. STAR Events are competitive events in which members are recognized for their proficiency and achievement in chapter and individual projects, leadership skills, and career preparation.

Of the nearly 3,000 competitors, Nebraska had 213 participants who came home with 105 Gold medals, 84 Silver Medals, and 18 Bronze medals:

First Place

- Katie Wilson, Cozad – Fashion Design, Level 2, Gold
- Leonardo Luna-Duran, Neligh-Oakdale – FCCLA Chapter Website, Level 1, Gold
- Brooke Ehlers & Mary Walnofer, Chambers – Food Innovations, Level 3, Gold

- Samuel Coble, Mullen – Hospitality, Tourism, & Recreation, Level 2, Gold
- Hailey Bixler, Neligh-Oakdale – Job Interview, Level 3, Gold
- Sophia Birch, Milford – Leadership, Level 2, Gold
- Ally Sedlacek, O'Neill – National Programs in Action, Level 2, Gold
- Alexis Butterfield, Chambers – Nutrition and Wellness, Level 3, Gold
- Hannah Scott & Brianna Klabenes, Chambers – Promote and Publicize FCCLA!, Level 1, Gold

Second Place

- Lisselle Lucas & Laynee Boltz, Maxwell – Chapter in Review Display, Level 1, Gold
- Kaydense Hansen & Ava Neujahr, David City – Chapter in Review Display, Level 2, Gold
- Ashley Pischel, O'Neill – Digital Stories for Change, Level 2, Gold
- Claire Woepfel, Chambers – Focus on Children, Level 1, Gold
- Ella Hostetler & Cassidy June, Milford – National Programs in Action, Level 2, Gold
- Miranda Batenhorst & Jessica Nelson, Logan View – Promote and Publicize FCCLA!, Level 2, Gold
- Hannah Olson, Lily Vogel, & Teagan Butterfield, West Holt – Sustainability Challenge, Level 1, Gold

Third Place

- Raina Le & Lily-Ann Smidt, Neligh-Oakdale – Chapter in Review Portfolio, Level 1 Silver
- Annie Corkle, O'Neill – Entrepreneurship, Level 1, Gold
- Braxton Small, David City – Fashion Design, Level 2, Silver
- Conner Oberhauser, Twin River – National Programs in Action, Level 3, Gold
- Ellery Simpson, Maxwell – Public Policy Advocate, Level 2, Gold

Fourth Place

- Ashlyn Simonson, Mullen – Career Investigation, Level 1, Gold
- Hannah Pedersen, Aurora – Career Investigation, Level 3, Gold
- Hannah Ryun, Scribner-Snyder – Chapter in Review Display, Level 1, Silver
- Joseph Brown & Alaina Eberle, Medicine Valley – Chapter in Review Display, Level 2, Gold
- Kaylee Smith, Minden – Chapter Service Project Display, Level 2 Gold
- Maria Gonzalez, Sarhai Luna, & Katie Vanderveen, Wakefield – Chapter Service Project Display, Level 3, Gold
- Ashlyn Schildt & Erin Landkamer, Milford – Interior Design, Level 2, Gold
- Trevor Brooks & Kiryn Kayl, Boyd County – Promote and Publicize FCCLA!, Level 3, Gold

- Haddi Heckert & Wyatt Olson, Neligh-Oakdale – Sustainability Challenge, Level 1, Silver
- Harrison Koehn, Elmwood-Murdock – Teach and Train, Level 1, Silver

Fifth Place

- Kirsten Koenig, Chambers – Chapter in Review Portfolio, Level 1, Silver
- Jillian Dames & Elissa Dames, Scribner-Snyder – Digital Stories for Change, Level 3, Silver
- Harleigh Claussen, O'Neill – Event Management, Level 2, Gold
- Tram Ngo, Crete – FCCLA Chapter Website, Level 3, Silver
- Claire Harrison, Franklin – Interpersonal Communications, Level 3, Silver
- Emma Potter, Erin Reynoldson, Cheyenne Ruhnke, Samantha Weeder, Brittany Preister, Destiny Umbarger, Emilie Kelley, & Kali Niemann, Boone Central – Parliamentary Procedure, Level 3, Gold
- Lindsey Schukei, Kearney – Say Yes to FCS Education, Level 2, Silver

Sixth Place

- Jalynn Baumann, Sophia Gasper, & Lindy Schmidt, Twin River – Chapter Service Project Portfolio, Level 1, Gold
- Hailey Hanneman & Grace Ziegler, Aurora – Entrepreneurship, Level 2, Gold
- Lindey Coble, Mullen – Entrepreneurship, Level 3, Gold
- Kaitlyn Palik & Chloe Zegers, David City – Event Management, Level 1, Silver
- Courtney Oswald & McKenzie Young, Aurora – Focus on Children, Level 3, Gold
- Clay Brandenburger & Brayden Rinkol, Twin River – Interpersonal Communications, Level 1, Gold
- Jayna Moses & Shealynn Rasmussen, Burwell – Interpersonal Communications, Level 2, Gold
- Lacy Lemburg & Emma Yrkoski – National Programs in Action, Twin River, Level 1, Gold
- Avery Bargman, Olivia Lauck, & Brooke Pinkelman, Bloomfield – Repurpose and Redesign, Level 1, Gold

Seventh Place

- Grace Anderson, Chambers – Career Investigation, Level 1, Silver
- Kaitlyn Byerly, Bloomfield – Entrepreneurship, Level 1, Silver
- Sabra Schmidt, Medicine Valley – FCCLA Chapter Website, Level 3, Silver
- Callie Coble & Jordyn McDowell, Mullen – Food Innovations, Level 2, Gold
- Blake Byerly, Bloomfield – Hospitality, Tourism, & Recreation, Level 2, Silver
- Rebecca Zeleski, Overton – Leadership, Level 3, Gold
- Bailie Graybill & Jessica Hoffman, Leigh-Clarkson – Professional Presentation, Level 2, Gold

- Tiffany Mayfield, Burwell – Professional Presentation, Level 3, Gold
- Garret Alexander, Twin River – Sports Nutrition, Level 1, Silver

Eighth Place

- Alyssa Kolbo, Autumn Smith, & Megan Dyer, Cozad – Chapter in Review Portfolio, Level 2, Gold
- Harley Cahoy & Emma Smith, O'Neill – Chapter Service Project Portfolio, Level 2, Gold
- Heather Atkinson & Joseph Hlatt, Boyd County – Chapter Service Project Portfolio, Level 3, Gold
- Shilo Shabram, Neligh-Oakdale – Focus on Children, Level 2, Gold
- Megan Zulkoski, Overton – Focus on Children, Level 3, Gold
- Briley Cuba, Libby Held, & Chloe Pilakowski, Twin River – Food Innovations, Level 1, Gold
- Michael Hynes, Elmwood-Murdock – Nutrition and Wellness, Level 1, Silver
- Kevin Bantam, Kaleb Einspahr, & Kahner Kotschwar, Medicine Valley – Professional Presentation, Level 1, Gold
- Madisen Tietz, Nebraska City – Teach and Train, Level 1, Silver
- Peter Jesse, Chambers – Teach and Train, Level 2, Silver

Ninth Place

- Grace Anderson, Chambers – Career Investigation, Level 1, Silver
- Wyatt Ehlers, Chambers – Career Investigation, Level 2, Gold
- Miranda Stearns, David City – Chapter in Review Display, Level 3, Silver
- Sebastian Kramer, Hannah Schultz, & Jaden Henderson, Medicine Valley – Chapter Service Project Display, Level 3, Gold
- Calli Weston, Overton – Chapter Service Project Portfolio, Level 3, Gold
- Alyssa Bell & Sydney Schildt, Milford – FCCLA Chapter Website, Level 3, Silver
- Taylor Svoboda, Mullen – Job Interview, Level 2, Gold
- Addison Karo, West Holt – Repurpose and Redesign, Level 1, Gold
- Rene Assels, Brady – Repurpose and Redesign, Level 3, Gold
- Breanna Francescato, Maxwell – Teach and Train, Level 2, Silver

Tenth Place

- Jenny Goesch, Boyd County – Entrepreneurship, Level 3, Silver
- Piper Dather, Crofton – Fashion Construction, Level 2, Gold
- Myranda Schildt, Milford – Food Innovations, Level 1, Gold
- Brooke Luedders, Waverly – Interior Design, Level 2, Silver
- Carly Bayer, Blair Fiala, & Brooklyn Macholan, Howells-Dodge – Sports Nutrition, Level 2, Silver

- Cassidy Hoffman & Ashlynn Novotny, Leigh-Clarkson – Sports Nutrition, Level 3, Silver
- Sydney Howerter, Kelsey Shotkoski, & Madelyn Spaulding, Cozad – Sustainability Challenge, Level 2, Gold

Other national award winners included:

Say Yes to FCS National Signing Day: The National Say Yes to FCS Signing Day held virtually on June 22, recognized 38 graduating high school seniors across the country who have committed to a future career as a Family and Consumer Sciences teacher and FCCLA Chapter Adviser. Teacher educators from respective colleges and institutions connected with their future students. LEAD FCS Education, an organization of State FCS Administrators and leaders as well and National FCCLA sponsored the virtual signing event.

- Skylar Long – Neligh-Oakdale will be majoring in FCS Education at Wayne State College
- Calyn Mowinkel – Milford will be majoring in FCS Education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

About FCCLA

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) is a dynamic and effective national student organization that helps young men and women become leaders and address important personal, family, work, and societal issues through Family and Consumer Sciences education. FCCLA has over 182,000 members and more than 5,200 chapters from 48 state associations, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

FCCLA: The Ultimate Leadership Experience is unique among youth organizations because its programs are planned and run by members, and it's the only career and technical in-school student organization with a central focus on careers that support families. Participation in national FCCLA programs and chapter activities helps members become strong leaders in their families, careers, and communities.

Nebraska FCCLA is supported through the Nebraska Center for Student Leadership and Extended Learning at the Nebraska Department of Education.

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David Jespersen
 Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Education
 402-471-4537
 david.jespersen@nebraska.gov