

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**NEBRASKA FCCLA MEMBERS RECOGNIZED WITH SUCCESS DURING HYBRID NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) held the organization’s first-ever Hybrid National Leadership Conference. Trading in face masks for red blazers, more than 4,500 students from around the country got a taste of normalcy at this year’s National Leadership Conference, held June 27-July 2, 2021. The conference was hosted in a hybrid format, with participants attending in-person in Nashville, Tennessee, and virtually from across the country. After over a year of mask mandates, social distancing, and virtual learning, FCCLA’s student members were ready to reunite in person to participate in professional development opportunities, career exploration, and youth leadership sessions aimed at advancing families, careers, and communities through Family and Consumer Sciences education.

More than 4,500 attendees from across the nation took part in FCCLA’s Hybrid NLC. Nebraska had over 70 students and advisers attend the conference in Nashville with another 160 participants participating virtually from across Nebraska. “Those attending virtually could experience the conference very similarly to those attending in-person, and however members participated, they were still able to grow as an individual and leader,” said Kaylee Hilbers, 2021-2022 Nebraska State President.

‘Beyond Measure’ was the theme for this year’s conference. Not only have members been encouraged to lead, advocate, educate, grow, and influence beyond measure in the past year, they were also challenged to define what it means to ‘Be Me.’ Throughout the ups and downs of the 2020-2021 schoolyear, marked by the trials and tribulations of the COVID-19 pandemic, FCCLA members had the opportunity to ‘Be Me’ and go ‘Beyond Measure’ through various local, state, and national FCCLA projects, conferences, and experiences. The hybrid National Leadership Conference was the culminating event of the year meant to celebrate successes and provide opportunities for continued growth.

“A lot has happened in our world this year,” said Sandy Spavone, Executive Director of FCCLA. “This conference served to provide students with a safe space to engage in important conversations, celebrate this year’s accomplishments, and strengthen their employability skills.”

Rebekka Jay, a rising senior at Logan View Jr/Sr High School, was one of 25 National Officer Candidates vying for a position on the 2021-2022 National Executive Council. After taking an FCCLA knowledge test, participating in interview and delivering her speech, and having her resume and application evaluated by the nominating committee, Rebekka was one of the top 20 candidates selected to move on in the election process. Following the voting delegate networking session and speeches, unfortunately Rebekka 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. Meredith Rohwer serves as the Logan View Jr/Sr High School Chapter Adviser.

The National Say Yes to FCS signing event was held during the closing session of the hybrid conference. This event recognized 12 graduating high school seniors from across the country who have committed to a future career as a Family and Consumer Sciences teacher and FCCLA Chapter Adviser. LEAD FCS Education, an organization of State Family and Consumer Sciences Administrators and leaders, as well as National FCCLA sponsored the signing event. Avery Olnes, a 2021 graduate of Boone Central High School, participated in the event. Avery will be majoring in FCS Education at Wayne State College this fall. Sarah Smith is the Boone Central High School FCCLA Chapter Adviser.

Alexis Tira, a rising junior at Minden High School, was a participant in the annual FCCLA Fashion Show. Her medieval costume took her over 52 hours to construct and featured a lined bodice and skirt made out of faux leather. Pam Johnson serves as the Minden High School FCCLA Chapter Adviser.

Nebraska had a chapter selected as National Program Award winner. 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 to increase seat belt usage in their school and educate elementary students about the importance of wearing seat belts. Their chapter was also the recipient of the state-level FACTS award, which included a $1,000 cash prize.

Howells-Dodge FCCLA was also recognized as one of six Lead4Change Spring 2021 Challenge winners and received a $10,000 grant for a non-profit of their choice. The Lead4Change Student Leadership Program teaches students leadership lessons which include skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication and collaboration. Students work to develop a service project that addresses a need in their community using these skills. Howells-Dodge FCCLA members worked to help children develop a love for books and reading as part of the Nebraska FCCLA SLC Outreach Project, Literature for Littles. The team worked to provide an age-appropriate book to every student in pre-school through first grade. Seeing the faces of students as they received a book to take home and keep was a project highlight! Marla Prusa is the Howells-Dodge FCCLA Chapter Adviser.

The 2021 Spirit of Advising Award was given to Kimberly Scarborough from Neligh-Oakdale Jr/Sr High School, who is serving as the Nebraska FCCLA Board of Directors Chairperson. 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. Kimberly was also 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 professional development opportunity available in two courses for advisers with fewer than five years of experience and for advisers with more than five years of experience. Each course is comprised of four professional development tracks to hosted virtually by national FCCLA within the past year. Nebraska Chapter Advisers who successfully completed an Adviser Academy course this year include:

* Ashley Harrison, Chambers Jr/Sr High School, Course 1
* Britton Andreasen, Twin River Jr/Sr High School, Course 2

In addition to the many learning and networking experiences offered at the conference, students were recognized for their participation and success in Family and Consumer Sciences related STAR (Students Taking Action with Recognition) Events. 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. STAR Events allow students to compete individually or as a team. There are more than 30 STAR Events students can choose to compete in, all which recognize participants who demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities to actively identify an issue concerning families, careers, or communities, research the topic, and develop and implement a project to advocate for positive change. STAR 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.

Although this school year looked a bit different, FCCLA members’ perseverance, tenacity, and resilience shined through as students nationwide participated in STAR Event projects. Nebraska had 184 members compete in the national STAR Event competition, which was hosted virtually in May. 50 Nebraska participants were recognized live during the conference as one of the top three competitors in their event. In total, Nebraska FCCLA members earned 85 Gold medals, 90 Silver Medals, and 9 Bronze medals:

**First Place**

* Emily Hagemann & Hayden Wulf, Kearney – Chapter in Review Portfolio, Level 3, Gold
* Laynie Allen, Isabella Ferris, & McKenzie King, Twin River – Chapter Service Project Portfolio, Level 1, Gold
* Cassidy June, Milford – Hospitality, Tourism, & Recreation, Level 3, Gold
* Rachel Malander, Boone Central – Leadership, Level 3, Gold
* Brooklyn Cahoy, O’Neill – Nutrition & Wellness, Level 1, Gold
* Ashley Pischel, O’Neill – Repurpose & Redesign, Level 2, Gold
* Alexz Rodriquez, Overton – Teach & Train, Level 2, Gold

**Second Place**

* Deakon Lauby, Overton – Career Investigation, Level 1, Gold
* Kaydense Hansen & Ava Neujahr, David City – Chapter in Review Display, Level 2, Gold
* Maria Gonzalez, Sahrai Luna, & Katie Vanderveen, Wakefield – Chapter Service Project Display, Level 3, Gold
* Miranda Batenhorst & Bailey Harpham, Logan View – Digital Stories for Change, Level 2, Silver
* Brynn Settje & Ella Urban, Leigh/Clarkson – Event Management, Level 1, Silver
* Alexis Tira, Minden – Fashion Construction, Level 2, Gold
* Ashley Caballero & Jaquelin Luna-Duran, Neligh-Oakdale – Food Innovations, Level 1, Gold
* Alexis Butterfield & Mary Walnofer, Chambers – Food Innovations, Level 3, Gold
* Autumn Lindsley & Drew Whitney, David City – Interior Design, Level 2, Gold
* Abby Lawton, Overton – National Programs in Action, Level 3, Gold
* Kalli Niemann, Brittany Preister, Cheyenne Ruhnke, Emma Thompson, & Samantha Weeder, Boon Central – Parliamentary Procedure, Level 3, Gold
* Shayla Jacobsen, Plainview – Repurpose & Redesign, Level 1, Gold
* Jaqueline Lara-Patino & Lluvia Montelongo, Scottsbluff – Sustainability Challenge, Level 3, Gold
* Marisa Malander, Boone Central – Teach & Train, Level 2, Gold

**Third Place**

* Garrett Alexander & Logan Kershaw, Twin River – Chapter in Review Portfolio, Level 1, Silver
* Hana Miller, O’Neill – Chapter in Review Portfolio, Level 2, Gold
* Danika Kreifels & Adelyn Ten Kley, Logan View – Entrepreneurship, Level 1, Gold
* Olivia Lauck & Brooke Pinkelman, Bloomfield – Entrepreneurship, Level 2, Gold
* Katilyn Palik & Choe Zegers, David City – Event Management, Level 2, Gold
* Piper Dather, Crofton – Fashion Construction, Level 2, Gold
* Kylie Cautrell, Winside – Fashion Construction, Level 3, Gold
* Troia Drey & Jessica Nelson, Logan View – Professional Presentation, Level 2, Gold

**Fourth Place**

* Brynn Almgren, Teegan Henderson, & Natasha Zeisler, Boyd County – Chapter Service Project Portfolio, Level 2, Gold
* Jillian Dames & Kelby Dames, Scribner-Snyder – Instructional Video Design, Level 3, Silver
* Jaiden Johnson, Bloomfield – Leadership, Level 3, Gold
* Jaelynn Roberts, Overton – National Programs in Action, Level 1, Gold
* Daisy Kanode, Exeter-Milligan – Professional Presentation, Level 3, Gold
* Harleigh Claussen, O’Neill – Say Yes to FCS Education, Level 3, Gold
* Tram Ngo, Crete – Sustainability Challenge, Level 3, Gold

**Fifth Place**

* Emma Wubben, Hartington-Newcastle – Career Investigation, Level 2, Gold
* Aspen Henderson & Koda Pell, Medicine Valley – FCCLA Chapter Website, Level 2, Gold
* Cassidy Aycock & Courtney Oswald, Aurora – Focus on Children, Level 3, Gold

**Sixth Place**

* Aubree Whitaker, Chambers – Chapter Service Project Portfolio, Level 1, Gold
* Abby Fiske & Peyton Schoone, Minden – Chapter Service Project Portfolio, Level 3, Silver
* Kaylee Hilbers, Logan View – Job Interview, Level 2, Gold
* Jena Spady, Garden County – Leadership, Level 2, Gold
* Mazie Beister, Audra Groth, Briana Johnson, Cassidy Maricle, Isabella Meyer, Natalie Pelster, & Natalie Schrad, Boone Central – Parliamentary Procedure, Level 2, Silver

**Seventh Place**

* Caydence Guthard, Boone Central – Career Investigation, Level 2, Gold
* Sydney Fisher, Northwest – Entrepreneurship, Level 3, Gold
* Jayna Moses & Ella Vore, Burwell – Interpersonal Communications, Level 2, Silver
* Emerson Swanson, Arapahoe – Leadership, Level 2, Gold
* Ava Cramer & Alyssa Renken, Cross County – National Programs in Action, Level 1, Silver
* Mason Knox, Chambers – Nutrition & Wellness, Level 1, Silver
* Charles Cawley, Elmwood-Murdock – Sports Nutrition, Level 1, Silver
* Madison Kratz, West Holt – Teach & Train, Level 1, Bronze
* Avery Olnes, Boone Central – Teach and Train, Level 3, Gold

**Eighth Place**

* Sydney Howerter, Madelyn Spaulding, & Kelsey Shotkoski, Cozad – Chapter Service Project Display, Level 2, Silver
* Bailey Arnold & Kaylee Smith, Minden – Entrepreneurship, Level 3, Gold
* Izabel Hollatz & Baylee Settje, Leigh/Clarkson – Focus on Children, Level 1, Silver
* Sara Morrow, O’Neill – Focus on Children, Level 3, Gold
* Myranda Schildt, Milford – Food Innovations, Level 2, Gold
* Leah Livingston & Sonny Sowles, Minden – Repurpose & Redesign, Level 3, Gold

**Ninth Place**

* Hannah Ryun, Scribner-Snyder – FCCLA Chapter Website, Level 2, Silver
* Hailey Romesser, Chambers – Food Innovations, Level 1, Silver
* Mollie Corkle, O’Neill – Professional Presentation, Level 1, Silver

**Tenth Place**

* Andrea Hipke & Kaci Mashino, Boyd County – Chapter in Review Portfolio, Level 3, Silver
* Winnie Huber, O’Neill – Focus on Children, Level 2, Silver
* Trevor Brooks & Kiryn Kayl, Boyd County – Food Innovations, Level 3, Gold
* Gracelyn Eisenmann & Tanyn Larson, Leigh/Clarkson – National Programs in Action, Level 2, Gold
* Milli Ciprian, Kearney – Public Policy Advocate, Level 3, Gold
* Kaitlyn Byerly & Ava McFarland, Bloomfield – Repurpose & Redesign, Level 1, Gold

**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 reaches more than 155,000 members and over 5,000 Family and Consumer Sciences educators in the United States and territories.

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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