



2025 National Officer Candidate Applications

**National Leadership Conference
Orlando, Florida**



2025 National Officer Candidate Application Materials

Below are the names of the 27 National Officer Candidates. Click one of their names to go to their application materials.

Eva Orr

Molly Kennebeck

Macalie Hoffmann

Logan Guynn

Myrka Rojas-Baten

Matthew Kieslor

Madison Goodwin

Jaiden Ertzner

Jordan Platt

Emma Pitman

Lia Montenegro

Leia Rombough

Jhiriss Smith

Ashton Osbahr

Ilse Bustos

Emersyn Rentschler

Tegan Richardson

Makenzie May

Kendall Slaughter

Gracelyn Vails

Clara Pereira

Sutton Sherrard

Tennyson Elrod-Spears

Julianna Snow

Delia Alberts

Lauren McBurney

Joey Miller

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The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Eva Orr

State: Arkansas

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA’s mission?

During my term as chapter president, I led a community project called Donuts with Santa. This event required significant planning, collaboration, innovation, and dedication from both our officer team and chapter members. Our goal was to create a festive and inclusive holiday experience for children in our community while also raising money for a meaningful cause. From the very beginning, I knew I wanted this event to be more than just a fundraiser—it needed to reflect FCCLA’s mission by strengthening families and involving youth in leadership and service.

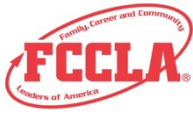
To begin organizing the event, we created and distributed invitations to all elementary and middle school students in our district, asking them to RSVP. This gave us an estimated headcount, which helped us plan supplies, snacks, and photo sessions. I then organized a meeting with our chapter to explain the event’s purpose, delegate tasks, and encourage participation. Members eagerly signed up to help, taking on roles like running craft tables, serving donuts and drinks, and helping younger children stay engaged while they waited for a photo with Santa. We even had members help decorate and create props to make the space feel more magical.

Throughout the planning process, I focused on ensuring every member felt involved and valued. I encouraged creativity in setting up activity stations and problem-solved when unexpected challenges came up, like last-minute cancellations or needing additional supplies. The event itself was a huge success—families came together, children were full of joy, and our chapter members showed incredible leadership and teamwork throughout the day.

However, just a few days before the event, I heard about a devastating house fire that impacted a woman in our town who had always been a strong supporter of our FCCLA chapter. She frequently attended our events, donated to our fundraisers, and uplifted students in our school. After learning about her situation, I brought it to the attention of our chapter officers. We all agreed without hesitation that we wanted to do something more than just host a fun event—we wanted to make a difference. We decided to donate every dollar we raised from Donuts with Santa to her and her family to help them begin rebuilding.

That moment transformed our project from a holiday event into something much greater. It was a real, heartfelt example of how FCCLA empowers students to lead with compassion, respond to community needs, and make a lasting impact. Through collaboration, member engagement, and a clear purpose, our chapter lived out the mission of FCCLA—to promote personal growth and leadership development through Family and Consumer Sciences education. This experience reminded me how powerful student leadership can be when we come together with a shared goal and a heart for service.

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The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Eva Orr

State: Arkansas

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

FCCLA™s Financial Fitness National Program empowers members to take charge of their personal finances and future by teaching essential money management skills that are practical, engaging, and lifelong. Focused on five critical areas—Earning, Spending, Saving, Protecting, and Investing—this program meets students where they are and equips them with the tools to make smart financial decisions. It turns financial education into hands-on leadership experiences that promote personal responsibility, confidence, and growth.

One of the most powerful aspects of Financial Fitness is how it transforms members into not just learners, but leaders. In schools and communities across the nation, FCCLA members use the program to lead workshops, create classroom lessons, design engaging STAR Events, and develop outreach initiatives. These projects make a real difference—helping classmates open their first savings accounts, teaching younger students about wants vs. needs, and even equipping parents and teachers with tips for budgeting.

In my own chapter, Financial Fitness created opportunities for all members to learn and grow. Some explored future career earnings and the impact of student loans, while others created mock budgets or practiced using debit cards. These discussions helped students think long-term about their goals and gave them a stronger foundation for life after high school. It also built teamwork, public speaking, and problem-solving skills as members worked together to teach their peers or lead community outreach efforts.

For me, the Financial Fitness program was a turning point. It helped me turn my love for baking into a successful small business—Baker™s Dozen. I sell custom cookies, cinnamon rolls, and cakes for local events and holidays. Before starting my business, I used the Cash Control and Making Money units to learn how to calculate expenses, price products, budget for ingredients, and track profits. These tools allowed me to run my business confidently and professionally. I later built on this experience through my Entrepreneurship STAR Event, where I shared how I applied financial literacy skills to launch and sustain my business.

Financial Fitness also introduced me to opportunities beyond the classroom. Through STAR Events, national program recognition, and collaboration with other chapters, I™ve seen how FCCLA creates a network of financially responsible, service-driven youth leaders. The program empowers students from all backgrounds to gain financial independence and see their potential beyond high school—whether they dream of owning a business, going to college, or managing a household.

At its core, the Financial Fitness program reflects FCCLA™s mission: to promote personal growth and leadership development through Family and Consumer Sciences education. It teaches responsibility, inspires action, and equips members with the tools to shape a stronger, more secure future. It doesn™t just teach students how to manage money—it gives them the confidence and skills to take charge of their lives.

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Eva Orr

State: Arkansas **School:** [REDACTED] **Chapter:** [REDACTED] FCCLA
Affiliation: Comprehensive **Grade:** 11 **Years in FCCLA:** 4 **Years of FACS Instruction:** 3

Family and Consumer Science Courses Taken

8th Family and Consumer Sciences - 1 credit
9th Food Safety and Nutrition -1 credit
10th Lifespan Development - 10th Grade 1 credit

Participation in FCCLA

FCCLA Leadership Experience:

Local: Vice President (2021-2022), VP of Community Service (2022-2023), Chapter President (2023-2024), VP of Public Relations (2024-2025)
Region: Region II President (2023-2024)
State: State Executive Council Member (2023-2024), Arkansas State President (2024-2025), State Officer Training (2024)

Local Involvement:

- Community Service Project Leader
- Safe Rides—Save Lives PSA Contest Participant (2025)
- Donuts with Santa Planner (2022,2023)
- Chocolate Covered Strawberry Fundraiser Leader (2023-2025)
- Hospital Toy Drive Leader (multiple years)
- Margie's Haven House Toy Drive Organizer (FCCLA) (2024)
- SOLA participant (2024)
- Advocated for chapter FCCLA and FACS at our local rotary club (2024–2025)

Region Involvement:

- Fall Leadership Training (2022-2024)
- Region STAR Event Competitor (2023,2024)
- Region Service Project Participant (2023)

State Involvement:

- State Conference Attendee (2023,2024,2025)
- State STAR Event Competitor (2023,2024)
- State Conference Planner (2024-2025)
- AR ACTE Guest Speaker (2024)
- Advocated for FCCLA, CTE, and FACS at the Arkansas State Capitol (2025)
- Arkansas Girls State Representative (2025)

National Involvement:

- National Fall Conference Attendee (2022, 2023)
- National Leadership Conference Attendee (2023, 2024)
- National Fall Leadership Institute Attendee (2024)
- National Networks: State President Representative (2024–2025)

National Programs & Events:

- Power of One Completer (2023, 2024, 2025)
- National STAR Event Competitor (2023)
- National STAR Event Qualifier (2024)
- Skills Demonstration Event Competitor (2023)
- Community Service National Program (2024)

School and Community Involvement:

- Varsity Track & Field Team Member – 4× State Champion (2023–2025)
- A Honor Roll (2022–present)
- Church Youth Member (2020–present)
- FCA Member (2022–present)
- Beta Club Member (2023–present)
- Student Council Member (2023–present)
- FBLA Member & Officer (2023–present)
- Drug Alliance Coalition Member (2025)
- Local Food Pantry Volunteer (2021–present)
- Pageant MC (2024–2025)
- Arkansas Food Bank Volunteer (2023-2025)
- Certified Lifeguard (2024-present)
- The Bakers Dozen owner and operator (2023-present)
- Veterans Day Service Participant (2023- 2025)
- Leader of Holiday Donation Drive to Domestic Violence Shelter (2025)



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National Officer Candidate: Logan Guynn

State: Arkansas



Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

There are two words that perfectly describe my life after COVID-19: mental health. My anxiety began to take control of my life. My heart would race, and I would hyperventilate and cry until I couldn't anymore. I let the stress of the world consume me, as if I were trapped in a box with no way to get out. After silently struggling for years, I finally spoke out about my mental struggles because Family, Career and Community Leaders of America gave me a voice. FCCLA showed me that life is filled with many ups and downs, but struggles do not define us. What shapes our future is how we deal with the battles we face. FCCLA gave me the courage to step out of my comfort zone, allowing me to not only heal but also help others do the same.

My passion for mental health led me to compete in my second STAR Event, Public Policy Advocate. The main focus of my event was to be a voice for a policy that I loved. As soon as I started, I knew I wanted my project to be centered around mental health. My search for a policy that combined my personal interests and passion for community service led me to find Unity Day. Unity Day, held on the third Wednesday of October, is a nationwide event organized to spread awareness for bullying victims and their mental health. Schools across the nation wear orange to symbolize "kindness, acceptance, and inclusion." Once I found this event, I immediately knew that this was the project I wanted to champion.

Next, I started collaborating with my counselors, administrators, and peers about the idea. My school was on board due to the increase in disciplinary issues that stemmed from unrecognized mental health problems. Shortly after, the process of planning Unity Day began. Social media, school announcements, and FCCLA members helped encourage students to wear orange on October 18th. Flyers were hung around the school while orange necklaces and bracelets were passed out. With an overwhelming amount of support and dedication, I was able to successfully plan and execute Unity Day at my school. This day changed our school along with the student body for the better. Students became more open to talking about a critical issue that affects their daily lives. By addressing the concern, [redacted] students received the help they needed to soon become great leaders. This project gave me a different perspective on life. Orchestrating Unity Day has helped not only my community, but me as well. Unity Day gave me the opportunity to gain skills that go beyond what a regular class could offer. Personally, I developed communication skills by talking with students and faculty one on one. This opened the eyes of the [redacted] community to the importance of mental health. My school joined together in a way that I have never seen before. Instead of acting out of anger, we were supporting each other through love. As a city that was hit with so much tragedy, this project shed light on unspoken issues that everyday students face.

Opening up about my mental health has helped those struggling, especially victims of bullying. Unity Day provided me with skills that can be used for the rest of my life, while also creating a nurturing environment for all students where they feel supported. Unity Day gave students an opportunity to express how they truly feel. Words can't express how thankful I am to have been able to help change the lives of individuals. I hope my impact transcends my community, making it a place that everyone can call home.

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National Officer Candidate: Logan Guynn

State: Arkansas



How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

Attending a public school has taught me many valuable lessons. Most importantly, it has shown me how diverse the world we live in is. Our differences are what make us unique. The way we are raised, educated, and influenced affect our future. These experiences impact the way we use everyday resources. There are necessities in life that are needed to survive, such as money. However, money isn't easy to obtain, and managing it wisely is critical.

Our environment plays an important role in how we handle our finances. As kids, we just take the advice given from our parents and hope for the best. My mom often mentions how my grandma never had the opportunity to teach her about money because they never had much of it. My mom watched her mom struggle financially, which inspired her to learn how to manage her money. Now, my mom is a thriving mortgage lender and an expert in all things banking. Fortunately, FCCLA members have access to resources through FCCLA and Family and Consumer Science classes to plan for a better financial future, breaking generational hardships everywhere. In my Family and Consumer Sciences class, we made budgets, wrote checks, and learned how to fill out a deposit book. This experience helped me understand real world financial management. FCCLA provides programs that turn classroom lessons into practical skills.

One of those resources is FCCLA's National Programs, Financial Fitness. Financial Fitness allows members an opportunity to learn how to save, handle, and earn money. This program helps bridge financial gaps in every community. Members are able to apply skills learned through successful projects to their everyday lives. By learning how to manage their finances, they won't have to depend on their parents' advice or pursue a career in finance to be successful. Students can realize the importance of well-managed money, enabling them to become financially responsible. Finances are a commonly unfamiliar topic amongst teens. Most members are uncertain of where to begin when it comes to navigating money. Financial Fitness breaks personal finance into units which offer a better understanding of the next necessary actions. The four units of Financial Fitness include earning, saving, spending, and protecting. The earning unit focuses on enhancing financial literacy for employment. Next, the saving unit helps youth comprehend how to build and manage assets. Spending, the third unit, guides members on monitoring their expenses. Finally, the fourth unit, protecting, emphasizes maintaining a safe financial system for all members. Each of these units encourages members to get a head start on their future.

Financial Fitness also inspires students to learn more about money. As they witness successful projects, members recognize the advantages of money management. Members believe they too, can be successful which creates a sense of community. Peer success not only motivates students, but it builds confidence in their own abilities. This confidence can help members achieve their financial goals. It becomes the foundation for a successful future, where money is no longer an uncertain topic. Financial Fitness goes beyond members years in FCCLA by offering long-term benefits. Financial Fitness is more than just a National Program, it's a lifestyle. The influence of this program will leave a lasting impact on members' communities, inspiring students to strive for financial excellence.

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LOGAN GUYNN
NATIONAL FCCLA OFFICER CANDIDATE

Arkansas

High School

High School FCCLA Chapter

ABOUT ME

- 10 grade at [REDACTED]
- Class of 2027
- 4 years in FCCLA
- 1 year of FCS Education

OFFICES HELD

- [REDACTED] Chapter President
(2022-2023)
 - Arkansas Region IV Vice President of Public Relations (2022-2023)
 - Arkansas State Officer Candidate
(2022-2023)
 - Arkansas Vice President of Public Relations (2023-2024) (one term limit)
- [REDACTED] Chapter Vice President of Public Relations (2024-2025)

FCS EDUCATION

- Family Consumer Science Investigation
(2021-2022) 7th Grade (0.5 Credit)
- Family Consumer Sciences
(2024-2025) 10th Grade (0.5 Credit)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO FCS EDUCATION

- Educate FCSI students at [REDACTED] about FCCLA
(2023 & 2024)
 - Advocated for FCS & FCCLA to Arkansas Senators and Congressmen at Capitol Leadership (2023)
 - Advocate for FCS & FCCLA at CTSO Day at the Capitol (2024)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- [REDACTED] County Teen Court Volunteer
- Sisters in Service
- Employed at [REDACTED] Waterpark
- Arkansas Food Pantry

LOCAL PARTICIPATION

- Lead, assist, and attend chapter meetings 2021 – present
- Annual Community Service Drives 2021 – present
(CASA, Hope of the Delta, Food Bank, Schools, etc.)
- [REDACTED] CTE Showcase 2024

REGIONAL PARTICIPATION

- STAR Event Competitor 2021 – 2023
- STAR Event Judge 2023 – 2024
- Region IV Fall Meetings 2022 – 2024
- Region IV Planning and Election Meetings 2022 – 2024
- Region Fall Leadership Conference 2021 – 2024

STATE PARTICIPATION

- STAR Event Competitor 2021 – 2023
- State Leadership Conference 2021 – 2025
- State Executive Council Meetings 2023 – 2024
- State Officer Leadership Academy 2023
- CTSO Day at the Arkansas State Fair 2022 – 2023
- CTSO Day at the Arkansas Capitol 2024
- State Leadership Conference Presenter 2024
- National Program - Power of One 2022 – 2025
- Arkansas Red Rose Exam Participant (2nd place) 2025

NATIONAL PARTICIPATION

- National STAR Event Qualifier 2021 – 2023
- National Leadership Conference 2023
- National Fall Leadership Conference 2023
- Voting Delegate for Arkansas 2023
- Capitol Leadership 2023
- Franklin Covey Leadership Academy 2024
- Challenge Test Participant (2nd place) 2024
- National Program - Community Service 2023

SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT

- Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)
- Varsity Steppers Co-Captain
- BETA Club
- Mu Alpha Theta
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- Project Renew
- [REDACTED] Student Ambassadors
- Debate Club
- Chick-Fil-A Leadership Academy
- [REDACTED] Student Council



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1

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National Officer Candidate: Madison Goodwin

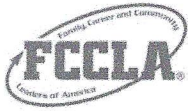
State: Florida



Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

This past year, I led a chapter project called, "Little Leaders, Big Dreams," where our FCCLA chapter partnered with our local elementary school to create a mentorship program for first graders. Our central aim was to nurture the confidence and positive social skills of first grade students, which is the foundational building blocks for their future and a direct reflection on FCCLA's commitment to strengthening families and communities. Recognizing the passion within our chapter to strengthen young minds, I formed a dedicated team of students who were interested in early childhood education. Every student on this team was enrolled in the early childhood education program within my school and were eager to help! For three weeks, we collaborated in focused planning sessions, brainstorming and crafting engaging lesson activities that seamlessly blended the magic of reading and storytelling with hands-on exploration. I formed an environment where every team member felt empowered to voice their opinions and creative ideas as well as take ownership of specific elements. This ensured that our energy remained high and our visions aligned. We created the famous "Reading Buddies" system, a personalized connection where each elementary age student was paired with a high school mentor. To ignite their imaginations and foster a love for reading, we designed themed reading weeks, such as "superheros" where dreams of bravery soared and "animals" where the wonders of the natural world sparked curiosity. During superhero week, for instance, our team not only read stories of courage, but also guided the first graders in creating their own superhero masks with pre-made cutouts we made, encouraging them to envision their own inner strength. Guiding the "little leaders" towards their "big dreams" demanded unwavering dedication. We approached a few challenges while working with the elementary age students. For example, short attention spans, chatter, and scheduling complexities. With patience, flexibility, and a lot of enthusiasm, our team remained calm and inspired by consistently celebrating their growth. The moment a previously hesitant first grader (a true "little leader" finding their voice) bravely volunteered to read aloud to his peers after just two weeks, served as a powerful reminder that even small acts of encouragement can ignite big dreams. Over the span of two months, our weekly visits elementary school became looked forward to. We witnessed firsthand their blossoming confidence and the strengthening of social connections, all while experiencing the joy of making a difference in our community. Through "Little Leaders, Big Dreams," we not only empowered these young students to develop essential foundational skills but also made our own capacity for leadership and service. This project exemplified FCCLA's mission to promote personal growth and leadership development through Family and Consumer Sciences education. Through this project, we served our community and inspired the next generation to embrace their potential and reach for their dreams.

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NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 2

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National Officer Candidate: Madison Goodwin

State: Florida



How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

The FCCLA Financial Fitness National Program is designed to empower members with the knowledge and skills needed to make smart financial decisions, ensuring long-term financial stability and success. This program equips students with essential money management skills that help them navigate personal finance, budgeting, saving, and responsible spending. Through hands-on learning, community engagement, and leadership opportunities, members not only improve their financial literacy but also educate and inspire others to do the same, fostering a culture of financial responsibility within their schools and communities. The Financial Fitness program focuses on four key areas. It teaches members how to budget effectively, track expenses, and make informed purchasing decisions to develop strong financial habits. It encourages students to establish savings routines, understand interest and investment strategies, and plan for long-term financial security. It educates members on how to use credit responsibly, avoid debt traps, and protect themselves from financial fraud, ensuring they are prepared for financial challenges in adulthood. Additionally, it provides opportunities for members to lead financial literacy initiatives in their schools and communities, helping others develop the knowledge and confidence to manage their finances successfully. By integrating real-world applications into the learning process, members gain practical experience that extends beyond the classroom, giving them the confidence to navigate their financial futures with clarity and responsibility. By engaging in the Financial Fitness program, members develop critical life skills that prepare them for a financially independent future. They gain leadership and advocacy skills by organizing financial literacy workshops and campaigns, strengthening their ability to educate and influence others. Real-world financial scenarios help members practice making responsible financial choices, improving their decision making and problem solving abilities. Understanding financial principles prepares students for managing money in college and beyond, enhancing their career and college readiness and providing them with a competitive edge in their personal and professional lives. These experiences not only equip students with essential financial knowledge but also help them develop resilience, adaptability, and confidence in their ability to make informed financial decisions. FCCLA members implement projects that promote financial education within their communities, collaborating with schools, financial institutions, and local organizations. These projects include hosting interactive workshops, developing accessible educational materials, and leading peer-to-peer discussions that make financial literacy engaging and relevant to students of all backgrounds. By taking an active role in spreading financial awareness, members not only reinforce their own knowledge but also create a lasting impact on those around them. As financial literacy becomes an increasingly essential skill in today's world, the FCCLA Financial Fitness National Program ensures that students are well-equipped to handle their financial responsibilities with confidence and success. This program is more than just about money; it is about empowering students to build a secure financial future while leading positive change in their communities, fostering a generation of responsible and proactive individuals.

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MADISON GOODWIN

FLORIDA NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE

High School
High FCCLA

11th grade
3 years in FCCLA
3 FCS Courses Completed
GPA - 4.3



FCS COURSES COMPLETED

- Culinary Arts 1 - 9th Grade - 1.0 Credit
- Personal Fitness - 10th Grade - 0.5 Credit
- Fitness Lifestyle Design - 10th Grade - 0.5 Credit

FCCLA PARTICIPATION

Local:

- Snowflake "Special Needs" Winter Formal
- Participation in "The Mitten Project"
- WeHelp2 Chapter Coordinator
- School Choice Assembly Night
- [REDACTED] Technical College Assembly Night
- Multiple Visits to Chapter Meetings of Florida FCCLA
- [REDACTED] County CTSO Student Representative

District:

- 2022 Annual District Meeting
- 2023 Annual District Competition
- 2023 Annual District Meeting
- 2024 Annual District Competition
- 2024 Annual District Meeting
- 2025 Annual District Competition
- Multiple Visits to District Meetings of Florida FCCLA

State

- 2023 Indiana Fall Leadership Rally
- 2023 Indiana State Leadership Conference
- 2024 Florida State Leadership Conference
- 2024 Florida, Georgia, Alabama Tri-State Leadership Development
- 2024 Florida Fall Leadership Conference
- 2025 Florida State Leadership Conference
- 2025 Florida, Georgia, Alabama Tri-State Leadership Development
- 2025 - 2026 Florida FCCLA Board of Directors

National:

- 2022 National Fall Leadership Conference
- 2023 National Leadership Conference
- 2024 National Leadership Conference
- 2024-2025 National Membership Network Member
- Monthly National Network Meetings

FCCLA OFFICES HELD

- Chapter Vice President of Development (2023-2024)
- District VII State Representative (2024-2025)
- State President-Elect (2024-2025)
- State President (2025-Present)
- District VII State Representative (2025-Present)

CONTRIBUTIONS

TO FCS EDUCATION

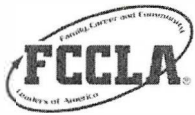
- Advocate for CTSO and FCS Education at the [REDACTED] County School Board Office
- School Choice Night FCS Student Advocate
- Promotion of FCS Through Social Media Posts

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Fellowship Of Christian Athletes Student Leader (FCA)
- HOPE Ambassadors
- Student Government (SGA)
- National Honors Society (NHS)
- National Society of High School Scholars (NSHSS)
- Stampede (School Spirit Club)
- Varsity Swim Team Captain
- Varsity Tennis Team Member
- Cheer Team Member
- Club Swimming
- [REDACTED] Christian Church Volunteer

WORK EXPERIENCE

- Urban Taco [REDACTED]



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National Officer Candidate: Emma Pitman

State: Georgia



Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

Since first joining FCCLA in the seventh grade, I have always valued our organization's mission and the ways in which FCCLA aims to uplift families. The values that FCCLA teaches and instills in each of us allow us to recognize how family is truly the building block of society. That mission took on an even deeper meaning when my own family faced a crisis: my dad suffered a serious heart condition, opening my eyes to the life-saving power of education and support. His condition and the medical journey we have been on together as a family have deepened my understanding of service and have given me a new sense of purpose. That purpose became "Heart to Heart," a campaign that required collaboration, innovation, and dedication at every step, and it became one of the most impactful experiences of my life.

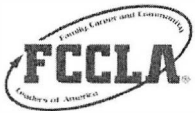
To bring my "Heart to Heart" campaign to life, I focused on collaboration first. I partnered with the American Heart Association and local first responders to create opportunities for students to engage with real-world heart health education. I coordinated fundraising Miracle Minutes at both of our Fall Leadership Rallies to benefit the American Heart Association. My local first responders help prepare and train me to teach life-saving CPR skills. At our next event, Fall Leadership Conference, over 600 members gained vital life-saving skills as I hosted CPR training during all workshop sessions of the event.

Innovation played a key role in making the project accessible and memorable for all members. After earning my CPR instructor certification through a local university, I designed an interactive presentation that made a potentially intimidating topic approachable for students of all ages. To keep engagement high, I built the session around a familiar theme: Paw Patrol. Using action cards with relatable scenarios, I helped students apply what they learned in a fun, stress-free environment. Each participant left with a memory device keychain to serve as a simple and effective reminder of how to perform hands-only CPR and use an AED.

Dedication fueled every part of this project, from its launch to its final events. Throughout the year, I maintained active communication with chapters by using social media campaigns, email updates, and friendly contests to keep the excitement going. One major addition was a pop tab collection drive for Ronald McDonald House Charities, reinforcing FCCLA's focus on family support during health crises. I organized incentives and prize giveaways at our State Leadership Conference to encourage chapter participation and keep service efforts going strong.

Leading "Heart to Heart" taught me that leadership means empowering others while staying rooted in purpose. The project ultimately reached over 20,000 members, strengthening skills, building communities, and saving lives—all while reflecting FCCLA's core values. Through collaboration, innovation, and dedication, I saw what is possible when service meets passion, and when leadership truly comes from the heart.

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National Officer Candidate: Emma Pitman

State: Georgia



How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America's Financial Fitness National Program not only encourages students to make educated financial choices but also equips them with the essential tools needed to manage the demands of the real world. From understanding income and expenses to learning how to protect one's financial future, Financial Fitness empowers members through four key units: Earning, Spending, Saving, and Protecting. These pillars provide a comprehensive foundation that helps young people build lifelong money management skills.

The importance of this program became clear to me during my time as a student aid in a middle school Family and Consumer Sciences classroom. I witnessed students participate in a "Game of Life" financial simulator modeled after the Spending unit. As they rolled the dice to determine their future careers and incomes, they budgeted for essentials like rent, food, and entertainment. But what stood out most was not just the simulation, but their curiosity. Students asked about opening bank accounts, building savings, and managing paychecks. They were eager to learn, and I saw firsthand how early exposure to financial literacy creates confident, capable individuals.

Through the student's curiosity and questioning, I was able to help them explore the other pillars of the program. Sixth-grade students began to understand the importance of protecting their financial futures and learned to appreciate what they have even more. Seventh-grade students learned how to read a bill and understand how their earnings play an important part in paying those bills. Eighth-grade students began inquiring about how to deposit a paycheck after getting their first job and how to save their money in those bank accounts. These moments are the ones that set up future generations for success and financial stability. The activity integrated the four pillars of the Financial Fitness Program seamlessly and made them accessible to young students. This accessibility and opportunity to learn these valuable life skills are what make FCS education a vital curriculum in all levels of education.

I have seen how Family and Consumer Sciences is the foundation for life, and how the Financial Fitness Program plays a vital role in educating youth about a major component, finances. This program has allowed me to become a more thoughtful role model and a more financially aware individual. By helping students understand money early on, we are investing in their futures. And with programs like Financial Fitness, FCCLA gives every member the opportunity to be a part of a real-world investment that changes lives through earning, spending, saving, and protecting. By teaching others about financial literacy, I realized that managing money is about more than counting change, it's about building the future generation of world changers.

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Emma M. Pitman

Georgia | ██████████ Arts and Sciences Academy | Senior, Class of 2026

██████████ Arts and Sciences Academy FCCLA Chapter • Four Year FCCLA Member • Three Years of FCS Education

FCS EDUCATION

Family Consumer Sciences | 1 Credit Earned | Middle School Course | Grade Earned 100
Introduction to Culinary Arts | 1 Credit Earned | Hospitality and Tourism | Grade Earned 100
Culinary Arts I | 1 Credit Earned | Hospitality and Tourism | Grade Earned 100

FCCLA INVOLVEMENT

Local Involvement

- ██████████ Middle School- Chapter Liaison 2021-22
- ██████████ High School- Chapter Liaison 2022-23
- ██████████ Arts and Sciences Academy- Chapter Liaison 2023-24, 2024-25
- Assisted with Chapter Competitive Events Training, 2021-2025
- Promoted Chapter at Open House/Curriculum Nights, 2021-2025
- Planned Valentine's Day Chapter Service Project, 2021
- Represented chapter on local Business and Industry visits, 2024-2025

State Involvement

- 3rd Place in Creed Speaking and Interpretation, 2022
- 2nd Place in Theme Speech, 2022
- Distinguished Statesman Award Recipient, 2023
- Bronze State Officer Scholarship Recipient, 2024 & 2025
- GA FCCLA DISCOVER Training Workshop Presenter
 - 2022 - Community Service National Program
 - 2023 - Membership Campaign Promotion
 - 2024 - Community Service Projects for Your Chapter
- GA FCCLA Fall Leadership Conference Workshop Presenter
 - 2023 - Business and Industry Partnerships
 - 2024 - CPR and AED Training
- Developed GA FCCLA Statewide Campaigns
 - Membership - Shine Bright with Georgia FCCLA, 2023-24
 - Community Service - Heart 2 Heart, 2024-25
- Submitted Georgia News Article, 2022

Region Involvement

- Content Creator for Georgia FCCLA Region 2 social media, 2022-23
- Developed monthly newsletter for Georgia FCCLA Region 2, 2022-23
- Presented Leadership Workshops at Region 2 & 3 Fall Meetings, 2023 & 2024
- Student Runner volunteer at Region STAR Events, 2024

National Involvement

- Attended National Leadership Conference, 2023 & 2024
- Georgia FCCLA Voting Delegate at NLC, 2023 & 2024
- National Advancer in Online STAR Events
 - Digital Stories for Change, Silver, 2023
 - Red Talks on Education, Silver, 2024
- Top 10 Winner in Online STAR Events at NLC
 - Digital Stories for Change, 4th Place, 2023
 - Red Talks on Education, 3rd Place, 2024
- Online Challenge Test, Teaching, 1st Place, 2024
- National Association of Parliamentarians Student Member, 2025

FCCLA Offices Held

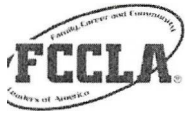
- Chapter President, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
- Region 2 Officer, 2022-23
- State Vice-President of Membership 2023-24
- State Vice-President of Community Service 2024-25

CONTRIBUTIONS TO FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES EDUCATION

- Advocated for FCS Education at the State Capitol, 2023, 2024, 2025
- Advocated for FCS Education and FCCLA at local school board meeting, 2023
- Represented FCS pathway at Career Tech School Advisory Meetings, 2023, 2024, 2025
- Served as a Middle School Family Consumer Sciences Instructional Assistant, 2025
- Created career-tech advocacy program "On the E.D.G.E of Something New", 2023, 2024

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Top 15 percent of the Class of 2026
- Dual-enrolled student at the University of North Georgia
- Agriculture and Plant Science Pathway Completion
- Foreign Language Pathway Completion
- National Honor Society Member
- HOSA Member, State Finalist, Vet Science
- DECA Member, Regional 1st place, job interview
- FFA Member, Chapter Vice-President, 2023-24, State Degree recipient, extemporaneous speaking state finalist
- Livestock show team member, state showmanship placement
- Published children's book author, "Just a Glass of Milk: The Story of a Girl and her Dairy Cow", available on Amazon, 2024
- Spearheaded a "Trick-or-Treating for Cans" drive for ██████████ Food Bank, 2024
- ██████████ Medical Center Youth Volunteer, 2023, 2025
- Salvation Army Holiday Bell Ringing, 2024
- American Cross Blood Drive Volunteer, 2023, 2024
- ██████████ Women's Club branding development volunteer, 2024, 2025
- Sunshine program participant at the ██████████ Senior Living Community, 2023, 2024
- Miss ██████████ Teen, competed at Miss Georgia's Teen, 2023, 2024



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National Officer Candidate: Jhiriss Smith

State: Georgia

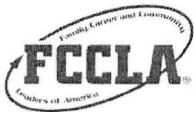
Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

Looking back on my four years with Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America, I have been privileged to participate in numerous projects requiring collaboration, dedication, and innovation. Among these, one experience that is incredibly memorable is presenting a workshop at Georgia FCCLA's DISCOVER Training. In this workshop, titled "Making Chapter Meetings Brighter!", I taught members how to host more engaging chapter meetings. This experience stands out not only because of the lasting impact it had for over one thousand members that attended, but also because it aligned closely with FCCLA's mission to promote personal growth and leadership development through Family and Consumer Sciences Education.

As state president, I was tasked with creating a workshop that could be presented at our first event that takes place in the fall, DISCOVER Training. The DISCOVER (Developing Individual School Chapter Officers with Vision, Energy, and Responsibility) Training is designed for chapter officers and experienced members. The first idea that came to my mind when tasked with this workshop, was to educate chapter officers on ways to engage members and ideas they could utilize to make their meetings more engaging. I centered my workshop around the idea of the beach, tying in the excitement of the upcoming National Leadership Conference in Orlando, Florida. Using this idea, I came up with an exhilarating icebreaker that members had a lot of fun participating in. Using beach balls, I wrote different prompts that members would answer if the color on the beach ball was facing them, giving members the ability to network and meet other chapter officers; furthermore, a fun activity they could bring back to their own chapters.

Creating and perfecting this workshop required a great deal of collaboration, communication, and resilience. I worked closely with Georgia State Staff, receiving peer feedback on my draft presentation and making revisions to make sure members are better engaged. Additionally, I collaborated with the State Officer team to ensure that our workshops did not overlap in topics or icebreakers. Communication was essential, whether adjusting workshop items, editing my presentation, or simply making sure I did not leave anything important that would cause my workshop to not go as planned. Following a tragic school shooting at my school on September 4, balancing my role as State President with personal healing took a lot of dedication. I leaned on my FCCLA support system and used this workshop as a positive outlet to stay focused on leadership and service. Even without my adviser being in attendance, I remained committed to the State Executive Council's goals and dedicated to members who benefited from the training.

Reaching over 1000 members and receiving great feedback, my workshop helped chapter members continue to "Dare to Dream" by increasing participation during their chapter meetings and by focusing on ways that chapter officers could engage members at their school. Through my workshop, I was able to align FCCLA's mission, to promote personal growth and leadership development through Family and Consumer Sciences Education, by teaching members how to successfully host engaging chapter meetings.



The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: **Jhiriss Smith**

State: Georgia



How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

Money will always play an important role around the world, whether it is saving for college or earning to pay car insurance. Within the organization, Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America, there are many National Programs that allow students to develop lifelong skills that can be used in their future endeavors. Through the National Program, Financial Fitness, members are empowered to make smarter financial decisions to better their lives and powerfully impact society. Whether students are participating in any of the eight National Programs that are offered within our organization, Financial Fitness is one program that undoubtedly prepares members the most for adulthood!

Earning, spending, saving, and protecting are the four units of Financial Fitness. Each unit of Financial Fitness plays an important role in developing students' financial decisions. The earning unit helps members understand the different ways to receive income, whether it is through traditional employment, entrepreneurship, or investment income, and teaches members how to budget and arrange those earnings accordingly. In the spending unit, members can learn ways to use their earnings efficiently, differentiating their wants from their needs and helping them make informative decisions on how to make the most of their money. In the saving unit, members learn the importance of putting money aside to reach their goals, whether they are short-term, such as buying a new computer, or long-term, such as buying a home. This unit also helps members understand the many methods of saving and the benefits of each, ultimately helping them learn key methods for achieving financial stability and working towards their goals! Last is the protecting unit, the unit that aids members in understanding the importance of putting their money into safe places to avoid financial loss, revealing to members common financial risks, including fraud, and how to avoid them.

Through these four units of Financial Fitness, many members within my chapter have been able to learn ways to protect their earnings and spend wisely. Our most recent Financial Fitness project involved inviting a bank manager from one of our local branches to talk about budgeting and what the differences are between a savings and checking account. By doing so, members of my chapter have increased their knowledge of the way money works around them. Not only have I seen the impact this has made on my chapter, but I have seen the impact it has made on my state. As the past State President, I have had the opportunity to witness many chapters that participated in this program and have seen the benefits. These chapters have gone above and beyond to educate their members on the importance of Financial Fitness and educate their peers, impacting the lives of teens and ways that other students in their communities can use financial knowledge and skills in their lives.

With stronger financial literacy, individuals are better prepared to share the profound impact that the National Program, Financial Fitness, offers and the ways that members around the nation can continue developing better money management skills.

JHIRISS SMITH

██████████ HIGH SCHOOL

11TH GRADE

4 YEARS IN FCCLA, 3 YEARS OF FCS INSTRUCTION

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES HISTORY

- 8th Grade | Family and Consumer Sciences | Credit: 0
- 10th Grade | Food, Nutrition, and Wellness | Credit: 1
- 11th Grade | Food for Life | Credit: 1

National Participation

- 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 | National Leadership Conference
- 2024 | Fall Leadership Institute
- 2021 | National Leadership Conference Competitor

State Participation

- 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 | Georgia Leadership Conference
- 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 | Georgia Fall Leadership Conference
- 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 | Georgia Fall Leadership Rally at National Fairgrounds
- 2024 | Inaugural Georgia Fall Leadership Rally at Six Flags
- 2023 | Summer Leadership Camp at Georgia FFA-FCCLA Center
- 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 | Georgia FCCLA Day at the Capital
- 2023, 2024 | Georgia CTSO Training
- 2025 | CTSO Legislative Expo
- 2023, 2024 | 4x State Executive Council Meetings
- 2024 | Inaugural Tri-State Officer Training
- Presentation of 8+ Workshops

Regional Participation

- 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 | Region 3 Meeting
- 2023, 2024 | Region 2 Meeting
- 2024 | Region 6 and Region 4 Meeting
- 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 | Region 3 STAR Events
- 2023, 2024 | Region Officer Training

Local Participation

- 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 | Chapter Meetings
- 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 | Community Service Participation

POSITIONS HELD IN FCCLA

- Chapter President | 2021-2022
- Chapter Secretary | 2022-2023
- State Vice President of Public Relations | 2023-2024
- State President | 2024-2025
- Georgia FCCLA Board of Directors State Officer Representative | 2024-2025

CONTRIBUTIONS TO FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES EDUCATION

- Presented to FCS Classes about Early Childhood Careers
- Presented to FCCLA Chapter about Families First
- Presented to ELT and FCS Class about FCCLA
- Represented FCCLA at District wide CTAE Committee Dinner
- Represented FCCLA at District Board Meeting
- Attended Summer Leadership Camp Planning Meeting

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

- Collected and donated items for school cafeteria worker appreciation | 2022
- Cooked and sold "Take and Bake" meals for community members, raising funds for FCCLA Chapter | 2021
- ██████████ High School Student of the Month | 2023 and District FCS Student of the Year | 2023-2024
- Chick-fil-A Employee | Since November 2024
- Volunteered at Open House | 2023 and 2024
- Volunteered at Nursing Home to decorate doors for Christmas | 2021
- Babysat teachers' children during teacher in-service days | 2022 and 2023

PARTICIPATION IN FCCLA



The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate Emersyn Rentschler

State: Iowa

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA’s mission?

San Diego, Denver, and Seattle are the 3 FCCLA National Conferences I have gotten to attend. These three trips have given me life long experiences that I will never forget. Now before you are able to have fun at all these conferences, getting there is the first step. How can our school fundraise enough money to make these trips affordable for everyone? This is when our 2025 National Conference fundraiser was brought to life

Introducing: Night With The Stars!

This event challenged me with collaboration, innovation, and dedication to FCCLA’s mission. Being tasked with a high leadership position gave me the opportunity to improve and develop these skills that prepare me for every aspect of life. The other National qualifiers and I got straight to work. Through this project we were able to bring in 300 community members, create long lasting brand partnerships, and bring in over \$20,000. We created an outstanding idea that combines entertainment, incredible food, local partnerships, and even collaboration between FCCLA and our school’s new SkillsUSA chapter.

At first this large task felt daunting. So I broke it down into 3 simple steps.

Step one: believe it’s possible. With all of our different strengths working together we knew that our goals were achievable. Working with SkillsUSA allowed us to partner with people who had different talents than those of FCCLA and gave us the encouragement to truly start our plan.

Step two: use creativity. We wanted to develop a never seen event that everyone would be able to have fun at, and get something out of. This is when we decided to incorporate many local businesses into our event. We asked them for donations in return for marketing and partnership for them. This allowed us to create a raffle drawing and a silent auction so that anyone would be able to get something out of our Night With The Stars fundraiser.

Step three: pull it all together. After months of planning this event, watching it come together was a dream come true. Seeing how all my hard work and dedication really did pay off with the results we received. Getting the ability for every one of our national qualifiers to not have to worry about paying for nationally was truly a life changing experience.

But most importantly this event really showed how our school reflects FCCLA’s mission. Developing leadership skills through service, innovating with hands-on experiences, and collaborating with not only brands, but countless members who worked to pull this off. Through this project I was able to strengthen my leadership skills by creating an atmosphere that harnesses passion for anything.

The passion for FCCLA was truly shown that night and so did not only MY love for leading, but my fellow chapter members.

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NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 2

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: **Emersyn Rentschler**

State: Iowa



How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

“Financial Fitness engages members in teaching one another how to earn, spend, save, and protect money wisely.” In today’s society understanding financial literacy is no longer optional—it becomes essential. Especially for teenagers. Things like social media, constant peer pressure, and their upbringing all influence how teenagers view and manage money. This is why the National Program Financial Fitness is so significant right now. It truly empowered members to develop stronger money management skills through its 4 comprehensive units, the up-to-date information it provides, and instilling positive lifelong financial habits.

The 4 unit structure of Financial Fitness is focused on directly targeting crucial parts of money management. Using these units to guide students through earning, spending, saving, and protecting their money provides an easy way to inform members about their financial situation and future. These units encourage students to take control of their financial position. By actively engaging students to take charge and be responsible for their financial practices. This first step is essential in developing resilient, knowledgeable, and motivated individuals that will help them for the rest of their lives.

Financial Fitness utilizes modern technology and information that keeps members engaged and motivated. The teenage focused design ensures that the content being consumed is easy to understand, access, and fun. Partnering with organizations like the AFSA Education Foundation and tools like MoneySKILL, members are given the opportunity to develop their own personal financial course that makes learning both flexible and impactful.

And most importantly, Financial Fitness directly establishes the formation of good financial habits that will last a lifetime. By portraying financial literacy not as a daunting task but rather something that is manageable, realistic and attainable allows students to start from the beginning and work into their own goals. This makes sure that students know they are not pressured into this but rather excited and enthusiastic to make smart financial decisions. Financial Fitness makes financial literacy something that is inspiring and creates the foundation for future independence and success.

Living in a world where financial literacy is a need, shows the need for the National Program Financial Fitness. Using this as a powerful force for change we can encourage people to become confident, capable, and willing members of society that builds generations that are ready to thrive.

Emersyn Rentschler's Professional FCCLA Resume

Emersyn Rentschler	Name	[REDACTED] FCCLA	Chapter
Iowa	State	5 Years	Total Years in FCCLA
11th Grade	Grade	3 HS and 2 MS	Years in FCS Education

Education

11th Grade

Chowdown 1 (2 Credit)	Semester 1 and 2
Intro to Education 1 (1 Credit)	Semester 1
Today's Family (1 Credit)	Semester 2

10th Grade

Prostart/Cul Arts 1/2 (2 Credit)	Semester 1 and 2
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9th Grade

Child Development 1/2 (2 Credit)	Semester 1 and 2
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Middle School

FCS Health (1 Credit)	7th 8th Grade (Full Year- Every Other Day)
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Participation

Districts

- 11th Grade- Attended meeting at [REDACTED] n
- 10th Grade- Meeting at [REDACTED] - Attended as State Officer
- 9th Grade- Meeting at [REDACTED] /STAR Event Work Day - Attended as SO
- 8th Grade- Meeting at [REDACTED] - Elected Secretary - STAR Event Work Day

State

- 11th Grade- Competed in STAR Event Hospitality, Tourism, and Rec (Placed First)
- 10th Grade- Competed in Peer Education - Attended as State Officer
- 9th Grade- Competed in STAR Event Repurpose and Redesign (Placed First) - Elected as VP of Finance
- 8th Grade- Competed in STAR Event Repurpose and Redesign (Placed First)

National

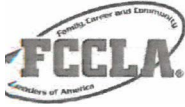
- 11th Grade- Attended Disney Leadership in Anaheim, Attended Seattle as NOC, Attended National Policy Seminar as an advocate for Iowa and National CTE funding
- 10th Grade- Competed in Knowledge Bowl at NFC - (Placed Top 16 in Nation - Birmingham, Alabama), - Attended as State Officer, Community Service Program Application Award
- 9th Grade- Competed in Knowledge Bowl at NFC (Columbus, Ohio), Competed in STAR Event Repurpose and Redesign NLC (Silver) - Attended as State Officer (Denver, Colorado)
- 8th Grade- Competed in STAR Event Repurpose and Redesign (Placed Top 10 and Gold - San Diego, California)

Contributions to FCS Education

- Advocate for CTE Funding at the NPS
- Move FCS education in a positive direction through encouraging work based learning

Participation in School/Community

- National Honor Society
- Academic Honor Roll (9 Semesters)
- Active in 4 Different Sports/3 Clubs



The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Kendall Slaughter

State: Kentucky

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

This year, I have had the privilege of serving as a Spencer County High School student ambassador for the Family Consumer Sciences (FCS) program area. Through this role, I have been able to represent FCS and FCCLA by leading a number of student recruitment initiatives. The largest project that our ambassador team executed this year was an 8th-grade advising and recruitment week in February. It was an amazing week filled with many fun activities that were intended to expose incoming freshmen to the career pathway offerings at our school.

This project required a great amount of collaboration with other student ambassadors, my FCS teachers and fellow officers, and school administration at both Spencer County High School and Spencer County Middle School. Planning for the event began in November as part of our monthly student ambassador meetings. I then worked alongside my FCS teachers and officer executive council to develop plans and activities for the classroom tours, while also creating recruitment flyers and promotional materials for the 8th-grade parent info night. The ambassador team worked extensively with school administrators to finalize dates, confirm facilities and bus transportation, and assist with social media and marketing of the week's activities.

Our innovative ideas were brought to life through the hands-on activities that were planned for the classroom and lab tours. I also had the task of designing our informational table for the parent info night, which allowed me to creatively design the FCS space with student work displays, FCCLA memorabilia, and more.

This project required extensive dedication from myself and our team of ambassadors. It took months of preparation, and the week-long activities culminated in all-day tours and events, as well as an evening for the parents. It was a huge success, and I attribute that to the hard work each of us contributed to the planning and execution of the project.

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NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 2

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Kendall Slaughter

State: Kentucky

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

Financial Fitness empowers individuals to develop a greater understanding of money management and how to be financially stable. Through simple projects, members develop a sense of reality before they are placed into the real world. They learn how to earn, save, spend, and protect their money. I feel that one of the greatest issues facing teens today is not being knowledgeable about the economy and how to live a sustainable lifestyle while maintaining a budget. Through this national program, members develop skills for life in a fun and inviting way.

The first way that the Financial Fitness national program empowers members is by being project-based. Members who utilize this national program improve their money management skills by exploring resources, tools, and education on various financial topics, such as budgeting, saving, investing, and even managing debt. These resources help members develop a better understanding of their finances, set financial goals, and create a plan to achieve them.

The program also establishes ways in which members can connect with industry professionals on a variety of financial literacy topics. Whether that be personal finance or long-term investments and retirement, these peer leadership projects provide intentional connection to mentors that can provide immediate and lasting impacts on members' financial stability. By utilizing the skills that these members have acquired through this national program such as budgeting, members are able to run successful businesses, are good employees, and even have an efficient household. In the time we live in, many people are spending more than they are earning. Additionally, the student debt crisis is a huge problem in the United States. According to the Institute for College Access and Success, the average student debt at graduation in 2020 was between \$26,001–\$29,999. Students who have the resources from the Financial Fitness national aid programs have the adequate mindset and skills to be able to navigate student loan and financial aid programs. It is important to be knowledgeable about the economy and how to live a sustainable lifestyle.

Just like each of the other seven national programs, Financial Fitness enables FCCLA members to apply their knowledge of critical life skills in real-world settings. In conclusion, the importance of financial literacy is extremely critical. Just like each of the other seven national programs, Financial Fitness enables FCCLA members to apply their knowledge of critical life skills in real-world settings.

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KENDALL SLAUGHTER

NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE

██████████ COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL - ██████████, KENTUCKY
CENTRAL REGION

EDUCATION

██████████ County High School

Current Junior: High School Diploma
Anticipated in May 2026

Culinary Arts Career Pathway

Three years of FCS instruction completed:
FACS Essentials (9th Grade, 1 credit);
Foods and Nutrition (10th Grade, 1 credit);
and Culinary Arts I (11th Grade, 1 credit).

EXPERIENCE

Chapter

- 2024-25 ██████████ County Chapter President
- 2023-24 Chapter Vice-President of Finance
- 2023-24 Chapter Degree
- 2022-23 Junior Degree
- Fundraising Committee (2022-current)

Regional

- 2025-26 Nominating Committee Member
- 2024-25 Nominating Committee Member
- 2023-24 Region 6 Vice-President of Finance
- 2022-23 Region 6 STAR Events Winner

State

- 2025 Leadership Camp Intern
- 2024-25 State Vice-President of Finance
- 2024-25 State Advisory Board Member
- 2024-25 State Degree Recipient
- 2024 Leadership Camp Attendee
- 2023-24 State Scholarship Committee Member
- 2023 Leadership Camp Attendee

National

- 2025-26 National Officer Candidate
- 2024-25 Power of One Recipient
- 2024 National Nutrition Challenge Test - 4th Place
- 2024 NLC National Voting Delegate
- 2024 Franklin Covey National Leadership Academy Participant
- 2023-24 Power of One Recipient

CONTRIBUTIONS TO FCS

- ██████████ CHS Student Ambassador for FCS Education
- Local Board of Education Recognition
- Supported 2025 "Say YES to FCS" Signing Day
- Local Chamber of Commerce Presentation & Visit with Elected Officials
- Partnership with local 4H Cloverbuds

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

- Class of 2026 Senior Officer Candidate (Determined in May 2025)
- ██████████ County Board of Education Student Representative Applicant (Determined in May 2025)
- FFA
- Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)
- ██████████ Varsity Cheerleader
- ██████████ Student Ambassador
- Beta Club Member
- ██████████ Baseball Manager
- Sources of Strength Mentor
- ██████████ Honor Roll
- 2021 ██████████ County Middle School "Grizzly Hero" Award

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Kendall's Community Ag-Related Education (CARE) Project

- Created and branded this community service initiative in August of 2023 as a way to advance community awareness of the importance of the agriculture industry.
- Began by teaching lessons to a 4th grade classroom on a variety of agriculture-related topics, including farm to table and other nutrition-related connections tied to FCS content.
- The initiative expanded in the fall of 2024 to involve the ██████████ middle school Ag Club and a social media campaign that is designed to spotlight local community farmers.
- I have promoted this platform and displayed my work through multiple social media accounts.

2024 United States of America's Teen Kentucky

- Top 6 National Finalist
- Presidential Volunteer Service Award Winner
- National People's Choice Award Winner
 - Allowed for a portion of the proceeds from the national pageant to be donated to a non-profit organization of the winner's choice.
 - Proudly presented a check to the ██████████ County Educational Foundation ██████████ in the amount of \$1,750.00 in September of 2024 to support their mission of enhancing and elevating the student experience for students in the ██████████ County school district.

Other

- 2023 Legislative Page - Kentucky General Assembly (House of Representatives)
- Team 26 Senior Spokesmodel - Kelly Goree Photography

Grizzlies Beyond the Bell (GBB) - ██████████ County Middle School

- Currently tutors students daily and assists with homework help.
- Created and leads an Ag Club of approximately 40 middle school students every Tuesday afternoon.
- Assists with leading service and community projects with GBB students.

██████████ County Educational Foundation (CEF) - Social Media Intern

- Manages all social media platforms for the SCEF.
- Creates content for social media and other communication strategies.
- Tracks and evaluates data related to reach and impact of the ██████████ CEF's social media strategies.



The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Sutton Sherrard

State: Kentucky

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA’s mission?

Countless Connections, Endless Opportunities fl is a phrase I often use to describe my time within FCCLA. In October 2023, I began to recognize a developmental gap in elementary students (Grades K-5th); a lack of life skills and knowledge about how to prepare a simple meal and navigate the kitchen. In a world focused on academic success and achievement, I sought an opportunity to advance the reach of Family and Consumer Sciences and FCCLA through a collaborative event called kiddie Cook Camp. This event was a 2-hour interactive experience serving over 120 elementary students in the community. Kiddie Cook Camp was designed to give elementary students a free hands-on learning opportunity to prepare simple meals and practice proper kitchen hygiene.

The event, its planning process, and outcome reflected collaboration, innovation, and dedication in numerous ways- providing an avenue of opportunity for community and FCCLA members alike. As FCCLA™s 1st purpose is to provide opportunities for personal development in preparation for adult life, this event prepared students to assume responsibility and gave them the necessary tools they need to be successful in the kitchen, ultimately fostering personal growth and leadership development, just as FCCLA™s mission embodies.

In the months prior to the event, I embraced FCCLA™s Countless Connections to forge partnerships with local businesses and diligently worked to gain the support of the ██████████ County School Board. With an event of this size, I organized a team of 30+ volunteers and collaborated with advisers to establish a detailed budget that determined registration and ingredient costs. I worked closely with the ██████████ County Public Schools District Communications Officer to publicize Kiddie Cook Camp amongst elementary school parents, creating awareness about FCS in the community. I spent time organizing student information (Ex: allergies, accommodations, etc.), coordinating arrival/pickup procedures, and delegating tasks to group leaders to ensure the smoothness of the event. Months of dedication, innovative thinking, and collaboration culminated in a successful event that raised over \$1,600. These funds directly contributed to FCCLA State and National Leadership Conference expenses, fostering the Endless Opportunities FCCLA provides to its members. This event continues to be highly requested amongst elementary school parents and has continued as an annual fundraiser.

Kiddie Cook Camp allowed me to refine my leadership skills, forge genuine connections, and provide opportunities for FCCLA members to work alongside the next generation of leaders. As a National Officer, I hope to implement my organizational, time management, reflective collaboration, and empathetic communication skills, as demonstrated through kiddie Cook Camp,fl to strengthen our National Association and allow members to embrace FCCLA™s Countless Connections and Endless Opportunities.

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The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Sutton Sherrard

State: Kentucky

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

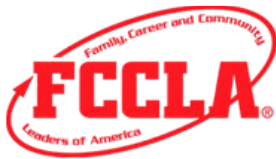
Over 40% of incoming college students are affected by inadequate financial literacy education. According to Dave Ramsey's *The Financial Literacy Crisis in America*, over 88% of high school students reported feeling "high school did not leave them fully prepared for how to handle money in the real world (Ramsey Solutions). As FCCLA™'s mission focuses on the multiple roles of family members, wage earners, and community leaders, financial literacy plays a critical role in shaping members' futures in the home and their communities.

FCCLA™'s Financial Fitness National Program aims to empower and educate members on the importance of earning, spending, saving, and protecting their financial investments, as demonstrated through the program™'s 4 units. In partnership with the AFSA Educational Foundation and the Jump \$tart Coalition- A program designed to empower students to take control of their financial future- chapters nationwide engage in projects and classroom lessons that directly implement these core money management skills. Through projects such as career simulations, community financial literacy panels, and event planning, members gain valuable insight into managing money in various real-life situations. Financial Fitness equips members with the tools they need to make informed financial decisions and prepares them to gain economic independence.

Having served as the Kentucky FCCLA State President, I witnessed the essential skills learned through the Financial Fitness National program. In service on the Kentucky FCCLA Advisory Board and in collaboration with numerous Kentucky FCCLA Committees, I saw firsthand the value of money management, responsible spending, and close financial monitoring in the best interest of all members. With FCCLA™'s diverse membership and endless opportunities available to all, we must equip members to become smart consumers and responsible contributors as they take on the real world and seek various avenues to apply their skills.

As a National Officer, I desire to uphold partnerships with institutions that educate members on financial literacy and advocate for continued programming that promotes effective financial habits. As we work towards the accomplishment of these goals, we ultimately empower members to Dream Big and brighten students' financial horizons.

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SUTTON SHERRARD

Kentucky National Officer Candidate

██████████ County High School FCCLA | 3 year FCCLA Member | 3 year FCS Student

FCs COURSE SUMMARY

Culinary and Food Services

- 9th grade: Foods & Nutrition A&B (1 credit)
- 10th Grade: Culinary & ITNL Cuisine A&B (1 credit)
- 11th grade: Culinary II & ServSafe Cert (1 credit)

Education and Training

- 11th Grade: ED 200 AU Intro To Ed A
(.5 HS Credit- 3 College credit hours)
- 11th Grade: ED 230 AU Human Growth & Dev.
(.5 HS credit- 3 College credit hours)

FCCLA LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

- Chapter 1st Vice President (2023-2024)
 - Chapter VP of Membership (2024-2025)
 - Kentucky FCCLA State President (2024-2025)
- *One-year limit for holding any Kentucky FCCLA State Officer position

COMMITTEE & BOARD POSITIONS

- KY FCCLA History Committee (2023-2024)
- KY FCCLA Honorary Membership Committee Ex-Officio (2024-2025)
- KY FCCLA Advisory Board Member (2024-2025)
- ██████████ County FCS Advisory Board Representative (2024-2025)

NATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

- National FCCLA Week participant (2022-2025)
- 2023 Power Of One Recipient
- 2023 Knowledge Bowl Top 40 Competitor
- 2023 National Fall Leadership Conference
- 2024 National Leadership Conference
- 2024 National Fall Leadership Institute (Presented “Keys of Leadership” to Orlando Participants)
- 2024-2025 Online Challenge Test participant
 - FCCLA Knowledge (5th place)
 - Teaching and Learning (6th place)
- 2024-2025 National Networks: Presidents Network

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Sophomore, Junior Class Representative & Committee
- Distinguished Young Woman Little Sister & participant (2023, 2024, 2025)
- National Honor Society/BETA Club (81+ service hours)
- 2022-2023 Spanish Club Vice President
- Competitive Irish Dancer- McTeggart (7x Mid America Championships, National & “All Irelands” qualifier)
- Andy Barr Youth Leadership Program Completer (2025)
- Ronald McDonald House meal packing (4 hours)
- Secret Santa “personal shopper” volunteer for 180 students (5 hours) (2023, 2024)
- Founded annual clothing drive for “Journey Provisions”

CONTRIBUTIONS TO FCS

- Attended CTSO Capitol Leadership day advocating for FCS Legislation (House Bill 499 & 6) (2024, to attend 2025)
- Continued partnership with Kentucky Farm Bureau, advocating for FCCLA and FCS- Featured conference speaker
- Engaged with FCS & CTE Professionals at the Kentucky School Board Association annual conference (2024, 2025)
- Collaborated with FCS Educators & professionals to gain insight on how to best serve their students via survey
- Engaged at KACTE & KATFCS Summer Programming/conference as a presenter & awards brunch speaker
- Attended & spoke at the KAFCS annual conference amongst FCS professionals and educators (2024)

STATE INVOLVEMENT

- Led Kentucky FCCLA to membership of 11,000+ members (2024-2025)
- 2023, 2024, 2025 Kentucky FCCLA State Leadership Camp
- 2023, 2024, 2025 Kentucky FCCLA State Leadership Conference
- 2024-2025 Began the first Kentucky FCCLA Monthly Newsletter for Members & an additional monthly newsletter for Regional Presidents
- 2024 Hosted 3 training sessions for 250+ collective members
- 2024-2025 Intentionally engaged all 14 Kentucky FCCLA Regions via meeting attendance, virtual projects, & newsletter publications
- Strengthened Kentucky Alumni and Associates through collaborative & strategic planning regarding membership sessions and new initiatives
- 2023, 2024 STAR Event Participant (1st place, National Qualifier)
- 2023 State Leadership Conference Voting Delegate
- Served as Competitive Events (STAR Events) evaluator

LOCAL/ REGIONAL

- Fully initiated & planned “Kiddie Cook Camp” event for 120 local elementary students (2024, 2025)
- Created & presented 5 workshops /presentations for schools & district officials (2023, 2024, 2025)
- Advocated for FCS at School Board Mtg.
- Attended & Presented at all Regional Meetings 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 (6x)
- Coordinator for Chapter projects: Thanksgiving food drive, Brothers Run, Valentines for Veterans, Hall of Fame dinner, and Family Homework night



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Delia Alberts

State: Minnesota

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

The Financial Fitness FCCLA Program empowers members to develop better money management skills by providing them with financial knowledge and confidence in making smart financial decisions. Through its 4 modules, earning, spending, saving, and Protecting—members learn to make informed, responsible decisions about earning, spending, saving, and investing. With productive interactive lessons, participants gain an understanding of the key financial concepts like setting realistic financial goals and managing income. Financial Fitness is applicable to real-life scenarios which gives members a real sense of how financial decisions affect you. Members are encouraged to set realistic, achievable financial goals for themselves to start healthy money-managing habits. One of the most notable facets of the program is the focus on growing financial literacy when young, which is pivotal for establishing a strong sense of financial security that lasts through life. The program is intended to inspire participants to take control of their own financial existence, teaching the importance of saving, investing for growth, and taking advantage of good financial opportunities.

To add on, FCCLA offers leadership, public speaking, and teamwork skills, which are crucial when meeting with bankers and financial advisors. Offering both practical financial tools and opportunities for personal growth, the Financial Fitness FCCLA Program helps members build a well-rounded skill set that will benefit their financial futures.

The program's hands-on approach provides one of the best learning structures to instill financial knowledge that will stick. The program's end goal is to empower members and show that there is no need to fear finances. By growing the confidence of the program participants, it's not only making headway for good financial decisions but also inspiring the next generations of bankers, accountants, and financial advisors.

Furthermore, the Financial Fitness FCCLA Program provides members with activities such as family budgeting projects, chapter projects that require spending, and mentorship programs; participants are encouraged to apply their financial knowledge in real-world situations. These scenarios show members how communities, families, and individuals are impacted in different financial settings. FCCLA also partners with organizations like the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE) to provide high-quality resources and curriculum support. This powerful approach strengthens participants' ability to think critically and realistically about financial matters, ensuring that they are better prepared to handle financial challenges as they grow older and as they get more relevant. These skills translate to

other areas of their lives, from academic performance to future career opportunities. The program's emphasis on planning and goal achievement helps students develop a mindset that prioritizes thoughtful decision-making and financial independence.

In conclusion, the Financial Fitness FCCLA Program equips members with the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to make informed, responsible financial decisions, ultimately empowering them to take control of their financial futures.

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NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 2

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Delia Alberts

State: Minnesota

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

Leading the statewide hygiene drive was an experience that required collaboration, innovation, and dedication. The project intended to provide essential hygiene products to those in need, focusing on shelters and families facing difficulties. To ensure the drive's success, I worked closely with Minnesota FCCLA chapters and the area officers team, collaborating on tasks such as the collection dates and transportation to the state conference. The national program Career Connections helped members and me learn more about the impact service projects have on the community. Career Connections taught me how to work with others in a professional setting and made me want to pursue a career in community service.

This project provided me the opportunity to develop My Skills, My Life, My Career, My Path and showed me how vital it is to collaborate and keep everything organized and efficient—ensuring that we were bringing in products and keeping everything on track. Innovation came into play when we thought about how to store the products. We brainstormed ideas for sustainable packaging and how to engage local businesses for donations. I created a flyer explaining the drive to spread the word. On the flyer, I asked everyone individually to bring travel-sized products to their Mid-Winter Area meetings.

The national program Families First made the members and me want to focus on the safety, development, and balance all families need. Dedication was the driving force, as hours were spent organizing, assembling, and distributing the products, overcoming obstacles like limited time and supplies. Including FCCLA members and finding internal drive was a key factor in achieving success. I involved members through every stage of the project, from planning to execution, ensuring that their donations and support of the drive were appreciated.

The project aligned perfectly with FCCLA's mission of promoting personal growth, leadership, and community service. It gave members the chance to learn how to apply leadership skills in real-world situations while making a meaningful difference in the community. Members had the opportunity to contribute to something important to those in need. By taking on the responsibility of leading a meaningful, positive, and impactful service project, I was able to bring the values of FCCLA to life by fostering leadership skills within myself and others.

The focus on service and making an impact on the real world also reinforced the mission of FCCLA by demonstrating how leadership can create meaningful change. Through this hands-on experience, members were not only able to develop a deeper understanding of the importance of helping others but also learn the vital role teamwork plays in making any project successful.

The travel-size hygiene drive embraced the core values of family, career, and community, while encouraging members to contribute to a larger cause. Additionally, the project promoted helping others and working together as a team to achieve common goals. Through this project, I learned the importance of teamwork, creative problem-solving, and communication to benefit the people in need. This project has inspired me to continue in my community service journey and think outside of the box.

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Delia Alberts

State: Minnesota

School: ██████████ High School

Grade: 10

Years in FCCLA: 4

Years of FCS Courses: 2.25 credit

GPA: 3.867

Family Consumer Science Classes

Grade 7 - FACS 7

–*comprehensive FCS Course*

Grade 9 - Life Management

–*comprehensive FCS Course*

Grade 9 - Food & Nutrition Fundamentals

–*Hospitality, Events, & Tourism Career Cluster*

Grade 10 - Culinary Arts & Baking

–*Hospitality, Events, & Tourism Career Cluster*

Grade 10 - Child Development & Psychology

–*Education Cluster*

Contribution to FCS Education

–Supported FCS and FCCLA through multiple fundraisers

–Participated in FCCLA Capitol Day to speak with Representatives, Senators & local policy makers about impact of FCS Education & FCCLA on students

–Presentation to School Board Members and local Lions Club

–Presented at the MSU FACS to the Max Conference on FCCLA & networked with FCS Educators

Participation in FCCLA

FCCLA Offices Held

2023-2024 - Minnesota FCCLA Southeast Area Peer Educator

2024-2025-Minnesota FCCLA State VP of Service

2025-2026 - Minnesota National Officer Candidate

Participation in School & Community

-2021-2025 - High School Volleyball Team

-2022-2023 - MS Student Council President

-2022-2023 - W.E.B Leader

-2023- Vacation Bible School Counselor

-2023-2024 - School Yearbook Member

-2023-2025 - Church Pre-K - 1st grade teacher

-2023-2025-High School Volleyball Camp Instructor

-2023-2025 - Honors student

-2023-2025 - Fellowship of Christian Athletes

-2024-2025 - Lifeguard

-2024-2025 - High School Varsity Track Team

-2025 - Student of the Month

-2019-2025 - High School Band

Local

2023-2025 - Mid-Winter FCCLA Southeast Area meeting attendance

2022-2025 - FCCLA Chapter meeting attendance

2022-2025 - Monthly FCCLA chapter project

2023-2025 - Organized two community food drives

2023-2024 - Organized School Cancer Service Project

2023-2025 - Taught Halloween Safety Elementary School

State

2023-2025- State FCCLA Conference chapter delegate

2024-2025 - Minnesota FCCLA State Vice President of Community Service

2024 - MN FCCLA Leadership Camp organizer

2025 - Organized the MN FCCLA State Service Project - hygiene drive

2023-2025 - MN FCCLA State Fall Summit delegate

National

2024 - Promote and Publicize FCCLA STAR Event-Silver Medal

2024 - State Officer Training at National Meeting

2025 - Minnesota National Officer Candidate



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Molly Kennebeck

State: Missouri



Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

One of the most impactful events hosted by the ██████████ FCCLA Chapter is the annual Turkey Trot. This event is evidence of the dedication and hard work of our chapter members, whose contributions make it possible each year. There are numerous elements that require careful planning and coordination, including ticket sales, baked goods, securing administrator approval, and liaising with the local YMCA. To fully grasp the level of collaboration needed to bring this event to life, it's essential to understand what the Turkey Trot entails. The event not only fosters a sense of community within our school but also provides an opportunity to give back to those in need, reinforcing the values of FCCLA in a tangible way. This event serves as an example of how leadership and teamwork can come together to create something meaningful and impactful for everyone involved.

The Turkey Trot is an engaging and interactive event that gives students a unique organization, communication, and problem-solving opportunity to break the rules of our school's strict no-cell-phone policy. With administrative approval, students can pay \$2 to "trot" out of their advisory period and enjoy some time on their phones in the commons area. This event takes place on the last day of school before Thanksgiving break and serves as a fun, lighthearted way to send students into the holiday. In preparation for the event, chapter officers, including myself, spend significant time organizing every detail. We design tickets, meet with administrators, collaborate with our local Key Club, and promote the event on social media.

The week leading up to the Turkey Trot is action-packed. Officers volunteer during their lunch periods to sell tickets to students, ensuring plenty of time for everyone to get involved and ask questions. This ticket sale process runs Monday through Thursday, giving students plenty of chances to purchase their ticket. Additionally, the chapter prepares for the sale of baked goods—contributed by both chapter members' families and local community members—which adds a personal and community-centered touch to the event. By Friday, ticket sales are complete, baked goods are ready, and excitement is in the air for a successful Turkey Trot. This past year, the ██████████ FCCLA and ██████████ Key Club together raised a record-breaking \$400 for the local YMCA's Backpack Buddies Program.

This event would not be possible without the dedication and teamwork of chapter officers and advisers. Every member has a voice and can create a meaningful impact on our community. My personal highlight from the event was witnessing the engagement of our members. To encourage participation, I helped design promotional flyers and even recorded a fun TikTok to promote the event to both our chapter members and the wider student body. This effort aligns perfectly with FCCLA's mission of promoting personal growth and leadership development through Family and Consumer Science Education. FCCLA is all about empowering students to become leaders who positively influence those around them. The Turkey Trot provided a platform for members to not only step into leadership roles but also to develop and refine their skills in collaboration, organization, communication, and problem-solving.

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National Officer Candidate: Molly Kennebeck

State: Missouri



How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

In today's rapidly changing financial landscape, the need for financial literacy is more critical than ever. The FCCLA Financial Fitness National Program encourages members to develop essential money-management skills that not only help them make informed decisions, but also leave a lasting impact on their financial futures. Through interactive lessons, this program empowers students to take control of their financial lives. Structured around four core units: Earning, Spending, Saving, and Protecting. These units form a solid foundation to help students navigate the complexities of the financial world.

The first unit, Earning, plays a pivotal role in shaping the financial futures of young individuals. While many teens enjoy the idea of having money to spend, the real challenge lies in understanding how to earn it. This unit introduces students to the job market, covering everything from job searching and writing resumes, to preparing for interviews. Key skills like reading a paycheck, understanding deductions, and recognizing the role of taxes in personal finances are also explored. This provides students with a clear understanding of how to earn and manage their income.

The next unit, Spending, shifts focus to how individuals can manage and track their personal finances wisely. This unit teaches critical skills that can help students avoid overspending and falling into debt. Topics like advertising, budgeting, and comparison shopping are introduced. Additionally, students explore the concepts of credit, loans, and leasing. This empowers students to think carefully before making spending decisions, to ensure they remain within their budget.

The third unit, Saving, helps members develop a strong savings mentality. Teens are often pressured to spend rather than save, but this unit offers strategies to encourage regular saving habits. Students learn how to set financial goals, build an emergency fund, and save for both short-term and long-term objectives. By developing these positive habits early, students are better prepared to handle unexpected financial situations and can build a secure foundation for their future.

The final unit, Protecting, focuses on educating members about the risks within their personal finances, specifically online security. With the rise of cybercrime, members are taught how to protect themselves from various online scams. Topics like online identity theft and safeguarding passwords from hackers are explored. By understanding how to secure their financial information, students can protect their financial futures from potential threats.

These four units of the FCCLA Financial Fitness National Program empower members to take proactive steps toward their financial futures. Each unit provides a comprehensive, practical framework that prepares students to make informed decisions about their finances. By equipping members with essential money-management skills, this program helps ensure their path to a successful financial future.

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Molly Kennebeck

Missouri | Junior | ██████████ High School | ██████████ FCCLA

Five-year Member | Five Years of Family Consumer Science Education

FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCES EDUCATION

7th Grade: FCS I, 0.5 Credit

8th Grade: FCS II, 0.5 Credit

9th Grade: Intro to Leadership, 1 Credit

10th Grade: FCS I, 1 Credit

11th Grade: FCS Leadership II, 1 Credit

CONTRIBUTIONS TO FCS

- Missouri FCCLA Legislative Shadowing - Job Shadowed Governor Mike Parson and Deputy Chief of Staff Kelli Jones (2024)
- Missouri FCCLA Legislative Shadowing - Job Shadowed Representative Peggy McLaugh (2025)
- Student Representative on the ██████████ Family Consumer Science Advisory Board (2022, 2023, 2024, 2025)
- Advocated about the importance of FCCLA to the ██████████ RII School Board (2023)
- Presented a roundtable at the Missouri Family Consumer Sciences Mentoring Meeting (2024)

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT -

Participation and Leadership:

- Student Council
 - Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup
 - Teacher Appreciation Week
- Rotary Interact
 - Social Media Representative
 - Chapter Secretary
 - Chapter First Vice President
 - Missouri Rotary Youth Leadership Academy (RYLA) Attendee
 - Autism Sensory Room Volunteer
 - Salvation Army Bell Ringer
 - Volunteer at CES
- National Honor Society
 - Easter Egg Hunt at ██████████
- Freshman Class President (2022-23)
- Sophomore Class President (2023-24)
- Junior Executive Council Member (2024-25)
- Senior Executive Council Member (2025-26)
- Ranked 1/131
- Student of the Week (2022, 2023, 2024)

FCCLA INVOLVEMENT

Local Involvement:

- Chapter Officer
 - President 2021-22
 - Chapter Exec Member - 4 years
- FACTS Seatbelt Check (2023, 2024)
- Turkey Trot (2022, 2023, 2024)
- Foster Adopt (2022, 2023, 2024)
- Grim Reaper Project (2025)
- Verelle Peniston Volunteer (2024)

Regional Involvement:

- Regional Officer
 - President 2022-23
 - State Officer Candidate 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26
- STAR Event Competitor (2022, 2023, 2024)
- Regional Officer Retreat (2024, 2025)
- STAR Event Youth Consultant (2025)

State Involvement:

- State Officer
 - First Vice President (2023-24)
 - Vice President of Elections (2024-25)
- SLC Attendee (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025)
- State FLC Attendee (2022, 2023, 2024)
- STAR Event Competitor (2022, 2023, 2024)
- Legislative Shadowing Participant (2024,2025)
- ACTE at the Capitol (2024)
- Missouri Show Me Skills Competitor (2024)

National Involvement:

- National Leadership Conference Attendee (2022, 2023, 2024)
- National Fall Leadership Conference (2023)
- National Fall Institute in Anaheim, CA (2024)
- Leadership Academy Student (2023-24)
- STAR Event Competitor (2022)
- Bylaw Town Hall Meetings (2024)
- Lead Voting Delegate in 2024 Bylaw Proposals



The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Myrka Rojas-Baten

State: North Carolina

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

One of the most impactful initiatives I led in my chapter was our Shoe Drive Fundraiser, "Footsteps for Hope", in which we collected shoes to donate to Funds2Orgs. This organization collects donated shoes and ships them to small business owners around the world. The business owners sell the shoes at local markets, helping them earn a steady income.

I started by asking a few members in my FCCLA chapter to help me, knowing that several had other activities. However, by working around a time that would work for everyone, I made sure my whole chapter could be part of the project.

While gathering as many shoe donations as possible, we also had to come up with several ideas on how to advertise the big project. One of the most successful ways that our chapter spread the work was through social media, school announcements, and hanging up flyers around town at places like local shops, churches, and many other local places. At first, we were discouraged by the small number of shoe donations we received. But we stayed positive, reminding ourselves that successful projects take time, as we told ourselves that great endeavors require patience. Eventually, one of our posters was seen by someone who called us, telling us that they had a great number of shoes they were willing to donate. This was a reminder to us of the importance of always being positive about the project, even when we were not receiving the results we desired.

We also came up with several innovative ideas to get people involved. We used social media to share updates and progress, as well as to thank our donors. The shoe drive was also promoted by announcing it at school on the morning and afternoon announcements. The announcements were able to reach both teachers and students. This really helped spread the work and encouraged more people to participate in the shoe drive, leading to more community donations.

This project created major engagement and even inspired others to join FCCLA. By working together on the shoe drive, members saw how leadership, teamwork, and community service are essential for creating positive change in a community. The excitement of the fundraiser and the impact it had on others inspired some members to further engage in the Ultimate Leadership Experience by competing at the North Carolina FCCLA State Leadership Conference. During their competitions, they applied the skills gained from this project to showcase their leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving skills.

This project perfectly aligns with FCCLA's mission by promoting personal growth, leadership, and community service. The shoes we collected did not just help people in need; they also supported small business owners by giving them the opportunity to earn a living and provide for their families. In the end, we collected 100 bags with 25 pairs of shoes in each, totaling 2,000 pairs of shoes donated to Funds2Orgs. Knowing that our efforts compelled such a large portion of our community to donate made this project even more meaningful.

It was incredible to see how one project could bring so many of us together, strengthened our chapter, and inspired others to be a part of something bigger.

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The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Myrka Rojas-Baten

State: North Carolina

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

Money is something we all use, but not everyone know how to manage it wisely. That's why the FCCLA Financial Fitness National Program is so important. It teaches the members ways to effectively manage money while also building skills that will be very useful in the future. When members learn how to budget, save, spend wisely, and understand credit, they are better at managing their own money and avoiding financial problems in the future.

One of the most important lessons in the FCCLA Financial Fitness National Program is learning how to make a budget. A budget helps the students keep track of how much money they have and where they are spending their money. But without a budget, it is hard to keep track control of your finances, and you might find yourself low on money before your next paycheck or payment. This is why the Financial Fitness National Program is so important because it helps students set money goals, manage their spending, and make smarter choices with their money. Members learn the value of saving and why it is important to do so. From medical bills to a home, starting a business, setting aside money, or saving regularly, saving is important for our own future success. While it is easier to spend money right away, the Financial Fitness National Program teaching members the value of saving and planning for the future. Learning to save early helps students avoid problems with money in the future.

Another component of the FCCLA Financial Fitness National Program is teaching members how to spend money responsibly. Many people buy things impulsively without thinking about the consequences later on. This program helps members make better decisions on spending like comparing prices, looking for deals, and thinking before making a purchase. These habits help members get the most value from their money and it helps them avoid unnecessary expenses. The Financial Fitness National Program also help students understand credit and debt. Many young people do not realize that borrowing money comes with responsibilities. This program teaches members how to use credit cards wisely, avoid debt, and make smart financial decisions. Understanding credit early can help student avoid financial mistakes in the future.

FCCLA's Financial Fitness program has made me really passionate about helping others learn smart money skills. It taught me how important it is to budget, save, and spend wisely. I was so excited about what i learned that I used what FCCLA Financial Fitness offered to teach a group of students about saving money by using fun activites like games and challenges. Through this experience, i discovered my passion for helping others make smart financial choices and realized how important it is to share these skills with others.

One of the best parts of the FCCLA Financial Fitness National Program is that it encourages members to share what they learn with their families, friends, and communities. By teaching others about budgeting, saving, and spending responsibly, the members can help more people make better financial decisions.

FCCLA's Financial Fitness National Program gives members the help they need to manage money wisely. By learning how to budget, save, spend smartly, and understand credit, members can set themselves up for financial success. With these skills, they will be better prepared for the future, and Financial Fitness willll help them make a difference in their community.

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FCCLA

Myrka Rojas Baten

State: North Carolina | School: [REDACTED] High School | Chapter: [REDACTED] FCCLA | Class: Junior | Years in FCCLA: 3

FCS Courses: 1 year

- Child Development (1 credit): 9th
- GPA: 4.4
- Class Ranking: 23 out of 207

Offices Held

- Chapter First Vice President, [REDACTED] FCCLA: 2024-2025
- State Vice President of Public Relations, NC FCCLA: 2024-2025
- North Carolina National Officer Candidate: 2025

School and Community Involvement

- Ronald McDonald House volunteer
- Over 40 hours volunteering at local food bank
- Shoe Drive for Funds2Orgs: 14+ hours
- Church Assistant: 2024-2025
- Special Olympics Volunteer: 2023
- School Cleanup Projects: 2024
- Breast Cancer Walk: 2024
- Breakfast with Santa Volunteer: 2024
- National Honor Society: (Present)
- National Technical Honor Society: (Present)
- FFA Member: 2023
- HOSA Member: 2022-2023

Contributions to FCS Education

- Advocated at the North Carolina General Assembly for increased funding for FCCLA and expansion of middle school chapters
- Spoke at Freshman Open House to encourage student involvement in FCS and FCCLA
- Attended CTSO Summer Conference, collaborated with other CTSO officers

Local Chapter Involvement

- Led Say Yes to FCS project to help elementary students struggling with fractions
- Participated in Ronald McDonald House service project
- Delivered school-wide Bullying Prevention presentation
- Initiated and managed multiple fundraisers to support FCCLA chapter growth
- Active in chapter meetings (2023–2025) and local events
- Participated in FCCLA National Programs each year, including: Power of One, Community Service, Stand Up, Career Connection, Student Body, Families First, Financial Fitness

District Involvement

- Judge for district competitive events
- Assisted in [REDACTED] FCCLA Pageant: 2025
- Participated in [REDACTED] Chapter visit and 2024-2025 Chapter visits
- Attended Fall Leadership Conferences: 2023-2025

State Involvement

- State Vice President of Public Relations: 2024-2025
- North Carolina FCCLA Red Rose Award Recipient: 2025
- Taught 4 workshops at 2 Fall Leadership Conferences
- Created and managed 150+ social media posts for NC FCCLA
- Helped with state-wide initiative Fostering the Future community service project
- Say Yes to FCS – Gold Medal: 2023
- Focus on Children – Silver Medal: 2024
- Completed Human Services Knowledge Test: 2025
- Attended CTSO State Officer Training: 2024
- Delivered officer workshop to recruit 2025-2026 SOC candidates
- North Carolina State Leadership Conferences Attendee: 2023-2025
- Launched NC's first Membership Madness on social media: Go for the Red campaign: 2024-2025
- Led at the NC FCCLA sessions at National Conference: 2024

National Involvement

- National Leadership Conference Attendee: 2023-2025
- Competed nationally in Say Yes to FCS and Digital Stories for Change: Silver
- Power of One Program Completer: 2023-2025
- Showcased Chapter Community Service Project at National Leadership Conference: 2024
- National Community Service Program Runner Up Winner: 2024
- Member of the Connection FCCLA National Network: 2024-2025



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Jaiden Ertzner

State: Nebraska

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

During my time at FCCLA, I have been blessed with many opportunities to engage and lead a multitude of projects. One project that will continue to stick with me is the [REDACTED] Q150 celebration. I was originally put in contact with Ashley Walz, head of the [REDACTED] Planning Committee, in the summer of 2023. After some conversation with her I was invited aboard a planning committee that was planning the Q150. Being invited to help plan this events was an incredible offer. I knew I could not pass up. The event was intended to bring the town together to celebrate 150 years of history, community, kindness, and culture. During this time of planning, I would work collaboratively with community leaders, local businesses, organizations, as well as volunteers. I became the head contact of [REDACTED] High where I would have to rally support, communicate, and collaborate with students and staff to find innovative ways to include the school in various activities, as well as work with different committees on all aspects. My committee would collaborate to ensure engagement for community members of all ages. However, we would also work with other committees to help ensure that things were running smoothly and that everyone's ideas would work cohesively to provide the best event possible. Planning an event this size was a big responsibility and would require innovative thinking. The planning committee would have to come up with activities, events, and games that would engage families and children all while reflecting [REDACTED] History. We had to find innovative ways to promote and engage members, before and after the event, to ensure an attendance goal previously set. The committee came up with the idea to create a YouTube video asking the community to help tell the story of [REDACTED] history and spread the word. We had a multitude of volunteers who were able to spread the word about this event. From there the committee spent several months planning and finalizing every single detail. During the event itself, we were all very hands-on when it came to directing traffic, helping vendors with set up and tear down, distributing water to volunteers, and much more. This event required several late nights and very early mornings, when most were asleep or out with friends we were working to ensure everything went smoothly. The Q150 engaged FCCLA members in various ways. The [REDACTED] FCCLA chapter was able to help sell items and assist with bouncy houses. Members who participated received membership points and community service hours. Members not assisting were more than welcome to attend the event in whatever capacity desired. This celebration worked towards the FCCLA mission and purposes. It helped promote personal growth and leadership development. We were able to take on leadership roles by helping the city with a variety of tasks. These tasks allowed us to develop important skills, including communication and teamwork. The event also encouraged community service and citizenship. FCCLA members played a big part in making that happen. We helped create an event that didn't just entertain but also brought pride and unity to the town. Many activities focused on getting kids and adults to interact and work together. It created a space where families could spend time together, have fun, and celebrate the community as a whole strengthening the family unit. This event exemplified leadership, community, and family. Reflecting on the Q150 even I can confidently say it required collaboration, innovation, and dedication. The town was brought together in celebration of its amazing history. FCCLA members were engaged with hands-on tasks and leadership roles. Ultimately aligning with FCCLA's mission by promoting leadership, community service, and strengthening family bonds.

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NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 2

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Jaiden Ertzner

State: Nebraska

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

In today's world, I can confidently say that not a single person has the same knowledge or understanding of money as one another. FCCLA offers a wide variety of skill-based opportunities through competitive events, serving in leadership roles, and participating in National Programs. FCCLA's National Program, Financial Fitness, helps empower members for their future endeavors, especially when it comes to managing money. The Financial Fitness units all teach students a wide variety of valuable life lessons. Saving teaches the importance of saving money as well as how to properly manage it. Students learn how to use bank accounts, manage their credit scores, and see how having good credit can make a big difference. They can learn about investments including where to invest, how it works, and why making smart investments is important. Utilizing this unit students are able to speed the benefits that saving money can have. Students realize that by saving money they have the ability to invest in future potential wants or needs, such as medical bills. It emphasizes to students that life may not always go as expected and it is important to be prepared. The unit Earning helps students understand the different ways to earn income. It teaches how to manage the money they earn on the job. They learn that there is not just one simple way to earn money. This could be anything from a part-time job to starting a small business. Students eyes or open to a future they may not have known. Understanding how to manage your earnings is an important skill that's will be useful for the rest of your life. Spending allows students to create projects that meet everyday needs. They can create a budget for themselves, their families, or their peers, and track it over any period of time including days, weeks, months, or even a year. Students have the ability to see real world pricing and decide what is best for themselves and their future. This ultimately helps students make informed decisions on where to spend their money. Combined with the unit Saving students can figure out where to cut back on spending in order to specifically save more. With these skills, they're better prepared for future situations that require budgeting and managing money. The unit Protecting teaches students how to protect their finances. It informs students of the potential threats to their finances. They learn how to keep their money and personal information safe from risks such as scams and fraud. This unit gives students strategies for protecting their financial well-being and making safe decisions when it comes to managing their money. By using the National Program Financial Fitness, and its units, students can create and lead projects in their communities to help others improve their financial literacy. When it comes specifically to FCCLA, most STAR projects, require students to use at least one National Program. When discussing with other students what National Program they used, I most often hear Finical Fitness. Students understand its importance in seeing how there project would become finically possible. In specific events like Career Investigation, Entrepreneurship, or Event Management, students evaluate the real costs of future jobs, the price of education, and how to create financial plans for events or businesses they may want to start. The Financial Fitness National Program gives students the tools to create and manage a personal budget. They learn about the differences between credit and debit, as well as the pros and cons of each. Students better understand the importance of saving and investing and all of impacts that money will have on their future. Ultimately, Financial Fitness prepares students with skills and knowledge for their future endeavors. Helping to prepare them for whatever comes next in their lives, setting them up for success in the real world.

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Jaiden Ertzner

State: Nebraska | School and Chapter: [REDACTED] Public Schools | Class: Junior (Class of 2026)

Years in FCCLA: 3 years | Years of FCS courses: 3 years

FCCLA Involvement

Chapter:

Attend monthly chapter meetings
Annually Program of Work meeting
Competed in STAR projects
Event Management (9th, 10th Grade)
Leadership (11th Grade)
Participated in FACTS week with my chapter
Earned the most membership points (2023-2024)
Engaged in numerous community service project- Pink out game, Food drive, Kids' Day Camp, Senior Night, Ect

State:

Most community service hours state wide (2023-2024)
STAR Champion (2023)
STAR Medalist (2024)
STAR Champion (2025)
Completed Power of One
Participated in various State Peer Officer Team State Outreach Project
Attended 2023-2024 District Officer Leadership Training
State Officer Leadership Academy
Various Training, Appearances, Chapter visits
Served as a State Officer (2024-2025)
Representatives for the Nebraska Board of Directors

District:

First Place STAR finisher (3 years)
Attended District Conference 2022
Organized District Leadership Conference
Lead the District Leadership Conference as President (2023)

Nationals:

STAR Competitor (2023)
Helped lead state sessions during NLC (2024)
Nebraska NLC Voting Delegate (2024)
National Leadership Conference Attendee (2023,2024)
Attended several National Network Zoom Calls

FCS Coursework (3 years, 40 Credits)

9th| Life Skills: 10 (Essential Skills)
10th| Fundamentals of Nutrition:10 (Food Services)
10th| Child Development: 5 (Child Development)
10th| Exploring Education and Training: 5 (Education)
11th| Culinary Skills I: 5 (Food Services)
11th| Culinary Skills II: 5 (Food Services)

Offices Held

2024-2025

Nebraska State First Vice President
(Nebraska only allows one term)
District 8 Representative
Chapter Vice President of Programs

2023-2024

District 8 President
Chapter Vice President of Competitive Events

School & Extracurricular Involvement

[REDACTED] Community College Student (2024-Current), [REDACTED] Community College Play Production, (2023-2025), [REDACTED] Community College Play Assistant Stage Manager (2025), Top 25% of Class (2022-Current), Honor Roll (2022-Current), One Act (2022-Current), Speech (2022-Current), Student Council (2022-Current), Volleyball (2022-2023), Golf (2024-Current), Trailblazers (2024-Current), Wrestling (2022-2023), Choir (2022-2024)

Contributions to Family and Consumer Science Education

Spoke with Senators and other Elected Officials about FCS and CTE
Presented to Local Community Members
Attended School Board Meeting
Presented to other schools about FCS
Presented to incoming students about offered FCS classes and the importance of FCS
Interviewed by local media regarding FCS
Attended Proclamation Signing regarding FCS education

Community Involvement

250+ Community Service Hours
[REDACTED] Church Member
[REDACTED] Church Youth Group Member
[REDACTED] Church Sunday School Substitute
[REDACTED] Church Vacation Bible School Leader
Mercy Meals Volunteer
Completed the Youth Health Equity Project
Annual Local Chapter Food Drive Volunteer
Annual Pink Out Game Volunteer
[REDACTED] College Theatre Program Member
Girl Scout Member (4+ Years)
Softball (2016-Current)
Subway Employee



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Lia Montenegro

State: Nebraska

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

One of the most impactful projects I led was our chapter's largest community service event- Trunk or Treat. This project required a strong foundation of collaboration, innovation, and dedication, and above all, a deep understanding of our FCCLA mission: "To promote personal growth and leadership development through Family Consumer Science Education." As an officer, I worked closely with my officer team to establish a detailed plan of action and ensure our members had a specific role in contributing to the success of the event. From the beginning, I encouraged each officer to take the initiative in areas that would help them grow their leadership skills and step beyond their comfort zone. This included coordinating the roles of chapter members, reaching out to community sponsors, and even contacting local media outlets for event promotion. I truly believe that by taking ownership of responsibilities, each officer and I gained confidence and developed personal growth that FCCLA emphasizes. We all divided and conquered each aspect of the planning process- assigning duties, setting deadlines, and sharing our creative ideas, so that everything was accomplished efficiently and meaningfully. The result wasn't shown just in our outcome it clearly showed how the FCCLA mission was being brought to life. Through their outreach, they were already taking the FCCLA mission to heart and gaining personal development. Officers and members were gaining real-world experience, engaging with the community, and growing into the leaders they aspired to become. This project went far beyond our chapter. Trunk or Treat benefited our entire community. It provided families with a safe, fun environment during Halloween while also allowing us to promote Family and Consumer Sciences. This inspired a strong sense of responsibility and pride in our work, as this expanded the circle we were working with. By engaging local businesses, schools, and community partners, we expanded the circle of involvement, allowing even more people to experience the value and mission of FCCLA. To ensure the event aligned with FCCLA's mission, I carefully designed the planning process to promote growth at every level. Members weren't just assigned tasks they were given the opportunity to lead and be creative. Some helped design games and decorate trunks; others brought their cars to distribute candy and interact with families. Every element of the event, from set-up to clean-up, involved skills related to Family and Consumer Sciences, including organization, time management, communication, and community outreach. We partnered with businesses like the Nebraska Educational Service Unit (ESU) to support our event and highlight the real-world application of FCS. With their help, we were able to showcase our skills and connect education to hands-on experience. Throughout the planning and execution of Trunk or Treat, my officers and I prioritized fostering an environment where each member contributed ideas, felt heard, valued, and empowered to become a leader. We worked together to solve problems creatively, adapt to unexpected changes, and maintain high energy and enthusiasm. Since the event had been hosted the year before, we knew we needed to bring fresh ideas to the table to make this year's event even more engaging. Whether it was adding new games, enhancing decorations, or reaching out to more families, we built upon the past to make something even better. The Trunk or Treat event allowed my chapter to develop essential skills like communication, teamwork, and time management, which are correlated to Family Consumer Science education. It also strengthened our members' engagement with our chapter as they had the time to dive into their childhood and dress up for the event. With the help of the officers and my chapter, the project I had in mind became a reality, thanks to their collaboration in ensuring everyone was gaining personal and leadership development. Through this experience, I learned that when we come together with a shared goal and a strong sense of purpose, any project no matter how big or small can create lasting impact. Trunk or Treat wasn't just an event; it was a reflection of everything FCCLA represents, and I'm proud to have led something that brought our mission to life.

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NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 2

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Lia Montenegro

State: Nebraska

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

The Financial Fitness National Program is a vital resource for FCCLA members, empowering them to develop money management skills that will serve them throughout life. In an era where financial literacy is more important than ever, this national program equips young individuals with the tools, knowledge, and confidence they need to shape a financially stable future. This national program enables teens to enhance their understanding of personal finance, establish financial goals, and make informed decisions that benefit them helping them begin to shape a financially stable future. The first unit, earning, focuses on how members can generate income and introduce students to traditional employment, entrepreneurship, and other avenues of income, all while emphasizing the importance of understanding how income affects overall financial wellness. Members can learn to navigate job searches and salaries. This knowledge is critical for establishing a secure financial future. The second unit, spending, addresses the concept of track-and-plan personal spending, and the third one addresses responsible consumption. Students are educated on differentiating needs and wants, essential for making financial decisions. This unit shows the importance of budgeting and tracking your spending. Students can develop strategies and prioritize their financial goals by understanding the impact of their spending habits. Next, the savings unit is focused on conquering bank accounts, credit, and investments. FCCLA members need to prepare for college, jobs, or life independently. This unit teaches the importance of saving early and consistently, whether it's for education, emergencies, or future goals. By learning how to manage and grow their savings, members are setting themselves up for financial success. The protection unit highlights keeping financial and personal interests safe. It covers insurance, identity theft prevention, and understanding credit scores. Members gain valuable insight into protecting themselves from financial risks and making informed financial fitness decisions. This unit builds a deeper awareness of financial risk and emphasizes the importance of protective measures in maintaining security and peace of mind. Altogether, the FCCLA's Financial Fitness National Program empowers FCCLA members by giving them the financial literacy needed to succeed beyond high school. Through the four key areas earning, spending, saving, and protecting members gain practical, lifelong skills that prepare them for adulthood and help them thrive as independent, responsible individuals. The program doesn't just focus on knowledge it fosters confidence, goal-setting, and responsible habits that members can carry into every stage of life. Overall, the Financial Fitness National Program empowers FCCLA members by equipping them with the knowledge and strategies they need to develop better money management skills. Through the discovery of earning, spending, saving, and protecting, members develop a greater understanding of personal finance. As they engage with all aspects of the national program, members are prepared for adulthood, gaining confidence and responsibility so these individuals can handle any financial situation they might encounter. The program also fosters a sense of financial independence, teaching members the value of making financial decisions based on their own goals and values. As they progress through each unit, they confidently manage money responsibly. This skill set prepares them for adulthood's financial demands and equips them to lead financially stable and prosperous lives. Through the lessons learned in earning, spending, saving, and protecting, FCCLA members are empowered to take control of their financial futures, making choices that will help them reach their personal and professional goals. Ultimately, the program installs lifelong financial habits to contribute to members' well-being and success. By practicing these skills with the 4 units of FCCLA's National Program Financial Fitness in real-life scenarios and engaging in peer discussions, members gain a broader perspective on financial responsibility, encouraging leadership and a larger mindset. The knowledge gained through FCCLA's National Program Financial Fitness benefits members, individuals, and creates a ripple effect within families and communities, fostering financial awareness on a larger scale.

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Lia Montenegro

Nebraska National Officer Candidate

Public Schools | FCCLA Chapter

Years in FCCLA: 5 Years

11th Grade

Years In FCS: 5 Years

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE COURSES:

7th Grade (2020-2021)

- Family Consumer Science 7

8th Grade (2021-2022)

- Health 8

9th Grade (2022-2023)

- Basic Nutrition (S) (5 credits)
- Beginning Clothing (S) (5 credits)

10th Grade (2023-2024)

- Adult Living (S) (5 credits)
- Advanced Nutrition (S) (5 credits)

11th Grade (2024-2025)

- Interior Design (S) (5 credits)

PARTICIPATION IN FCCLA:

CHAPTER INVOLVEMENT:

- Assist with Chapter Meetings
- Trash Cleanup
- Adopt-A-Highway
- Feed Nebraska, Canned Food Drive
- Change for Change Money Drive
- Trunk Or Treat
- Create Holiday Goodie Bags
- Partners and Progress Banquet Assistant
- Family Christmas Festival
- Parents Night Out
- Alumni Banquet Assistant

DISTRICT INVOLVEMENT:

- District 7 Leadership Conference
- District 7 STAR Competitor
- District 7 STAR Evaluator

STATE INVOLVEMENT:

- Nebraska State Association President
- Nebraska Board of Directors Member
- State Leadership Conference Attendee and Leader
- Fall Leadership Workshop Attendee and Leader
- Peer Education Conference Attendee and Leader
- CTSO Legislative Day Attendee
- State Leadership Conference Presenter
- Gold Chapter Award x 3
- Nebraska Network Zoom

NATIONAL INVOLVEMENT:

- National Leadership Conference Attendee
- 2024 National Conference Voting Delegate
- FCCLA Week
- National STAR Competitor x2
- State Officer National Network Zooms
- 2025 Nebraska National Officer Candidate

FCCLA OFFICES HELD:

- Nebraska State President (1 Term Limit) (2024-2025)
- Nebraska State Peer Career Leader Team Vice Chair (1 Term Limit) (2023-2024)
- District 7 President (2023-2024) (1 Term Limit)
- FCCLA Chapter President (2021- Present)

CONTRIBUTION TO FCS EDUCATION:

- Advocate for CTE Funding (in FCS) at the Nebraska Capital
- Spoke at Proclamation Signing proclaiming February as CTE Month with Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen
- Talk to Nebraska Senators Ben Hansen and Beau Ballard about importance of CTE and CTSOs

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

- Nebraska Girls State 2025
- National Honor Society
- FBLA
- Student Council
- Class of 2026 President
- Varsity Speech Team
- of Commerce Board Member
- Cheer and Dance
- St. Mary's Catholic Youth Group Assistant

HONORS/ AWARDS:

- Varsity Letter in Student Council x2
- Varsity Letter in Speech x2
- Varsity Letter in Cheer and Dance x2

JOB EXPERIENCE:

- Eye Care, Office Assistant (2022-Present)



The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Ashton Osbahr

State: Nevada

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA’s mission?

One of the most meaningful projects I have had the privilege of leading was our school’s Family Cooking Night. The inspiration for the event came from a concern in our school community: many families were struggling to find time to sit down for dinner together. Whether due to conflicting schedules, limited resources, or a lack of cooking knowledge, the simple act of sharing a home-cooked meal was becoming less common.

With this in mind, our FCCLA chapter envisioned an event that would address this need in a fun, engaging, and meaningful way. Family Cooking Night was designed so families who cooking and eating together could be a stronger family and maintain healthier lifestyles. It was more than a school function—it was a community movement.

As the project leader, I stepped into a role that tested and strengthened my skills in planning, communication, and leadership. I was in charge of the logistics of the event: coordinating with local businesses and food suppliers for donations, developing a budget plan, organizing cooking stations, and creating a timeline for the evening. I also worked to build a network of volunteers.

The most rewarding part of the process was the families. I spent time reaching out to families personally, encouraging them to participate and addressing concerns like transportation or dietary restrictions. I wanted every family to feel welcome, valued, and included.

What made this project innovative was how it combined education, empowerment, and connection in one interactive experience. Instead of simply providing a free meal, we created an opportunity for families to cook together, side by side, learning techniques for preparing affordable, nutritious meals. The evening included cooking demonstrations, hands-on food preparation, and nutrition tips—all woven into a fun and supportive environment. Families didn’t just leave with full stomachs; they left with new skills, deeper relationships, and a sense of accomplishment.

Throughout the planning process of Family Cooking Night, I was consistently reminded of the core values of FCCLA: fostering personal growth, encouraging responsible leadership, and promoting family and consumer sciences. I witnessed firsthand how leadership means lifting others up—bringing voices together, solving problems creatively, and building something larger than ourselves.

The event’s impact extended far beyond the evening itself. Families shared how the experience inspired them to cook together more often. Some students even expressed a newfound interest in culinary arts or nutrition. For me, the project solidified my commitment to service leadership and showed me how even small actions—like sharing a meal—can spark meaningful change.

Ultimately, Family Cooking Night was not just a project. It was a journey of learning, leading, and giving back. It taught me the power of community, the value of shared purpose, and the importance of creating spaces where everyone feels they belong. I carry those lessons with me and will continue to apply them as I pursue future opportunities to make a difference—one meal, one family, and one connection at a time.

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The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Ashton Osbahr

State: Nevada

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

The financial world is becoming increasingly complex, and managing personal finances correctly and effectively is crucial for long-term financial success. For many young people, learning the principles of financial literacy early in life can provide a strong foundation for financial well-being throughout adulthood. The FCCLA Financial Fitness national program plays an important role in helping FCCLA members develop essential money management skills, including teaching students how to earn, spend, and save money while also educating members about protecting funds for future investments.

At the heart, the FCCLA Financial Fitness national program is a focus on providing fundamental and foundational financial education. It offers pivotal lessons on financial topics, such as budgeting, saving, managing credit, and protecting finances. Through workshops, classroom instruction, and real-world experiences, members are equipped with the knowledge they need to make smart decisions when handling finances. Students then enter into real world situations knowing the exact steps to building credit through wise spending and budgeting habits, ultimately carrying positive monetary practices throughout life.

In addition, the FCCLA Financial Fitness national program offers members practical tools, like budgeting worksheets, savings trackers, and financial calculators. Provided financial resources then helps members monitor and manage their financial status. By using monetary tools, members are then able to make confident financial decisions. The practical nature of the resources provided by the Financial Fitness national program helps members transition from theoretical knowledge to real-life application, giving users hands-on experience with their own finances.

Without a doubt, the FCCLA Financial Fitness national program plays a key role in empowering members to develop strong money management skills. Through financial education, practical tools, goal-setting exercises, and a focus on personal responsibility, the program helps students build a solid foundation for their financial futures. As young people continue to navigate an increasingly complex financial landscape, programs like the FCCLA Financial Fitness national program are instrumental in equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed financial decisions and achieve lasting financial success.

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ASHTON OSBAHR

ashtonoz1826@gmail.com



OBJECTIVE

Highly motivated and dedicated high school Junior enrolled in the Aviation Magnet program at ██████ High School, with a strong track record of leadership in FCCLA and a passion for video production, service, and advocacy. Seeking to contribute to the growth and mission of FCCLA as a National Officer by using my experience, communication skills, and creativity to engage members, promote national programs, and lead with purpose.

EDUCATION

████████ High School, Las Vegas, NV

Aviation Magnet Program on track for College and Career Ready Diploma
Expected Graduation: May 2026

FCCLA EXPERIENCE

Chapter Officer - ██████ FCCLA | 2022–Present

- Chapter President, VP of Finance, and VP of Programs
- Led chapter meetings, developed program of work, managed budget, and promoted national programs

Nevada FCCLA State Officer | 2023–Present

- VP of National Programs (2023–2024)
- VP of Development (2024–2025)
- Executive VP (2025–Present)
- Coordinated statewide participation in National Programs and cultivated community partnerships

Competitions & Achievements

- STAR Events
- Entrepreneurship – Silver (2024–2025), Qualified for Nationals
- Chapter in Review Portfolio – Top in State (2022–2024), Competed at Nationals
- PEP Events
- Bulletin Board – Gold (2022–2024)
- Speak Out for FCCLA – 1st Place, State Fall Leadership Meeting
- Families First (2023–Present) – Organized Family Cooking Nights to bring families together through shared meals
- FACTS (2022–Present) – Led Teens in the Driver's Seat initiatives
- Financial Fitness (2024–2025) – Collaborating with Communities in Schools for Financial Bingo Nights
- Community Service – Raised funds for wells in Africa through We Help Two; created plarn mats for the homeless
- Speak Out for FCCLA – Created a recruitment campaign used by the chapter
- Power of One
- National Honor Roll
- Passed Workplace Readiness
- Passed End of Program Aviation and Culinary Arts

CONFERENCES ATTENDED

- Fall Leadership Conference – 2023, 2024
- National Fall Conference – Nov 2023, Ohio
- State Leadership Meeting – March 2023, 2024, 2025
- National Leadership Conference – 2023 (Denver), 2024 (Seattle)
- National Fall Leadership Institute – Oct 2024, Anaheim

WORK EXPERIENCE

████████ Pool Services | Nov 2024–Present

Child Care Provider, ██████ Family | 2022–Present

Bookkeeper, ██████ Commercial Realty | 2022–Present

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Sporting Events Filming – Video production and support at school sports games
- ██████ Neighborhood Events – Assisted with setup and community outreach
- NACTE State Meeting Auction Setup – Supported fundraising and logistics
- Chef for Kids – Helped prepare and serve meals to children in need
- ██████ High School Culinary Arts – Volunteered at events and competitions
- Advocacy – Engaged with Nevada State Legislature to advocate for CTSO funding and tobacco-use prevention
- Opportunity Village – Power of One Units – Participated in service projects supporting individuals with disabilities
- Feed the Funnel

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Culinary Arts & ProStart Team Member – March 2024 (Level 1 Dessert Team, Flavors for Life)
- Athletics – Golf (2023–Present), Bowling (2022–Present)
- Video Production Volunteer – Filming school sporting events and video projects
- National Honor Society 2024–Present
- Flavors for life 2023–Present
- SkillsUSA 2023–Present
- Magnet Ambassador 2024–Present

SKILLS

- Leadership & Team Building – Proven leadership through chapter/state officer roles
- Communication – Experienced in public speaking and member recruitment
- Aviation Knowledge – Studying in a rigorous aviation magnet program
- Video Production – Skilled in filming and editing
- Advocacy – Advocated for CTSO funding and tobacco prevention at Nevada State Legislature

FCS COURSES

- Culinary Arts 1 (2023–2024)
- Culinary Arts 2 (2024–2025)
- Dual Enrollment HDM 130 and HDM 101 (2025–2026)
- Raised in a Family and Consumer Sciences household by an FCS teacher



The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Tegan Richardson

State: Nevada

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

Throughout my 3 years as an FCCLA member, I have had many opportunities to demonstrate leadership not only to myself, but to my school, community, and fellow FCCLA members across the state of Nevada. I have done this through various community service initiatives centered around Family and Consumer Sciences, as well as FCCLA's mission to promote personal growth and leadership in others. The most impactful project that I have led is taking over a tradition called Fall Fest, which required collaboration among the community and students, innovation to create a new variation of the event, and dedication from community outreach, event planning, and student management.

Fall Fest was created in 2018 by Ryan Vortisch to increase the fine and gross motor skills of children ages 2-6 through games. This event acts as an opportunity for children to learn while playing fun games and receiving treats. It also is a canned food drive where people donated over 500 cans to the Food Bank of Northern Nevada this year, which is a record-breaking amount. In the same year, my team added a book drive; each child could take home a book, which will continue for years to come. The impact of this event didn't stop there: we then continued to raise over \$2,000 for our students to help pay for their State Leadership Conference registration fees. This event with vigorous fundraising earlier in the year allowed for our students, most of whom are low-income, to not have to pay any fees for SLC this year.

This event required collaboration between community professionals and students alike. Fall Fest is a great volunteering event for our chapter; we typically have about 75 student volunteers. Of these volunteers, upperclassmen are required to create their own booths and are assigned volunteers to work their booth. Each group works together to create a game that is uniquely their own, including group costuming, roles for each member, setup and teardown. I have to collaborate with them to ensure progress is made, and that all expectations are being met. We collaborated with community members to receive donations for raffle prizes, sponsorships for the event, and even introducing a craft fair as a new element to Fall Fest. I added many new additions to this event and reworked a lot of the existing ones to make it one of the best. This included a raffle, allowing all upperclassmen to run their own booths opposed to just seniors which doubled the booth count, adding a craft fair element, as well as increasing our media outreach and tripling attendance from last year. I was in charge of this event from August 2024 through the end of year, where I donated the canned food we collected. I was in charge of planning everything out logistically, while also managing the rest of my chapter, overseeing the craft fair vendors, and ensuring that we got the community outreach we needed.

This project engaged our entire chapter and aligned beautifully with FCCLA's mission. We allowed for personal growth in the areas of responsibility and collaboration, where we taught each member to be responsible for their own roles and how to work together in a team setting. We also taught how to lead booths responsibly, while still having fun at the event and making sure that others are having fun too. We also utilized the fundamentals of our FCS education by using developmental theories, working directly with children, and using our real-world learning to interact with our community in a professional way. This event taught me a lot, and I am grateful that I got to learn, reflect, and improve this event for others, so that volunteers can experience leadership growth, and guests can have a fun time while growing their limbic systems and motor cortices!

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The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Tegan Richardson

State: Nevada

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

Each of the eight FCCLA National Programs brings different value into a member's life. Whether it be learning healthier habits in Student Body, to learning about yourself and your future career in Career Connection, all of them work together to create a leader that is prepared for the multiple roles of men and women in today's society. Financial Fitness is no exception to this. To me, being financially aware and prepared to take on the responsibilities of life while independent is one of the most, if not the most, important skills to have. Financial Fitness empowers members to develop better money management skills through four different units: Earning, Spending, Saving, and Protecting.

Earning develops the necessary financial fitness used on the job daily. This unit allows for members to evaluate different job opportunities, negotiate salaries, and understand all of the benefits attached to the job offer. With these skills, members are equipped to make informed, smart, and responsible career decisions for themselves. They also learn about things that impact take-home pay, like taxes, deductions, and bonuses. After mastering these concepts, students are ready to take on the workforce with confidence and use their income strategically to achieve financial stability.

Spending teaches members how to track and plan personal spending. The main focus of this unit is to develop skills like creating and sticking to a budget, prioritizing needs over wants, strategies to avoid impulsive purchases, and evaluating the true cost of goods and services. Being able to do all of these things allows for all members to spend responsibly and set strong financial foundations in the future.

Saving allows for students to learn about credit, investments, and different banking options, including planning and goal setting. The importance of short and long-term savings goals, like emergency funds, as well as preparing for major expenses are extremely prevalent throughout this unit. It also teaches about different savings options, compound interest, investments, and stocks. The purpose of the Saving unit is to teach members that consistently saving will lead to significant financial growth over time. Using saving throughout their lives, it prepares members to achieve financial goals and prepare for any unforeseen circumstances.

Protecting gives students insight on how to keep themselves safe with financial and personal interest. This unit divulges into protecting against identity theft, avoiding scams, and ensuring that sensitive information is safe in the digital world. Protecting also goes into the necessity of safety nets, like insurance, to make sure that there are safeguards against risks and assets during emergencies. Ensuring that members are able to protect their finances allows for students to make decisions protecting their long-term security.

Financial Fitness provides students the opportunity to prepare themselves for anything in their future regarding their finances. This program, paired with the powerful MoneySKILL curriculum, the Virtual Business Challenges, and STAR Events allows for members to be more prepared for adult life in the workforce. It also gives students the unique opportunity to create community service projects geared towards being financially fit and allows for us to show our professionalism while working directly in the community to make a positive impact on others. Utilizing all of the skills learned in each unit of the program will continue to positively impact students and their financial journeys to succeed later on in life!

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TEGAN RICHARDSON

Nevada National Officer Candidate

State: Nevada School: [REDACTED] Chapter: [REDACTED] FCCLA

Class: Junior Years in FCCLA: 3 years FCS Classes: 3 years

FCS COURSES TAKEN

- Teaching and Training I (1 Credit) | 2022-2023
- Teaching and Training II (H) (1 Credit) | 2023-2024
- Teaching and Training AS (1 Credit) | 2024- Present

University of Nevada, [REDACTED]

- Education 201 (EDU 201) (3 Units) | 2024
- Education 203 (EDU 203) (3 Units) | 2025
- [REDACTED] Community College
- General Psychology (PSY 101) (3 Units) | 2023
- Principles of Sociology (SOC 101) (3 Units) | 2023
- Child Psychology (PSY 233) (3 Units) | 2023
- Introduction to Social Psychology (PSY 261) (3 Units) | 2024
- Introduction to Early Childhood Education (ECE 250) (3 Units) | 2024
- Success in Education and Human Development (EDU 110) (3 Units) | 2024
- Nevada School Law (EDU 210) (3 Units) | 2024
- Lifespan Human Development (HDFS 201) (3 Units) | 2024

GPA - High School and College

- High School Unweighted GPA: 3.959 - 45.5 credits total
- College Unweighted GPA: 3.87 - 78 units total
- High School Weighted GPA: 5.659 - 1/125 class rank

FCCLA OFFICES HELD

State Level

- Nevada State President | 2024-2025
- Nevada Voting Delegate | 2024

Chapter Level

- FCCLA Representative | 2024-2025
 - Fall Fest Co-Coordinator | 2023-2025
- (Nevada does not have District positions.)

FCCLA PARTICIPATION

Competitions

Nevada SLC 2025, Professional Presentation | Gold, 1st overall

NLC 2024, Job Interview | Gold, 11th overall

Nevada SLC 2024, Job Interview | Silver, 1st overall

NLC 2023, Job Interview | Silver, 22nd overall

Nevada SLC 2023, Job Interview | Gold, 1st overall

National Programs

Career Connections | 2024-Present

Power of One Completer | 2024

CONTRIBUTIONS TO FCS

- Junior Service Learning project centered around teaching elementary school students FCS skills and education.
- Advocated for FCS class expansion at a district/state level
- Advocated for CTSO funding at a district/state level

COMMUNITY SERVICE - 2,000+ HOURS

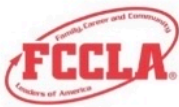
- League of Innovative Students, Member and only Nevada representative | 2023
- WCSD Promise: Core Planning Team | 2023
- Facility Modernization Plan: Stakeholder | 2022-2023
- Student Advisory Council to the Superintendent, held various roles | 2019-2024
- Nevada Safe and Healthy Schools Commission, panel presenter | 2022
- Education Alliance, Board member, only student representative | 2022-Present
- Speech at New Teachers' Luncheon | 2022
- 2 published articles featuring my advocacy efforts | 2021, 2022

SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT

- Worked multiple open houses, recruitment nights, and other school events | 2022-Present
- Fall Fest, raised \$3000 over two years | 2022-2024
- Ran 2 Craft Fairs, \$3000 raised | 2024-Present
- NHS member | 2022-2023
- SkillsUSA competitor | 2023, 2024, 2025
- Started school Student Advisory Council | 2024
- Student of the Year, two times | 2023, 2024
- Prom Committee | 2024
- FCS Class Aide and Assistant | 2024-2025
- Elementary School Intern | 2024-2025

JOB AND INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

- Gamemaster, [REDACTED] | 2024-Present
- Cafe Associate, [REDACTED] | 2023-2024
- Martial Arts Instructor, [REDACTED] | 2014-2023
- Classroom Volunteer, [REDACTED] | 2020-Present



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Gracelyn Vails

State: Oklahoma



Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

Leadership isn't about being number one or the boss. Leadership is about finding needs in your surrounding community and acting in order to meet those needs. My freshman year I was encouraged to participate in a STAR Event with my friend. At first, we were confused because we both weren't good public speakers, but we decided to give it a try. I went home and brainstormed ideas over our project. I realized that the number of homeless dogs in our shelter was a real issue, so we did research and found a local animal shelter called The Dakota Project. We then learned that the shelter was trying to keep their doors open, so we decided that we were going to host an event called Date with the Dakota Project. We teamed up with FCCLA chapter members and community leaders to plan an adoption and donation event at the park on Valentine's Day.

Collaboration was key to our event's success. We encouraged members in our chapter to take on roles that interested them—some helped spread the word about the event, while others focused on organizing the donations. We reached out to my chapter members, local businesses, and our advisor to gather support. We delivered letters to businesses to seek donations and support. I spoke with my advisor to obtain permission to carry out the event. I prioritized reaching out to Micah Burns, the founder of the shelter, to discuss their wants and needs. She shared that it takes 60 pounds of dog food to feed the animals for a day. She also mentioned the shelter was behind on vet bills, which gave us a clear goal to work toward.

We knew our event needed to make an impact. We planned to host the event on Valentine's Day. It was decided to host a love event so members of the community could go on "dates" with the dogs. This helped our community foster an emotional connection. We also set up a photo booth so attendees could take pictures of the dogs. We used social media platforms such as the FCCLA Instagram account with support from our vice president of public relations. We baked and sold cupcakes and even provided order forms for those who couldn't attend. We ran into some obstacles. It rained the day before our original date. I called Micah to set up a plan and try to reschedule. She expressed that the animals were muddy from the rain, and she was uncomfortable with them being shown in that state. So, we scheduled a new date—but we kept the love theme alive.

The event was a total success! \$550 was raised for The Dakota Project. That would feed the animals for a day and help pay down their vet bills. Our administrators and advisor agreed to make this a yearly event. Our project earned first place at the state STAR Event competition and second place at Nationals.

This event was an opportunity to develop leadership skills. By working together to raise funds and bring awareness, we practiced collaboration, problem solving, and effective communication. This was a demonstration of FCCLA's commitment to community service because it allowed us to identify local concerns to make a positive impact.

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NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 2

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Gracelyn Vails

State: Oklahoma



How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

Teaching students money management skills is one of the greatest lessons that can be taught to young adults. Unfortunately, few students are taught these skills in the home. Many young adults are in debt within a few years of graduating high school. Most students have not been taught about interest rates, payments, or even how to set up a basic budget. FCCLA's Financial Fitness National Program is such a valuable opportunity for students. It gives teens the knowledge of how to manage money step by step, starting with the basics like creating budgets and setting savings goals. It also helps members understand credit and how to avoid falling into debt. It encourages many students to save for an emergency fund. These basic skills empower young people to make responsible financial decisions.

Before participating in FCCLA's Financial Fitness Program, I didn't fully understand how budgeting and saving worked. I had heard my parents talk about credit cards and loans, but I didn't realize how much those things could affect someone's future. Through one of our chapter activities, we completed a budgeting simulation that showed how fast everyday purchases—like snacks, gas, or subscriptions—can drain your account if you're not careful. It opened my eyes and made me think more seriously about how I spend my money and how to plan for my future. Since receiving the knowledge and skills taught in the program I have been more mindful about any frivolous spending habits I may have. This program has given me confidence and allowed me to feel more secure regarding my financial future. These are skills that I will use throughout my lifetime. I will also be able to grow those skills as I mature and get older. I am more aware of how short-term financial decisions can have long-term financial consequences for my future. I now feel more in control of my spending and have set clear goals for savings.

The program also teaches students how to be mindful and knowledgeable regarding credit cards and how interest rates can affect their finances long term. Many students have not been taught how to determine what is considered a high interest rate and the long-term effects that can have on their credit. It is not uncommon in 2025 for a majority of young adults to find themselves straddled with student loan payments with little to no knowledge of the interest rates, future payment scale and the length of time it will require to pay back those loans. It is concerning the number of new college graduates who have no basic understanding of how the student loan program works. With the FCCLA Financial Fitness National Program, more young people will have the power to make informed decisions regarding their financial futures.

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GRACELYN VAILS
 NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE

3 Years in FCCLA
 3 Years in FCS

██████████ High school | Stigler FCCLA | Oklahoma | Rising Senior

FCS COURSES

9th Grade: Family and Consumer Sciences 1 (1 Credit)
 10th Grade: Interpersonal Communications (1 Credit)
 11th Grade: Nutrition and Wellness (1 Credit)

CONTRIBUTION TO FCS EDUCATION

Advocated for FCS education with State Representatives Daniel Pae, David Smith, and Randy Randleman.
 Met with Superintendent Dr. Tom Kettles to discuss the importance of Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs).

OFFICES HELD

Stigler Vice President of Programs 23-24
 ██████████ Chapter President 24-25
 Southeast 4 Vice President of Community Service 24-25
 Oklahoma Vice President of Programs 25-Present

WORK EXPERIENCES

Childcare- (2023-Present)
 After School Program- (2024-Present)

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Student Council
 Yearbook
 Speech/Drama
 FCCLA

CHAPTER INVOLVEMENT

The Dakota Project 23-24
 Kicking it for the kids 22'
 Back to School Movie Night 23-24
 Veterans Day Program 22-24
 Christmas Party 22-24
 Recruitment Week 25'
 Twisters and Taco Project 25'
 Art in the Park 25'
 Cook for Kittens 25'

NATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

National Leadership Conference — 2023, Denver, Colorado
 Event Management Level 2 Runner Up — 2023, Denver, Colorado
 Rock the Red Yoga/Zumba Night — 2023, Denver, Colorado
 Capitol Leadership Conference — 2024, Washington, D.C
 National Leadership Conference — 2024, Seattle, Washington
 Registration Desk Volunteer — 2024, Seattle, Washington
 National STAR Event Qualifier 23-24
 FCCLA Week 23-35

STATE INVOLVEMENT

Take AIM Leadership Conference — 2022
 Lead Conference — 2023, 2024
 District Officer Training — 2024
 Summer Leadership Summit — 2023, 2024
 Say Yes to FCS Day — 2024
 State Interviews — 2025
 Unite Tour Chapter Visit Tour 24'
 Voting Delegate 23'
 State Leadership Conference — 2023, 2024, 2025
 Content Creator Team — 2024
 Donna Kates Scholarship Recipient — 2025
 Level 2 Event Management — 1st Place, 2025
 Level 2 Entrepreneurship — Runner-Up, 2025
 Level 3 Promote and Publicize — 1st Place, 2025

DISTRICT INVOLVEMENT

Attending District Leadership Conference 22-24
 Vice President of Community Service 24-25
 Attending the District Movie Night 23'
 Attending Lead Conference 23-24
 Planning District Leadership Conference 24'
 Speaking at Lead Conference 24'
 Attending DOT Camp 24'
 Facilitating District Star Event 24'

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

Homecoming Float Committee
 Homecoming Mum Committee Chair
 Class Involvement Committee
 Social Media Committee Chair
 FCCLA Poster Committee Chair
 Tie Blankets for Saint Francis
 Citizens Caring for Children
 The Pearl House
 Advocates for Africa
 ██████████ Food Bank



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Tennyson Elrod-Spears

State: Oklahoma

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

Colin Powell once said that "volunteering is the ultimate expression of community spirit."

Through my time in FCCLA, I've learned how true that really is. Community service isn't just about checking a box; it's about bringing people together for a purpose, making someone's day a little brighter, and creating memories that stay with you. One of the most meaningful projects I've ever led was our FCCLA chapter's Adopt-An-Angel initiative, which focused on supporting less fortunate kids during the Christmas season.

When I first got involved, I realized the project had fallen short in previous years, there weren't enough volunteers or supporters, and that meant some kids missed out on experiencing Christmas. That didn't sit right with me. This project wasn't just about giving gifts, it was about giving kids hope and joy during a tough time. It took serious teamwork, creativity, and dedication, all of which line up with FCCLA's mission to promote growth and leadership through Family and Consumer Sciences.

To get our members on board, I started with a chapter meeting where I shared real stories of families in our community; some facing job loss, health struggles, or other hardships. It helped everyone understand why this mattered. We split into small groups focused on different parts of the project: finding sponsors, organizing gift wrapping, and managing deliveries. Giving everyone a role they cared about helped them feel more connected to the cause.

We got creative with outreach too. We designed custom angel name tags with each child's age and wish list and placed them around the school and on social media. Anyone could grab a tag, shop, and drop off gifts in the Family Consumer Sciences room. For privacy, we used unused classrooms as pick-up spots so parents could collect gifts quietly and with dignity.

What made this project powerful was the way everyone came together; students, teachers, and even local businesses. That unity and shared compassion were something I'll never forget. We ended up helping more families than any previous year, and seeing their gratitude made all the hard work worth it.

Leading Adopt-An-Angel showed me what real leadership looks like. It's not just about being in charge; it's about caring, listening, and stepping up for others. This project proved that when you combine teamwork, heart, and a little creativity, you can actually change lives. And that's something I'll carry with me long after high school.

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NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 2

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Tennyson Elrod-Spears

State: Oklahoma

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

When I first joined FCCLA, I didn't expect to learn much about finances. I figured we'd do community service, work on leadership, and maybe a few fun projects. But once I was introduced to the Financial Fitness National Program, it totally changed how I think about money. As an 18-year-old getting ready for adulthood, managing money can feel overwhelming, but this program made it simple and real. It gave me tools to understand saving, spending, budgeting, and planning—stuff a lot of people don't learn until it's too late.

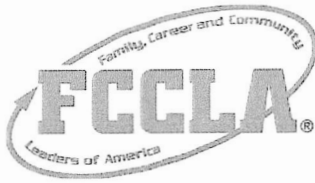
One of the most valuable parts was learning how to budget. Before this, I never really thought about where my money went. I had a part-time job and spent most of my paycheck without tracking it. Through Financial Fitness, I learned how to build a basic budget—figuring out what I earn, my fixed expenses like gas and phone bills, and what I could actually save or spend. We did activities that walked us through real-life situations like planning for college or managing monthly expenses. Seeing how saving just \$25 a week could add up to \$1,300 in a year really hit me.

The program also helped me understand credit and debt. Credit cards and student loans are things most of us are about to deal with, but we don't always know how they work. I learned how to build credit responsibly—keeping utilization low, paying on time, and avoiding things like payday loans or overspending. Now, I feel more prepared to make smart financial choices instead of just reacting to stuff as it comes.

What I really liked was how interactive everything was. In my chapter, we ran a "real world" simulation where we had jobs, salaries, and surprise expenses. I was a teacher with student loans, rent, and a car payment—and that hit hard. We also created presentations to share what we learned with younger students and our community. Teaching others helped me lock in what I'd learned and made me feel like I was making a difference.

Overall, Financial Fitness has been one of the most important things I've done in FCCLA. It's given me the confidence to handle real-life money situations—whether it's budgeting for college, managing a paycheck, or planning for the future. I'm heading into the next chapter of life with leadership skills and real-world financial knowledge that'll help me succeed.

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Tennyson Elrod-Spears

Oklahoma National Officer Candidate

██████████ City FCCLA

Oklahoma | Rising Senior, Class of 2026 | 5 Year Member | 5 Years of FCS Education

National Involvement

- National Leadership Conference (2022)
- National NOC Voting Delegate (2022)
- National STAR Event Competitor (2022)
- National Leadership Conference Virtual Attendee (2021)

State Involvement

- State Leadership Conference (21-25)
- State STAR Event Competitor 1st place (22)
- State Conference Voting Delegate (20/22)
- Joint Council (2025)
- Unite Tour (23/25)
- Take Aim (21)
- Summer Leadership Summit (21)

District Involvement

- Lead Conference Facilitator (22-24)
- District STAR Events Facilitator ((22-24)
- District Officer Training (22-24)
- District Leadership Conference Facilitator (22-24)

Chapter Involvement

- Chapter of Excellence Award – Gold (22-23/25)
- Chapter of Excellence Award – Bronze (21/24)
- 75% FCS Participation Award (2025)
- Adopt-An-Angel (20-24))
- Citizens Caring for Children Volunteer (21-23)
- The Pearl House Volunteer (23-25)
- City Wide Clean-Up Day (22-25)

Officer Positions Held

- Oklahoma VP of Parliamentary Law (25-26)
- State Officer Candidate (23-24)
- Southeast 5 District President (24-25)
- Southeast 5 VP of Membership (23-24)
- Southeast 5 VP of Public Relations (22-23)
- Chapter President (24-25)
- Chapter President (23-24)
- Chapter VP of STAR Events (22-23)
- Chapter First Vice-President (21-22)
- Chapter VP of Finance (20-21)

FCS Education

Credits Earned 5.50

- Teen Living Skills 1.0 CE (20-21)
- FCS Basics 1.0 CE (21-22)
- Lead Oklahoma 1.0 CE (22-23)
- Intro to Culinary Arts 1.0 CE (23-24)
- Lead Oklahoma 1.0 CE (23-24)
- Lead Oklahoma 0.5 CE (24)

Work Experiences

- ██████████ CSR/Trainer (2022-Present)
- ██████████ Tanning Store Manager (2024-Present)
- Sammie Jo's (2021-2022)

Contributions to FCS Education

- Advocated in conversation for FCS with State Rep. Eddy Dempsey & State Sen. George Burns.
- Spoke to local School Board Members about the importance of Career Technical Student Organization in public schools.



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Lauren McBurney

State: Oregon

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

Throughout my 5 years in FCCLA, I have been in numerous leadership roles in projects requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. One of the impactful experiences was my STAR project in 2022, completed with a partner for the "Chapter in Service Display" competition. Our project focused on recognizing our hard-working teachers during the pandemic and centered on bringing back enthusiasm to the school staff after the challenges of COVID-19.

The scale of our work was significant: we prepared 42 personalized breakfast boxes for our school staff, taught holiday-themed lessons to K-12 classes over 12 school days, organized a staff appreciation lunch where we fundraised money and made a pizza and salad bar for over 40 people, and finally, during the last week of school, we harvested flowers we had planted and gave them to our teachers with thankyou notes for "helping us grow."

This project took almost the whole school year. At each stage, we collaborated with our FCCLA chapter to engage members in our mission. We focused on FCCLA's purpose #4: "To encourage individual and group involvement in helping achieve global cooperation and harmony." Achieving this required effective communication, flexibility, and deep collaboration with both students and staff to make all our scheduling go smoothly.

Throughout this project, we experienced bumps on the road to success that required innovation. COVID-19 was still at the forefront of everyone's minds: we had to take extra precautions when handling food and teaching younger classes. This taught me how to work around problems and create solutions. For example, each classroom had a very specific set of rules surrounding their altered schedules and food handling projects. I created customized "lesson plans" for each class to align with individual teachers' expectations and safety guidelines, which strengthened my communication and planning skills.

During our STAR project, my partner and I were dedicated to making our vision a reality. I developed leadership skills by speaking at school board meetings to gain approvals, managing large groups of students, and learning how to stay motivated when things didn't turn out as planned. Together, we inspired hundreds of students to show appreciation for our incredible educators and school staff.

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NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 2

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Lauren McBurney

State: Oregon

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills? Financial knowledge and analysis techniques are among the best life skills to gain before graduation from high school. FCCLA's Financial Fitness National Program is structured around four essential units: Earning, Spending, Saving, and Protecting money. This program allows students to advance their money management techniques while also giving them the tools to educate and empower their peers.

FCCLA's National Programs are a phenomenal way to get students engaged in meaningful learning, hands-on projects, and national competitions. I believe that recognition leads to empowerment, and through these programs, students are acknowledged for their hard work and projects at the national level. This recognition encourages students to continue building essential life skills with purpose and confidence.

The "Earning" unit teaches students how to critically evaluate wages, employment opportunities, and career pathways. These lessons provide immediate benefits to high schoolers entering the workforce. The second unit, "Spending," equips participants with the confidence to make rational money-spending choices, helping high schoolers make rational financial decisions and develop a healthy relationship with money early on. Many young people lack guidance on spending, and this program fills that gap with practical knowledge.

In the "Saving" unit, students learn how to manage bank accounts, credit, and basic investments - key areas that are often overlooked in traditional education. This unit gears kids up for all the difficult financial roads they will face throughout life. Finally, one of the most important units, "Protecting," addresses the risks of scams and potential accidental loss of funds. Within the "Protecting" unit, students learn to manage their funds and assets with proper security and care.

FCCLA is helping to raise a generation of financially smart, responsible, and confident young adults. Student by student, project by project, participants across America are making a powerful and positive impact on themselves and their peers' financial lives. Through the Financial Fitness National Program, students are empowered to develop their money management skills in powerful and thoughtful ways.

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Lauren McBurney - [REDACTED] Charter School Chapter - Junior,

[REDACTED] laurenmcburney21@gmail.com

EDUCATION

- [REDACTED] Charter School - [REDACTED] OR
 - Current GPA 4.0, Honor Roll 2023, 2024, 2025, 4 total years in FCS education classes
 - Aviation 1 (9th grade .25 Credit), Intro to AG (9th grade .75 Credit), Manufacturing (9th grade 1.0 Credit), Theater Arts (10th .50 Credit), Business 101 (10th 1.0 Credit), Environmental Sciences (1.0 Credit), AG Mechanics and Welding (10th .5 Credit), Parenting (11th .5 Credit), Food Science (11th 1.0 Credit)
 - Won Presidential Service Award Bronze 2023, Gold 2025

FCCLA

- **Family Career and Community Leaders of America**, August 2020 - Present (5 years active)
 - Participated in state competitions and won gold years 2020-2023 , National competitions and won silver 2020-2023
 - Held chapter officer positions years 2020-2022
 - Served as State VP of development 2022-2023, State President years 2023-2025
 - Presented in front of state advisors to answer questions about starting new chapters
 - Went to fall conference 2022 - 2023, NLC 2021-2023
 - Won 3rd overall Impromptu Speaking at FLC 2023

EXTRACURRICULARS

- **Rotary Interact Club**, August 2021 - Present
 - International service trip to Los Barriles, Mexico
 - Held presidential position 2022-2025
 - Organized and held color run twice to raise money for a struggling hospital in Mexico
- **Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)**, December 2022-present
 - Competed in a Regional Speaking competition and won 1st, 2023
 - Held presidential position years 2022-2024
- **4-H**, January 2019 - Present
 - Participated in fair years 2019- present and won multiple Grand Champion Showman awards
 - Held officer positions years 2019- present
 - Grand Champion impromptu speaker 2022 - 2024
- **FFA**, August 2022 - Present
 - Competed in AG Sales competition and won Customer Relations competition 2022
 - Showed my steer in fair 2023-2024
 - Received Green Hand Degree 2023, State Degree 2025
- **Volleyball**, August 2022 - 2024
- **Basketball**, 2023 - 2025
- **Track**, 2023 - 2025
- [REDACTED] **Days Rodeo Court**
 - Sold over \$69,000 thousands of dollars in rodeo tickets
 - Won Queen and represented my local rodeo nationally with public speaking

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- American Spirit Program, 30.58 hours, 2021-2024 - Put up American flags around my community
- Fair Lights volunteer, 15.92 hours, 2020-2024, Fair grounds clean up, 8 hours, 2021, 2023
- Stacked wood and cleaned brush, 30 hours, 2023
- Built and donated handmade various wood projects, 20 hours, 2022



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1 The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Macalie Hoffmann **State:** Pennsylvania

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

I am from Pennsylvania, which means Penn's Woods. I live in [REDACTED] a small rural community in [REDACTED]. My name is Macalie Hoffmann, and I am a junior at [REDACTED]. In my Careers and Consumerism class, I learned about entrepreneurship and the characteristics that are needed to be a successful entrepreneur. Many characteristics, such as planning and persistence are principles taught in our FCS classes and used in FCCLA Star Events. Our assignment was to address a problem in our school or community. My concern was the inadequate announcement procedure. When the faculty received the daily absentee email, they read the announcements. This system was inconsistent because the emails arrived at different times, and teachers could not continually check their email. I experienced this in my FCS class. Often we are engaged in activities with no time to check emails. Due to these conflicts, many times the announcements were not read to the students.

After using the FCCLA planning process, I met with our principal to discuss alternatives for announcements. Together we collaborated on a possible solution. The students gather in the cafeteria for breakfast. Sadly our public address (PA) system was broken, so I was given a portable PA system. Many times, the announcements were written on paper scraps and difficult to read. In the cafeteria, everyone stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Once they were seated, they resumed talking while I read the announcements. This was a challenge, but it was better than what we had. This method had some success until the system failed and stopped working.

As I worked on a solution, I thought about ways to make the announcements more engaging, adding jokes, sharing birthdays, and other positive messages. To make the announcements easier to read, I created an online form that faculty could submit. This made the announcements easier to read and therefore, more information was communicated. I decided it was time to address ways to get an alternative PA system. I presented my project to the school board. They loved the idea and provided the funds to purchase a PA system. With the new system, the announcements are clear and students are able to pay attention. They enjoy having their birthdays recognized and student achievements announced.

I used collaboration by asking students, FCCLA members and faculty their feedback and by presenting to the school board. I demonstrated innovation by trying various ideas, such as the portable sound system and adapting my idea to request school board funding. I presented my project at a Career Day to the school district, elected officials, and the public. I showed dedication as I moved forward from the initial concern, through the planning process, and finally addressing the issue with our school community.

The skills I learned through FCS and FCCLA have aided me to reach my project goal. The FCCLA mission includes character development, creative and critical thinking, interpersonal communication, practical knowledge and career preparation. Without these FCCLA skills, I would not have been able to execute this project as smoothly. I am extremely grateful for FCCLA. It has shaped me into the leader I am today and has given me the skills to dare to dream.

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NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 2 The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Macalie Hoffmann **State:** Pennsylvania

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills? Happiness is not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort. --Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The Financial Fitness National Program empowers members to develop money management skills by teaching them to use money wisely and to be responsible consumers. Members learn these skills through 4 units: earning, spending, saving, and protecting.

When it comes to earning, the more skills a member gains and perfects, the more money they will likely earn. Earning a higher salary involves a higher skill set and will require the worker to have more responsibilities, collaborate effectively, use critical thinking, and have more experience in the job field. These concepts set members up for success prior to employment. While earning a salary, a worker also learns career-ready skills which include time management and work ethic. Through my current job as an associate at a market and deli, I have learned how to cook and have developed social skills working with customers and team members. Earning to me has a deeper meaning. People can earn skills, ideas, and perspectives in everything they do.

The next part of the Financial Fitness program is spending. It is critical to learn how to budget one's income to provide for needs. Members have the challenge of differentiating between wants and needs. Members are constantly enticed to spend money on unnecessary things like snacks, Starbucks, clothing, and "wants" from social media. Each purchase needs to be evaluated by how the expense impacts one's life. I have learned through Financial Fitness that it is important to control spending on wants so that you can afford your needs. I keep track of my monthly expenses in order to be able to determine where adjustments can be made and money can be saved.

The third Financial Fitness unit is saving. About 20% of one's income should go towards savings for short and long term goals from concert tickets to college savings. Saving money is vital for a rainy day when something unexpected happens and extra money is needed. This form of saving can lead to investment saving. It is important to save your money somewhere it can grow. This is why I have a checking and savings account. Educating members about credit cards, loans, and interest is important in preparing them for life as an adult. Members can develop these skills when planning for a trip like the National Leadership Conference. They will learn about fundraising, money management, mindful spending, and use of credit cards at a cashless location.

Protecting goes hand in hand with saving. While people should want their money to grow, they need to ensure that it is protected. A member's money should go in an interest bearing account that exceeds interest from a regular checking or savings account. They need to be mindful that these accounts are secure and that information is kept confidential. We live in a world where information can be accessed very easily. Taking steps to keep financial and personal interests safe can protect someone from identity theft.

Using these 4 units, FCCLA members can plan and carry out projects to help them become responsible money managers and teach others how to do the same. I believe that the best investment that you can make is in yourself.

Macalie Hoffmann

Pennsylvania
Junior Year of High School

4 years as an FCCLA member
4 courses of FCS instruction

List of Family and Consumer Sciences Courses and Grade

Grade 8 - Intro to FCS (0.5 cr)

Grade 9 - Careers and Consumerism (0.5 cr)

Grade 9 - FCS 9 (0.5 cr)

Grade 10 - Advanced FCS (0.5 cr)

FCCLA Participation - Local, State, National Levels

Local: Officer - Chapter Vice President - 2022 - 2023; 2023 - 2024

State: Officer - State Vice President of Membership 2023 - 2024

Officer - State First Vice President 2024 - 2025

(Pennsylvania has a maximum of two state officer terms.)

Attend - PA FCCLA State Leadership Conference - 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

Attend - PA FCCLA Western Regional Leadership Meeting - 2023, 2024, 2025

Attend - PA FCCLA Central and Eastern Regional Leadership Meetings - 2025

Compete - STAR Event Career Investigation Level 1 - Gold Medal

Compete - STAR Event Hospitality Tourism and Recreation Level 2 - Gold Medal Award –

Power of One - 2024

National: Attend - FCCLA National Leadership Conference - 2022, 2023, 2024

Compete - STAR Event Career Investigation Level 1 - Silver Medal

(top 10 - placed 8th in the nation) -2022

Compete - STAR Event Hospitality Tourism and Recreation Level 2 - Gold Medal Award –

Power of One - 2024

Contributions to Family and Consumer Sciences Education

- Active participation in FCCLA is my top contribution to FCS Education. Not only does my FCCLA participation contribute to the publicity that FCS receives, but the public learns more about what FCS teaches.
- I participate in class projects and discussions by using my creativity, diligence, and team attitude.
- During hands-on class activities, I will take the lead or serve as a follower depending on the situation.

School and Community Participation

Activities:

FCCLA - Grades 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th

Foreign Language Club - Grades 10th, 11th

Highest Honor Roll - Grades 9th, 10th, 11th

National Honors Society - Grades 10th, 11th

Student Council - Grades 9th, 10th, 11th

Choir - Grade 9, Vice President - Grades 10th, 11th

Book Club - Grade 9th; President Grades 10th, 11th

PMEA District Choir - Grades 10th, 11th

Drama Club - Grade 9th; President - Grades 10th, 11th; Best Leading and Best Supporting Actress Awards

Varsity Volleyball and Letter Recipient - Grades 9th, 10th, 11th; Most Inspirational Award - Grade 9th

Varsity Cheerleading and Letter Recipient - Grades 9th, 10th, 11th

Forest Grange - Division of the Pennsylvania State Grange - Grades 9th, 10th, 11th

Work Experience:

Cashier/Clerk/Cook, [REDACTED], Pennsylvania - 2022 to Present

Duties: I work the cash register, make subs, stock shelves, assist customers, and clean the store.

Tour Guide Pennsylvania Firefly Festival, [REDACTED] - June 2023

Duties: During my one-week internship, I set up and led campouts and activities. I led people on trails to see the famous synchronous fireflies. I also taught campers about fireflies and their conservation.

Farm work, [REDACTED] 2018 to Present

Duties: Help raise beef cattle and grow crops, drive tractors, run equipment to take care of the pastures.



The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Matthew Kieslor

State: South Carolina



Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA’s mission?

According to the FCCLA Annual Report for 2023-2024, South Carolina’s state association of FCCLA has 478 members. Eleven FCCLA state associations have under one thousand members. That is a whopping 23% of the available state associations. While serving time as South Carolina’s Vice President of Membership, I got the opportunity to learn in-depth about membership efforts and the algorithm behind membership increases and decreases. Quickly I came to understand, that recruitment was an effort that had to be focused from school to school. So, I sought to create a website for my chapter. One that not only established our Family and Consumer Sciences programs but also focused on the three R’s of membership: Recruit, Retain Recognize.

The website was born one faithful afternoon in June 2023. It began as a simple site that was coded using the small amount of the HTML programming language I had learned. I dedicated myself to learning more about HTML, exploring more of its capabilities and how it affects websites. I stayed in constant contact with our chapter members who attended the 2023 National Leadership Conference in Denver, Colorado to keep the site updated with news. As time went on I closed my laptop. I just couldn’t get the website how I wanted it. “I’ll get back to it tomorrow!” I told myself. But, I wouldn’t get back to it for the next 9 months.

In March 2024, I reopened the project. With an ignited motivation to continue, I decided to move platforms to using the website builder, Wix. I reached out to my programming teacher learned the program with her and used her advice to start. Soon, I discovered the STAR Event “FCCLA Chapter Website”. Using the rubric provided by “FCCLA Chapter Website Level 3” I began to build the website from scratch. By constantly communicating with my chapter officer team and my advisers, the website was born.

It took nearly a year. But by January 2025, the website was completed. I partnered with one of my close friends so she could create a few graphic designs and I partnered with my officer team to customize the website. By collaborating with my adviser we created the website which was the perfect balance between professionalism, information, and the eye candy needed to attract viewers. When my adviser got to see the finalized version all she could say was, “Wow.” I got to sit back and look at the project which was a result of 2 years of work. The direct result of learning HTML, of countless nights hunched over a computer screen to perfect a page.

“To promote Family and Consumer Sciences and related occupations” This is the 8th purpose of FCCLA and the mission of FCCLA echoes it. The website focuses on promoting Family and Consumer Sciences not only by promoting the local chapter but also all of ████████ FCS programs. To deliver all the information you need about a program in a short page. The website also focused on how FCS has affected our officers and advisers and how FCS and FCCLA education promoted personal growth and leadership development in themselves and the individual. Thanks to the project, I was able to provide an output for my chapter. I got to use that growth I gained to create more websites. Especially for SCFCCLA’s future redesigned website and assisting South Carolinian students in their STAR Event to create a website with them that not only were they happy to use, but something they were ecstatic to present. I was able to discover my love and possible career in Website Design and further my participation in FCCLA’s mission, all while creating an easier way to promote FCCLA membership.

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The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Matthew Kieslor

State: South Carolina



How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

National Family and Consumer Science Standard 2.7 states: “Demonstrate the ability to use knowledge and skills to manage one’s financial resources effectively for a lifetime of financial security.” With 4 comprehensive units including: “Earning”, “Spending”, “Saving”, and “Protecting”, 8 ready-to-use lesson plans, and over 175 interactive activities, FCCLA’s Financial Fitness National Program is the perfect program for FCS educators to engage students and help members develop better money management skills.

When students get jobs during high school, that is the time that they have the most financial freedom. Many students aren’t asked to pay bills, or handle insurance. Additionally, many banks offer special student accounts for minors that don’t have banking fees. Therefore, a student’s teenage years are the best time to develop their money management skills. That is where Financial Fitness comes in. According to Mrs. Rhonda Ashburn during the “ASFA Education Foundation Financial Literacy Panel” held at the FCCLA National Fall Leadership Conference in Columbus, Ohio: about the Financial Fitness Program “It now focuses on students earning to spend save and protect their money wisely so they’re learning how to be wise Financial managers and smart consumers.”

When I spoke with my FCCLA adviser about her concerns with students and their money management skills she said, “I believe a major issue is being able to plan and implement a proper budget. I also find that teenagers often want products not instead of waiting to earn the proper funds to achieve a wanted item.” Financial Fitness helps contribute towards the concerns stated by my adviser above which echoes the concerns of many parents worldwide.

In collaboration with the AFSA Education Foundation, FCCLA developed a free lesson plan for advisers and students regarding financial literacy. It helps distinguish how to plan a budget and focuses on areas that need to be well established in a budget. The eight regions are: Career, Housing, Vacation, Transportation, Entertainment, Education, Families & Pets, and Community Service. This lesson plan has helped many students learn how to manage their money in budgets.

FCCLA’s STAR Events are always connected to the National Programs. “Personal Finance: Presented by Everfi” is a STAR Event in which students get to set budgets and follow up on them. They track spending and adjust their plans. Then they get to reflect on their goals at the end of the experience. This STAR Event helps address the concern of teenagers spending without thinking. By getting to address these concerns within a competitive environment, helps teenagers understand their budget and financial choices. With the newly established Financial Services career cluster FCCLA members will get to continue to explore money management in connection to the Financial Fitness program and related opportunities.

Many students are constantly in debt due to how accessible credit is in the modern day. In today’s world of instant spending, many teenagers digitally spend money through cards and tap to spend. They feel like the money never left their pocket. Because they don’t see it leave their pocket. In a time in their life when they are financially free, they are living paycheck to paycheck when they shouldn’t be. Reach out to your adviser about the Financial Fitness program, now is the time for our generation to take hold of our financial future and to understand money management. The Spending unit focuses on how to budget and track your spending which will better help students understand money management, and that’s just one unit of the versatile program that we call, Financial Fitness.

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Matthew Kieslor

State: South Carolina

████████ High School | ██████████ High School FCCLA
Junior | 3 Years of FCS Education | 3 Years of FCCLA

Registered Family and Consumer Sciences Courses:

Completed:

Food and Nutrition 1 9, Grade 9, 1 Credit
Culinary Management 1 CP, Grade 10, 1 Credit
Family Life 1, Grade 11, 1 Credit

Taking during the 2025-2026 School Year:

Culinary Management 2 H, Grade 12, 2 Credits
Fashion, Fabrics and Design, Grade 12, 1 Credit
Intro to Early Childhood Education, Grade 12,
1 Credit

FCCLA Leadership Positions Held:

State Vice President of Public Relations (2025-2026)
State Vice President of Membership (2024-2025)
Chapter Vice President of Public Relations and Lead
Committee Coordinator (2024-2025)

Chapter Vice President of Membership and
Recruitment (2023-2024)
Chapter Vice President of NGC Operations
(2022-2023)

Contributions to FCS Education:

Assisted new FCS educators in onboarding and
curriculum development.
Spoke with freshmen in regards to FCS education.

Hosted FCS and FCCLA Education Booth at Clover
High School Academic Opportunities Night '23, '24
2026 ██████████ High School FCS + Culinary Completor

Community Involvement:

2024-2025 KFC / Taco Bell Collaboration Restaurant
United CTSO (FCCLA, DECA, HOSA, etc.) Chapter
Presidents to work on CTE month together.
2024-2025 DECA Chapter Vice President of Written
Competitive Events

2024-2025 Interact Rotary Board of Directors
Assistant for the local food bank.
Holiday Market Volunteer and Vendor assistant.
Collaborator of can tabs for Ronald Mcdonald House
Raised \$2,000 for Cystic Fibrosis Research

National FCCLA Participation:

2024 National FCCLA Access Scholarship Recipient
2024 NLC Showcase Presenter (STAR Event)
2024 Food Innovations Level 2 National Gold and
3rd Place
2024 National Fall Leadership Institute Attendee
2025 National Qualifier Chapter Website Level 3
2025 National Program Awards Evaluator
2025 Power of One Completor

South Carolina FCCLA Participation:

Redesigned SCFCCLA Website.
Managed SCFCCLA Instagram
Began Chapter of the Year and specialization awards
Established Carolina Membership Union Initiative
Led Leading with Emotions Workshop (FLC24)
Led SMART Toppings Workshop (SLC25)
Provided statewide membership resources.
2023 Food Innovations Level 2 Silver

Chapter FCCLA Participation:

Recruited 58% of Clover FCCLA members (30+
members).
Presented FCCLA to 31 classes.
Organized and led Chapter Officer Trainings.
Led mock STAR Events for preparation.

Created over 50 posts on ██████████ FCCLA Instagram.
Chapter FCCLA Website Programmer / Author.
Raised \$16,000 for chapter activities.
Leader for ██████████ Father and Daughter Dances. (3x)
Organized out FCCLA Week celebrations (3x)



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Jordan Platt

State: South Dakota

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

My *Call to Freedom* project required collaboration, innovation, and dedication. I chose this project while serving as a member of the South Dakota FCCLA National Outreach Team. Our ten-member team collaborated and titled our state project *Break the Chains: Shining Light on Human Trafficking* with a monthly focus on various aspects – basic information, signs, resources, who is affected, and sub categories. Being committed throughout the year required dedication but the topic was important to me. I started with a highly visible hallway bulletin board that built monthly adding information for each aspect but I was continually brainstorming for a bigger project that could make even more impact. I decided to collaborate with Call to Freedom in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, which is a non-profit that provides services for victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. They shared that hygiene and personal care items for their clients would be greatly appreciated and put to good use. Item collections are a rare event in my school, so it was the perfect opportunity to be innovative!

I received permission from my adviser and administration to host a competition between the SRB (Student Responsibility Block) classes. As human trafficking is a sensitive and serious issue, raising awareness is critical. I shared information about human trafficking in the daily announcements and via an email to staff to increase awareness and then posted my project flyer with a QR Code for easy access to the list of items desired. To engage FCCLA chapter members, I held a meeting so they would be informed and help promote collections in their SRB. Members also helped prepare and distribute paper bags for item collection to each class. An added incentive was an ice cream party for the SRB that collected the most items – but the real reward would be the meaningful impact that my school would make. By relating the project to a real-world situation, I was able to help members and students understand the significance of the competition. This became a mission of service which is in line with FCCLA's core values of advocacy and community service.

The collaboration was beyond my expectations! I am guessing that daily announcements, social media posts and ice cream all played a part. After the two weeks, chapter members again came together to sort and organize the 256 items that ranged from toiletry items to journals. Financial donations of \$210 was an added bonus!

Throughout this process, FCCLA's mission and values were accounted for. This project emphasizes leadership, service, and career development. This project wasn't just about winning an ice cream party but more about developing leadership skills, learning to collaborate, and understanding how small actions could lead to meaningful change. This project also had an emphasis on personal growth when it comes to serving your community. Members and students could see how their efforts to donate small items contribute to a larger cause. With this project, I helped build and foster problem-solving skills and organizational skills along with a greater sense of empathy and awareness about human trafficking. Creating a project that connected personal growth with community service, I was able to inspire others to step up, take leadership, and contribute to a great cause.

In all, this project was a rewarding experience in leadership, collaboration, and innovation. From effective engagement, creative promotion, and dedication to a cause, we were able to make a significant impact. This *Call to Freedom* human trafficking drive was an extraordinary example of how FCCLA's mission can be used to empower youth to lead with a purpose and make a difference in the world.

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The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Jordan Platt

State: South Dakota

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

According to the national FCCLA website, "Financial Fitness is a national FCCLA peer education program which involves youth teaching one another how to earn, spend, save, and protect money wisely." This program is organized into those four separate units and comes with 8 ready-to-use lesson plans as well as over 175 interactive activities.

Especially in today's economy, learning financial skills that will impact the life of each person both personally and professionally is of significant value. The Financial Fitness National Program is a practical resource designed to empower youth to develop better management skills. By offering hands-on activities, real world scenarios, and an easy approach to understanding financial education, this program allows students to build their confidence to make financially healthy decisions.

The primary way that the Financial Fitness National Program ensures students build confidence is by providing them with easy access to tools and resources designed to equip students with a better understanding of budgeting, saving, investing, and managing debt. Using these lessons, activities, and challenges, students learn the basics of finance. Since lessons are designed to be interactive, engaging, and relatable, each student can make connections and apply these concepts into their everyday lives.

I believe the spending unit with a focus on tracking and planning for personal spending (budgeting) is a most valuable concept for students. As students move from being dependent on adults for their money into the work force, they might find their income is just gone without a plan for how it will be used. Effective financial management comes from a clear understanding of how to balance income with expenses, other spending wants and needs and prioritized financial goals. Creating a budget encourages students to be mindful of their financial choices and helps limit impulse spending. Control of impulse spending leads to less credit card debt which is addressed in the saving unit.

The savings unit was the focus of a lesson I helped teach to 7th grade Family and Consumer Sciences students. Bank account options and the importance of saving were covered using an adapted lesson plan provided from Financial Fitness. After a slide show of information, there was a Kahoot game, and then piggy banks donated by local banks were distributed. Students were eager and proud to share about their savings accounts and to set savings goals.

Real-world scenarios within the units have students participating in mock budgets, financial planning of investments, and managing credit debt. These activities allow students to apply skills they learn from the realistic scenarios and require them to experience what it is like to manage finances as an adult. Practice builds confidence and reinforces the skills learned in the program to be utilized in everyday life.

Setting SMART Goals is another tool that is learned within the Financial Fitness National Program. This helps students understand that specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound are all pieces that make for a successful goal. The program also teaches students to review and adjust goals as needed to ensure they stay on track with their financial plans.

The activities and lessons throughout the Financial Fitness National Program ensure that students are equipped with the tools, knowledge, mindset, and strength to manage their money effectively and become better prepared for their adult life. Use of the Financial Fitness National Program should be a fundamental part for every teacher and FCCLA chapter to better equip students to develop stronger money management skills thereby empowering students to build confidence for their financial independence.

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Jordan Platt

South Dakota - [REDACTED] Middle & High School FCCLA – Grade 11 - 5 Years FCCLA – 5 FCS Classes

FCCLA Offices Held

- State Vice President of Public Relations (2024-2025) (one term allowed)
- Region III President (2024-2025) (one term allowed)
- Chapter Membership (2024-2025)
- Chapter Public Relations (2021-2022; 2023-2024)
- Chapter President (2022-2023)
- Chapter Activities Director (2020-2021)

Family and Consumer Sciences Education

- 80018 – 11th – CTE Youth Internship/ (1)
- EDFN 101 – 10th – Intro to Education (1)
- 19253 – 9th – CTE Nutrition and Wellness (.5)
- 19262 – 8th – CTE Personal Finance (.5)
- 725-3 FCS - 7th Grade Family and Consumer Sciences - Exploratory Semester (.5)

STAR Event Experience

- FCCLA Chapter Website – 2nd at National (2024)
- Teach or Train – Gold - 2nd at State (2023)
- Career Investigation – 1st at State; 6th at National (2022)
- Professional Presentation – Gold at Region, Gold at State (2021)

Contributions to FCS Education

- Advocated to legislators about CTE/FCS Education during CTSO Capital City Experience (2025)
- Promoted FCS Education/FCCLA at local CTSO Dinner with community leaders (2024)
- Quoted in local newspaper in 4 different articles about FCS/FCCLA experiences (2023-2025)
- Presented to school board (2022, 2024)
- Chaired food insecurity project in FCS class (2021)

Local Participation

- Chaired fundraisers (3x), family potluck/ game/ recognition events (4), and 7th FCS lessons (2x)
- Chaired 11 community service projects: human trafficking items drive (1x), trunk or treat (3x), canned food drive (2x), backpacks for SafePlace (1x), pop tab collection for Ronald McDonald House (2x), Little Free Library (2x); and supported Shrine concession sales (5x)
- Recruitment: plan member events – booths/ socials (8x), made bulletin boards (5x)
- Planned FCCLA Week activities (5x)

Region Participation

- Region Meetings attended: 5
- Plan/Preside over Region III Meeting (2025)
- Officer Candidate (2024)
- Present National Outreach Workshop (2023)
- Region Jr. High Candidate (2022)
- Knowledge Bowl Team (2x - 1st place 2021)

State Participation

- State Leadership Conferences attended: 5
- State Executive Council (2024-2025)
- Creator content planner (2025)
- Presented workshop/Running for office (2025)
- Presented workshops - Rookie Training (2024)
- National Outreach Leadership Team (2023-2024)
- Leadership Team Candidate (2022; 2023)
- Teens As Teachers with scholarships (3 years)
- Most Outstanding Jr. High Member Award (2022)
- Presented STAR Event - Fall Conference (2022)
- Rookie Training - Fall Leadership (2022)

National Participation

- National Program Award Evaluator (2023; 2025)
- State Officer Training/National Networking (2024)
- Voting Delegate for South Dakota (2024)
- Power of One Award Recipient (2022, 2024, 2025)
- STAR Event Youth Consultant (2022)
- Go for the Red (3x) Individual Award Winner (2023)

Community Involvement

- Conference Council on Youth Ministry – 2nd year
- CASA Board Member – 1st year
- Music: Marching Band Tech – 3rd year/Captain; Show Choir – 5 years; Musicals – 5 years/one lead
- Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership (2024)
- National Honor Society (2024)
- Church: Children's Ministries Team – 3rd year; Sunday School Lead Teacher – 3rd year; Youth Ministry Team – 3rd year; Youth Group – 7th year
- Service: Green Team Recycling – 3rd year/1 year president; Pen Pals – 3rd year/ 1 year president; Unfiltered REALity – 5 years; Love Feast – 16x;

Work Experience -

- [REDACTED] Daycare (Sept. 2024-present)
- McDonalds Crew Member/Trainer (2021-2024)



The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Leia Rombough

State: South Dakota

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA’s mission?

Throughout my many years involved within FCCLA, the one that stands out as the most rewarding project for me is the O’Hana Luau. I planned, organized and carried out this project during my 10th grade year using the FCCLA planning process. This event helped me to identify my concerns which included promoting family engagement, community education and water safety awareness in addition to helping me learn about and participate in the Event Management STAR Event. The Family, Career and Community Leaders of America’s mission is to help members develop their leadership and personal growth through Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Education. The O’Hana Luau aligns with FCCLA’s Families First and Stand Up National Programs by promoting family involvement and advocating for water safety, which met my goal. In addition, I was also able to raise money to assist in the community’s dream of building a pool. To bring my project to life, I had to form a plan. To build enthusiasm and teamwork, chapter members and I brainstormed creative ideas of how to make the O’Hana Luau an effective and innovative experience for those attending. Ideas such as Hawaiian-themed games, family-friendly competitions, and luau style music were used to make it memorable and fun. Engaging FCCLA members and my peers was critical to making this event a success and including them in the planning of the event. To act on my plan, I delegated responsibilities based on the experiences, strengths, and resources available to my members. This ensured that everyone had a role to complete and could perform successfully. I partnered and networked with many local businesses within my community to assist with door prizes, promotions and other donations. Working in collaboration with the [REDACTED] Aquatic Foundation (HAF), of which I serve as a board member and active participant in fundraising and community education, I was able to expand my audience and reach more youth and adults.

Additionally, I sought out and collaborated with certified and experienced lifeguards, water safety (WSI certified) instructors, and pool managers to provide hands-on learning opportunities for those attending the event. The O’Hana Luau had engaging stations that rotated between topics which included drowning prevention, life-jacket safety, sunscreen protection, and basic rescue techniques. Member participation included helping with promotional materials, operating the stations, clean-up and overall event management. I evaluated the event through a follow-up survey for which I had very positive feedback. This allowed me to plan better for future events and presentations. I am also very proud to have raised awareness and money to donate to the HAF for their mission through this event with a matching sponsor.

Overall, I feel that the O’Hana Luau was a wonderful demonstration of collaboration, family involvement, community service, and leadership. Through this project, I was able to educate my peers and community members about the importance of water safety and develop leadership skills that are essential for both my personal and professional endeavors. This project serves as an example of how we can make a difference through FCS education and FCCLA by taking action through teamwork. I feel that the FCCLA mission was on target for me personally as I learned so many new skills and gained confidence within my leadership abilities. It is my goal to continue my work to advocate for water safety within my school and community through my “Swim Safe with Style” platform and through my job as a lifeguard, swim instructor and as a leader within my FCCLA chapter.

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National Officer Candidate: Leia Rombough

State: South Dakota

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

“An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.” This timeless quote spoken by Benjamin Franklin embodies the core mission of FCCLA’s Financial Fitness National Program. The Financial Fitness Program is designed to provide young professionals with the critical financial skills needed to succeed in their future. In today’s generation these skills are no longer optional — they are a necessity. The primary goals of the program are simple yet essential: to help students understand how to earn, save, spend, and protect their money. According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics in 2025, more than 5 million teenagers aged 16 to 19 are employed. Teenagers are essential to the workforce and contribute significantly to the economy. Having access to money at this early stage in life requires learning responsibility in how to manage it. On average, teens save only an estimated 4% of their yearly earnings, showing that education in financial literacy is necessary. Through this program, my peers and I are not just learning about money — we are developing skills to be used for a lifetime. One of the key components of the program is the combination with STAR (Students Taking Action with Recognition) Events, where members can showcase their knowledge and concepts in front of peers and judges. The newest STAR Event, Personal Finance, increases member’s learning and experience with money management skills. These events challenge members to apply and use their real world skills, such as budgeting, debt management and investing, while also diving deeper into each of these categories.

As someone who dreams of being an entrepreneur and making a difference in society, I have had the opportunity through FCCLA to develop projects and work with budgeting and financial planning. Specifically, my participation in the Entrepreneurship and Event Management STAR Events has aided my growth in these areas. I also enhanced my learning of financial literacy by competing in the Knowledge Bowl since 6th grade. As a result, I feel that I have positioned myself to be a financially fit young adult and have built confidence within this topic. It has also helped me learn how to save a portion of my earnings as a lifeguard to be more financially responsible. Moreover, FCCLA’s emphasis on Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Education provides students with an academic foundation in money management. Through classes including Personal Finance and Adulting 101, which I was fortunate enough to complete, students receive the tools and knowledge they need to understand the challenges of this topic.

These classes teach real-life applications, such as how to build and manage a personal budget to being able to understand credit. By applying these tools within the classroom, FCCLA ensures that members are prepared for making sound financial decisions from the moment they begin adult life. All members can become more confident in these skills by reaching out and sharing their financial knowledge in a variety of ways. Examples of this include hosting workshops, mentoring younger learners and partnering with local businesses and community leaders to carry out projects. Taking financial literacy beyond just the CTE or FACS classroom is essential and helps to ensure that mine and future generations can be financially confident and secure. The Financial Fitness National Program leaves an impact on all, building a stronger foundation our future leaders need to be strong, confident individuals.

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LEIA ROMBOUGH

SOUTH DAKOTA - [REDACTED] HIGH - [REDACTED] FCCLA - 11TH GRADE - 6 YEAR MEMBER - 5 FCS COURSES

FCS COURSES / CONTRIBUTIONS TO FCS EDUCATION:

Foundational

- Middle School FACS – 0.5 credit – 6th
- Middle School FACS - 0.5 credit – 7th
- Middle School FACS - 0.5 credit – 8th

Hospitality & Tourism

- Culinary Arts I - 1.0 credit – 10th
- Culinary Arts II - 0.5 credit – 11th

- School Board Presenter (2025)
- Peer Mentor for FCS (2024-2025)
- Developed & Taught Lessons for Learner Interest Day Elementary (2023-2025)
- Advocated for FCS Education and CTE on Capitol Hill (2023)

COMMUNITY & SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT:

- ProStart National Mgt. Team (2025)
- ProStart SD Mgt. Champion (2025)
- National Honor Society (2024-2025)
- [REDACTED] Aquatic Foundation Board Member (2023-2025)
- FFA Chapter Member (2023-2025)
- Chapter ProStart Officer (2023-2025)
- Lifeguard/Swim Instructor (2023-2025)
- Water Safety Advocate (2022-2025)
- [REDACTED] HS Girls Tennis (2020-2025)
- FCCLA Member (2019-2025)
- Competitive Swim (2014-2025)
- Miss Teen SD USA Ambassador (2024)
- FFA Chapter Officer (2024)
- Miss Teen SD International (2023)
- Miss Teen [REDACTED] (2022)

FCCLA OFFICES HELD:

- State Officer - SD VP of Membership (2024-2025) *Limited to 1 Term*
- Region VI President (2024-2025)
- Chapter President (2023-2025)
- Chapter VP of Membership (2022-2023)
- Region VI Secretary (2021-2022)

FCCLA INVOLVEMENT:

NATIONAL:

- National Officer Candidate (2025)
- National Qualifier STAR Event - Entrepreneurship (2025)
- Go For the RED Individual Membership Award (2024; 2025)
- State Executive Council Member - Led SD Delegation at NLC (2024)
- Voting Delegate at National Leadership Conference (2024)
- National Leadership Conference Attendee / Seattle, WA (2024)
- Attended State Officer Training at NLC (2024)
- Workshop Participant at NLC (2024)
- National Program Community Service Evaluator (2024)
- Capitol Leadership Advocacy Training and Participant (2023)
- Power of One – Completed All Five Modules (2019-2022)
- Step One (2020)

STATE:

- National Officer Candidate (2025)
- Shadowing Capital City Experience with Legislators (2025)
- State Vice President of Membership (2024-2025) – *Limited 1 Term*
- State Membership Campaign “Member Memories” (2024-2025)
- STAR Event Competitor (2021-2025) *Entrepreneurship - Level 1 & 2-Top Superior; Event Management Level 2- Silver; Entrepreneurship Level 3 – Top Superior / National Qualifier*
- State Conference Attendee (2019-2025)
- Workshop Presenter (2022-2025); Workshop Participant (2019-2025)
- National Outreach Leadership Team Member (2023-2024)
- Teens as Teachers Participant (2022-2024)
- State Knowledge Bowl Qualifier (2020; 2024)
- Fall Leadership Conference (FLC) (2022-2024); FLC Presenter (2024)
- Completed Power Training (2023)
- Candidate for SD National Outreach Leadership Team (2022-23)

REGION:

- Region VI President (2024-2025)
- Voting Delegate (2023-2025)
- Region VI Secretary (2021-2022)
- Region VI Meeting Participant (2019-2025)
- Jr. & Sr. Knowledge Bowl Participant (2019-2025)
- Workshop Participant (2019-2025)
- Workshop Presenter – Water Safety “Swim Safe with Style” (2023)

LOCAL:

- Chairperson: Learner Interest Days (2023-2025); CTSO Feeding South Dakota (2023); Fundraisers (2023-2025); FCCLA Week (2022-2025) Hosted Member Meetings (2023-2025)
- CTE School Store Manager (2022-2025)
- Committee Member: Feeding South Dakota (2024) Banquet Volunteer (2021-2025); Boo Bash (2021-2023) Holiday Membership Party (2022-2024)



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National Officer Candidate: Ilse Bustos

State: Texas

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA’s mission?

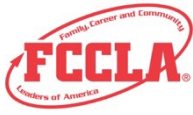
Leading a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication is no small task, but FCCLA does a fantastic job of preparing its members to take the lead. I've personally been given so many opportunities to engage members and take charge on projects and workshops. My personal favorite would be when I helped lead and manage a Fall Leadership Conference with my fellow Texas Region Officers. Texas FCCLA has engineered the fun concept of a Fall Leadership Conference, a day full of sessions focused around the FCCLA fundamentals that are open for all members to attend and are led by their very own Region officers as part of their training and duties. This past October, I was able to plan and host this event with my fellow Region II Officer Team! We had over 200 members attend our event, and by the end, they all left having more knowledge about FCCLA.

Before we even got to hosting the event, I had a lot to collaborate on alongside my fellow officers. My duties included finding a suitable venue to host our event, helping chapter advisors figure out food orders, and creating fun and engaging sessions for members to attend. I stayed up on multiple occasions planning out logistics with my team and coming up with ideas for games or creative hands-on-activities for members to enjoy. As for innovation, I noticed that many chapter advisors were having trouble figuring out how they would get lunches for their chapter, recognizing the problem I worked with my team to implement a food preorder system to ensure that everyone was fed and ready to learn. After all, no one can learn on an empty stomach! We encountered so many roadblocks, like how our original venue cancelled on us last minute, or how we had underestimated the number of members we would have to attend to. Throughout it all however, we persevered and gave it our best, handling each issue as it presented itself. We wanted to make the best possible experience possible for members, and at the end of the day, I think we achieved just that!

To me, fun sessions like this have always been an FCCLA staple. I believe that members thrive on hands-on activities and the chance to meet and connect with new people. The Texas FCCLA theme this year was "Bee Connected" and I wanted to ensure that members got to create life lasting bonds with each other and get to connect more with the leadership that served them. Growing up, I had a hard time making friends, to the point where I got bullied for it. It breaks my heart to look at someone by themselves, and I strive to make sure everyone has a voice and can join in the fun with everyone else. This workshop was so special to me because it gave me the chance to bring members together and orchestrate the creation of new friendships. Through fun puzzle scramblers, arm connecting activities, and letting everyone in the room introduce themselves, members got to not only learn how to socialize but also have fun in the process. My room ended up being the loudest out of all of the other workshops, which serves as testament to the enjoyment and satisfaction members received from it.

However, nothing in FCCLA is ever a solo effort, it required the help of my team, and through our Fall Leadership Conference and my personal workshop, I was able to foster personal growth and leadership in members through the teachings of FCS included all through our sessions. We encouraged students to develop skills for life that they would practice right in our very sessions, we developed their character by having them connect with each other, and we gave them the opportunity to learn about attending conferences, competitive events, and running for office.

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National Officer Candidate: Ilse Bustos

State: Texas

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

The entire world operates on a monetary system. While deviations and different currencies exist, the fundamental concept of money is universal. Today, many teens are thrust into young adulthood and expected to understand complex monetary concepts, such as saving, responsible spending, and taxes, often with little formal guidance. The ordinary education curriculum doesn't provide life preparation skills the way FCS does, the uniqueness of its career preparation prepares students for the real world. Thus, it's up to FCCLA to fill in the gaps that the current education system fails to recognize. This is where the Financial Fitness National Program steps in, empowering members to develop better money management skills and gain financial literacy that they might not otherwise acquire. The Program goes beyond simply educating members; it spreads awareness of the importance of cultivating healthy monetary habits. Through this program and its four units: Earning, Spending, Saving, and Protecting, members learn about crucial topics such as budgeting, how to save, spending responsibly, investing, and how to use credit. Moreover, the program highlights the potential consequences of lacking these vital skills, giving members the opportunity to fully educate themselves about what financial fitness and money security entail. Members are empowered to develop better money management skills by engaging in the educational, interactive, and leadership driven experiences provided by its units. It allows members to take back control of their financial future. For instance, through the earning unit members understand income and plan how they'll receive it through careers of their interest. Through the spending unit, they practice smart spending habits, the difference between needs and wants and the importance of thinking through every purchase. The saving unit teaches them how to build their financial security for their retirement, monetary emergencies, etc. Lastly, through the protecting unit, members learn how to avoid financial pitfalls, learning about credit management, how to prevent debt, and the dangers of identity theft and scams. Members take these units and make them their own by gaining knowledge on them and taking the initiative to educate other members and continue the cycle of growth. FCCLAs partnership with Money Skill Curriculum, a free personal finance curriculum that's offered to members at no cost, equips members with monetary knowledge while reinforcing the four units of the program. Not only does this resource provide knowledge opportunities to members, but encourages their practical application, allowing members to track expenses, create savings and retirement plans, and develop smart financial habits in a trial-and-error environment that promotes growth. Additionally, the program fosters leadership by empowering members to gain an interest in advocacy for financial literacy in their schools and communities. Encouraging them to strengthen their own knowledge and educate it onto others. To me, it empowers members to pass on the FCS legacy that is dying out in traditional education systems, it promotes change and education. I believe that it creates leaders that serve their communities. In conclusion, by combining knowledge, practical application, and leadership, the Financial Fitness program ensures that members don't just learn about financial literacy but that they are empowered to actively implement it and develop better money management skills that prepare them for financial independence in their personal and professional lives.

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State: Texas

School: [REDACTED] High School
Chapter: [REDACTED] High School Chapter

Current Grade in School: 11th Grade

Years in FCCLA: 3

Total Years of FCS Instruction: 3



Local FCCLA Involvement

Chapter Holiday Canned Food Drive, Community Food Bank - (2024) Chapter Trash Pickup [REDACTED] (2024) Chapter ILTK8 Trunk or Treat - (2023-2024) Open House, Chapter FCCLA Booth - (2023-2024) Donuts with Doc, PTO FCCLA Advocacy - (2024) Chapter Booth Freshman Orientation - (2023-2024) Trinity Trash Bash, [REDACTED] - (2024) Fundraised over \$2000, Community - (2024)

Region FCCLA Involvement

**Texas FCCLA Officers are not allowed to compete in any competitive events while running for or serving in an office.*

2nd place in Event Management Level II, Region II Conference - (2023) FCSA Child Development Bronze, Region II Conference - (2024) Attended Student Leadership Workshop, Region II-IV Conference (2023-2025) Ran for Office/HOD Attendee - Region II Conference (2024-2025) Spotlight on Projects Voter, Region II-IV Conference - (2023-2025) Coordinated and Planned FCSA Testing, Region II Conference - (2025) Co-Planned and Lead General Sessions, Region II Conference - (2025) Assisted with Spotlight on Projects, Region IV Conference - (2025) Assisted with FCSA Testing, Region IV Conference - (2025) Assisted in Evaluating 2 STAR Events, Region IV Conference - (2025) Region II Fall Executive Council Meeting - (2024) Co-Hosted and planned Fall Leadership Workshop for Region II (2024) Region II State Officer Candidate - (2025)

State FCCLA Involvement

Competed in Event Management Level II - (2023) Attended Student Leadership Workshop - (2023) Spotlight on Projects voter - (2023-2024) Power of One completion - (2024-2025) FCSA Etiquette Bronze - (2024) Assisted with FCSA testing - (2024-2025) Student Leadership Tracks Usher - (2025) Officer Summer Camp - (2024)

National FCCLA Involvement

Sustainability Challenge Level III, Youth Room Consultant - (2024) NLC Voting Delegate, HOD Attendee - (2024) Attended Student Leadership Workshop - (2024) Power of One completion - (2023-2024) Attendee of National Network - (2025) Red Talk Application (2025)

Family Consumer Sciences Coursework

- Principles of Health Science - 9th (*Human Sciences*) 1 credit
- Child Development - 10th (*Childcare*) 1 credit
- Human Growth and Development - 11th (*Childcare*) 1 credit
- Leadership - 9th, 10th, 11th (*Human Development*) 3 credits

Contributions to Family Consumer Sciences

- Advocated for FCS pathways (Practicum, Human Growth and Development)
- Advocated for FCS Cords for [REDACTED] Charter
- Proposed and Advocated for FCS to School Board of Directors, [REDACTED] Charter
- Monthly FCS Advocation Emails to School and Charter

Officer Positions Held

- Chapter Vice President of Competitive Events (2023-2024)
- Chapter Vice President of Projects (2024-2025)
- Region II Vice President of Correspondence (2024-2025)
- State Vice President of Leadership Development (2025-2026)
- Texas National Officer Candidate (*Current*)

Participation in School and Community

- National Honor Society Officer (2024-2025)
- Spanish Honor Society Officer (2024-2025)
- Science National Honor Society Officer (2025)
- Chinese Honor Society Member (2024-2025)
- Theodore Roosevelt Youth Medal (2023-2024)
- President's Volunteer Service Award, Gold (2023-2024)
- Community Babysitting (2021-2024)
- Toys for Tots (2022-2024)
- MCJROTC Community Clean Up (2023-2024)
- Junior World Affairs Council (2023-2025)
- ILT [REDACTED] Blood drives (2023-2025)
- Elementary School Tutor and Volunteer (2024-2025)
- A Honor Roll (2022-2025)



The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: **Makenzie May**

State: Texas



Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA’s mission?

When I think of the FCCLA mission, I think about all the amazing opportunities that come along with this incredible organization. The FCCLA mission is to promote personal growth and leadership development through Family and Consumer Sciences education. A great way to promote personal growth and leadership development is to participate in chapter projects. One project that sticks out to me the most is our school’s Friendsgiving. I loved this event so much that during my office term I wanted the event to reach more people and make some innovative changes. This event allowed our chapter members to get out of their comfort zone, find new friends, and further their creative and critical thinking skills.

Our Friendsgiving is an annual event that our chapter has done for many years. Friendsgiving is just like Thanksgiving, but with friends! We started this event so that all of our members can experience a big meal with lots of fun and games. All of our chapter members created and brought their own dish that we could all share; this showed how different each member was. By the end, we had leftovers for days. This was not the only great thing about our Friendsgiving. Although the food was exquisite, the best part of Friendsgiving was yet to come.

Even though I love my chapter, I wanted to get other local chapters to come experience this event with us. That is one of the big changes I suggested. The first year we invited two schools with FCCLA chapters. Then, the following year, we got two more chapters to come! I was so excited when I learned that these schools were going to participate in our Friendsgiving. My officer team and I got to work as soon as we could to make this night go well.

We started out planning fun games to get members moving around and getting to know new people. The game we started with was Guess Who?. The officer team made sticky notes that had either a person, place, or thing. Members would go around the room asking others a yes or no question. The goal was to figure out your person. It was hilarious seeing everyone asking questions and guessing. This was a great way to get people moving. After everyone got well acquainted, we sat down to eat.

Aside from Friendsgiving, my chapter’s officer team wanted to incorporate our Region and State service projects to get members even more excited about FCCLA. We created a station to make bracelets. Then, at our Region conference, members would be able to trade with other FCCLA members. To incorporate our state service projects, each school brought supplies that we could donate to the Dallas Casa. This was our community service project that year.

Overall, Friendsgiving was a very successful event that required collaboration, innovation, and dedication. When thinking about collaboration, innovation, and dedication, I thought of Helen Keller and this powerful quote, “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

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National Officer Candidate: **Makenzie May**

State: Texas



How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

In today's fast-paced world, members are expected to juggle academics, extracurriculars, and social lives, but one crucial life skill often gets left out in schools: financial literacy. For many teens, money is something they earn and spend, but rarely something they save. That is why the FCCLA National Program, Financial Fitness, is necessary for every student. Financial Fitness has four units that help members develop better money management skills: earning, spending, saving, and protecting. All of these units will help students gain control of their finances early. Teaching students how to budget, save, and spend their money, will allow for long-term success in their goals, teach responsibility and independence, and will make a happier life.

Students will become more conscious about making informed decisions about their money. By tracking their spending, students gain control of their financial future. The more students learn and understand how to handle money, the better prepared they will be when going into the real-world.

Earning is the very first unit. You might not think this is an important unit, but it very much is. Earning can be for everyone. Babysitting for the first time, mowing someone's lawn, or a part-time job, each one of those you get paid for. If you are getting paid for the first time, it can be tempting to spend the majority of it. This was my thought process. But after learning more about Financial Fitness, I taught myself to save it instead of spend.

Since, many members don't track their money and the various places they spend it, they have a tendency to overspend. A good way to remember this is by remembering the phrase "Track It to Hack It." This is a fun phrase to get students thinking about where their money goes. It teaches students to track every dollar, whether it's spent on coffee, fast food, clothes, or video games. Members can identify certain habits and eliminate wasteful spending.

Budgeting is the key to saving money. FCCLA's National Program, Financial Fitness, teaches members how to budget. If you have a good budget, then you can ensure that your savings stay positive. Another big part is learning how to distinguish between needs and wants. This helps students focus on values. For example, choosing to stay home to eat instead of going out to eat every night.

Lastly, protecting your goals is vital to have better money management skills. Whether it is saving for a car, a concert, or college, goal-setting keeps members focused. Financial Fitness provides tools to break big goals into smaller, more achievable steps. Protecting your goals in simpler terms means to be proactive with your money so you can achieve bigger things.

Thanks to the FCCLA National Program, Financial Fitness, members are showing that with the right knowledge and mindset, they can prepare for their future and achieve their dreams.

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MAKENZIE MAY

TEXAS

██████████ HIGH SCHOOL

██████████ HIGH SCHOOL FCCLA

JUNIOR

FCCLA MEMBERSHIP: THREE YEARS

YEARS OF FCS INSTRUCTION: THREE YEARS

FCS CONTRIBUTIONS

- Texas CTSO Capital Days: **2025**
- 8th Grade Club Tour: **2025**
- School Board Meeting Annual Update of FCS Programs: **2022-2025**
- FCCLA Recruitment Week: **2022-2025**

PAST OFFICES HELD

- Texas FCCLA State Vice President of Peer Involvement: **2024-2025**
- Chapter President: **2024-2025**
- Chapter Secretary: **2023-2024**
- Chapter Freshman Representative: **2022-2023**

SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT

- Undefeated in USA Boxing: **2021-2025**
- Powerlifting: State Qualifier: **2025**
- Powerlifting: Region Qualifier: **2023, 2024, 2025**
- Volleyball: Academic All- District: **2024**
- National Honor Society: **2024-Present**
- Key Club **2022-2024**
- Band **2022- Present**
- Varsity Volleyball, Softball, and Powerlifting
- Honors Courses: Math, English, Science, History
- Dual Credit Courses: U.S History, Public Speaking, Art Appreciation, College Algebra

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- ██████████ FBC Children's Ministry: 3 hours/week: **2021-Present**
- Color Run: **2023, 2024**
- Elementary Olympics Day: **May 2025**

FCCLA CONTRIBUTIONS

Chapter

- ██████████ High School FCCLA
 - Fall Recruitment Campaign: **2022**
 - Mental Health Awareness: **2023**
 - Friendsgiving: **2022, 2023, 2024**
 - Dinner Theatre: **2023, 2024**
 - Top 10 Banquet: **2025**

Region

Texas FCCLA Region III

- Region III Leadership Conference: **2025, 2024, 2023**
- Texas FCCLA Fall Leadership Workshop: **2024 (hosted), 2023, 2022**
- Professional Presentation, Level 2: 2nd place, **2023**

State

Texas FCCLA

- State Leadership Conference: **2025, 2024, 2023**
- CTSO Summit: **2025**
- Professional Presentation, Level 2: 4th place, **2023**
- Texas FCCLA Fall Conference: October **2022**
- Agriculture Awareness Day at the State Fair of Texas, **2022, 2023, 2024**

Nationals

National FCCLA

- National Leadership Conference attendee: **2024, 2023**
- National Voting Delegate: **2024**

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE COURSES TAKEN

- Child Guidance: 11th grade (1 credit- Early Childhood Pathway) **2024-2025**
- Introduction to Culinary Arts: 10th grade (1 credit- Hospitality & Tourism Pathway) **2023-2024**
- Principles of Human Services: 9th grade (1 credit- Human Services Pathway) **2022-2023**

NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Clara Pereira

State: Utah

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

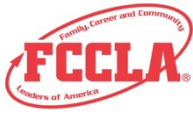
Leadership often calls for a balance of vision, collaboration, innovation and a lot of dedication, Qualities that I had the opportunity to fully embody when I led the organization of a cultural night for my FCCLA chapter. This project not only celebrated diversity through food from all over the world. But also aligned with FCCLA's mission of promoting personal growth and leadership development through family and consumer sciences education.

The idea for the cultural night created a desire to create an event that would strengthen our chapter's sense of community while honoring the diverse backgrounds of our members. To bring this to life, our chapter knew a collaboration was necessary. We reached out to FCCLA members, POP (People of the Pacific) club and National Honor Society, recognizing that combining the talents and energy of the groups could make the night really special. I delegated tasks thoughtfully: some students were responsible for setting up, others for serving food, and a separated team to do clean duty.

Innovation played a key role as well. Instead of a traditional food fair, we set up the event as an interactive experience. We created a circle with stations representing different countries, and with live music for everyone to listen to while they eat. This not only made the night more engaging but also encouraged conversation between participants. By incorporating those elements, the cultural night became more than an activity, it was an experience.

Using the FCCLA planning process, I stayed on task and committed to FCCLA core values, specifically leadership, teamwork and service. We had regular planning meetings before the event to plan and organize to make sure the event would run smoothly. This experience strengthened my commitment to FCCLA's principles and confirmed my passion for leading projects that unite, educate and empower others. I am grateful for being able to make the difference in my chapter and get to live the FCCLA mission through leadership, collaboration and innovation.

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The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Clara Pereira

State: Utah

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

The Financial Fitness National Program empowers FCCLA members by teaching them essential financial literacy skills that are highly important for lifelong success. By providing real world knowledge and practical experiences, the program transforms complex financial concepts into accessible tools for youth to make wise choices about their money.

One of the program's biggest strengths is its comprehensive focus on earning, spending, saving and protecting money. Through hands-on projects and interactive lessons, members learn how to create and follow a budget, understand credit and debt, and set realistic financial goals. These skills are not only important for their personal lives but also prepare them for the workforce and adulthood. By applying those lessons in chapter initiatives, students can immediately see the results of smart financial choices.

The program also fosters leadership and responsibility by encouraging members to share their financial knowledge with others. Members become advocates for financial wellbeing. This education on financial literacy not only reinforces their own learning as well as empowering others in their community.

Furthermore The Financial Fitness National Program promotes a mindset of independence and confidence. When members participating understand how to manage their money, they feel more in control of their future success. This sense of empowerment motivates members to make thoughtful choices and plan for long term success.

Overall, the Financial Fitness National Program is much more than a learning tool, it is a life changing experience. By engaging in this program, FCCLA members gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to build financial secure futures and become responsible, empowered citizens of our communities.

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❖ Clara Pereira

Utah FCCLA Member | ██████ High School FCCLA Chapter | 2 years in FCCLA | 3 Years of FCS education | 3.9 GPA

Family and consumer sciences courses:

- Interior Design 1 (0.5 credits) | Clothing
 - 9th Grade
- Sewing Construction and Textiles 1 (0.5 credits) | Clothing
 - 9th Grade
- Fashion Design Merchandising (0.5 credits) | Clothing
 - 10th Grade
- Fashion Design Studio (0.5 credits) | Clothing
 - 10th Grade
- Sewing Construction & Textiles 3 (0.5 credits) | Clothing
 - 10th Grade
- Food & Nutrition 1 (0.5 credits) | Food Services
 - 11th Grade

FCCLA Involvement:

National Level

- 2024 Nationals - Seattle, Washington
- 2024 Fall leadership institute Anaheim, California

State Level

- 2024 State Conference
- 2025 State Conference
- 2024 Fall Leadership Conference
- 2024 Led 2 workshops at Fall leadership Conference
- 2024 CTSO Leadership Training Institute
- 2025 CTSO Day on The Hill

Region level

- 2024 Region 3 Conference
- 2025 Led Region 2 Conference
- 2025 Region 3 Conference

- 2023 Region Activity
- 2024 Led Region 2 Activity

Chapter Level:

- 2023-2024 Fashion Design Star Event
- 2024-2025 Parliamentary Procedure Star Event

Offices Held:

- 2024-2025 ██████ High Chapter Vice President of Public Relations
- 2024-2025 Utah FCCLA Vice President of Development
- 2025-2026 Utah National Officer Candidate

Participation in School and Community:

School Level

- Class President for 2 years
- Volunteer Teacher Aid
- 4.0 GPA
- High Honors
- Best Student for 3 years
- Spotlight Student for 2 years
- Flute Player for 5 years

Community Level

- Produced masks for hospitals during covid
- President of organization to help teenagers for 3 years
- Created a method of teaching for autistic children

Contributions to FCS Education:

- Advocated for FCS education and CTSOs at the Capitol Building in Utah.

NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1

The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Julianna Snow

State: Utah

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

It goes without saying that FCCLA teaches us skills for life, but what I didn't expect was just how much those skills would show up in other parts of my life. FCCLA's mission isn't just something that stays in chapter meetings or conferences. It really shapes how we lead, how we communicate, and how we step up in our schools and communities. I've especially noticed that through my role as co-chair of my school's student PTSA.

One of the projects I'm most proud of was running a booth during Red Ribbon Week for PTSA. We wanted to raise awareness about drug abuse and promote healthier, drug-free choices, but we also wanted to make it something people actually engaged with. So we set up fun, interactive activities that got students talking. We handed out wellness tips and real-life resources students could actually use. It wasn't just about giving people information, it was about making sure it felt relevant and meaningful. Our main goal was to help students build connections with one another. Our theme was "Connection fights addiction".

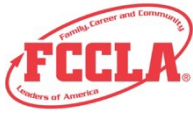
Even though it wasn't an FCCLA event, everything we did tied into what FCCLA stands for: health, wellness, leadership, and making smart, responsible choices. It also lined up perfectly with two of FCCLA's national programs. The first was Student Body, which focuses on encouraging healthy decisions and personal well-being. The second was Community Service, which is all about identifying your community's needs and addressing them. That's exactly what we did; we saw a need at our school for more open conversation and support around substance abuse, and we stepped up to fill that gap. Through our Red Ribbon Week booth, we weren't just handing out information, we were encouraging students to come together, support one another, and work toward something bigger. That kind of unity reflects FCCLA's purpose of promoting cooperation and harmony, starting right here in our school.

Much like the theme of our Red Ribbon Week booth, a big part of FCCLA is all about connections and how we build them, and what we do with them. Being part of this organization and wearing the red blazer connects us to peers who share similar values and goals.

Planning and running the booth pushed all of us to grow. We had to use public speaking, teamwork, organization, and decision-making, all skills FCCLA has helped me build over time. This project extended beyond a requirement or a project to complete. We were driven by the fact that it mattered to us.

Leadership skills that FCCLA teaches aren't just for competitions or events, they're for life. When we carry those values into other things we're involved in, we are still representing FCCLA, even if it's not labeled that way. That's the kind of impact FCCLA leaves behind: the ability to lead with purpose, no matter what we're involved in.

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The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Julianna Snow

State: Utah

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

When I decided to take Financial Literacy online last year, it sounded like a great idea because I could work at my own pace and wouldn't have to sit through class. However, I didn't actually learn anything. So when I started running into real-life money issues like figuring out how to budget or what to do when I got a notice that I owed money from tax returns, I was completely lost. In that moment, I really wished I'd paid more attention in Financial Lit.

As it turns out, I'm not the only one who feels unprepared. A survey by MissionSquare Retirement's Foundation found that 42% of teens said they feel "terrified" about not saving enough for their future. That's a huge number. Financial literacy classes are supposed to help with that; they teach basic skills like budgeting and managing money. The same study found that in 2024, nationally, only 31% of students were even enrolled in those classes. That's a problem.

To get another perspective, I talked to a friend and fellow FCCLA chapter member, Brooklynn Cannell. She's gone through the FCCLA Financial Fitness National Program, has competed in the financial fitness Star Event, and has taken more than four finance-related classes. I asked her which one helped her more: school courses or the FCCLA program. Without hesitation, she said FCCLA. According to her, the way it's taught just makes more sense. It sticks. She mentioned that while both taught her about the 50/30/20 budget rule, it was FCCLA's program that actually got her to use it. For example, she used to spend a lot of money on fast food with her friends at lunch, but once she started applying what she learned, spending only 30% of her money on wants, she started saving more and felt way more in control.

If I could add anything to the Financial Fitness program, it'd be lessons on digital finance. These would include how to use online banking safely, understanding apps like Venmo and Zelle, and even an intro to investing platforms like Acorns or Robinhood. This kind of information is super relevant for our generation, since so many of us are already using these apps without fully understanding the risks. Nearly 143 million users were enrolled in Zelle as of June 2024, sending a total of \$481 billion in the first half of the year alone. With technology changing so fast, there are new financial tools, online currencies, and ways to manage money. While these options can make life easier, they also come with some risks. Teaching students how to handle online banking, payments, and even getting started with investing is essential, not just to keep up, but to use these tools responsibly and make smart financial decisions.

FCCLA's Financial Fitness National Program does more than just teach money management, it helps students actually put those skills into practice. When you're learning because you want to, and not just because it's required to graduate, it is more likely to stick. That kind of hands-on learning can make all the difference.

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Juliana Snow



Junior at [REDACTED] High School - Affiliated with [REDACTED] High FCCLA - 4 Year member - Involved in FCCLA Activities for 5 years. 4.0 GPA

PARTICIPATION IN FCCLA

National Level

- ★ Nationals 2024- Seattle, Washington
- ★ Nationals 2023- Denver, Colorado
- ★ Fall Leadership Institute 2024- Anaheim, California
- ★ 2024-25 Safe Rides Save Lives PSA Contest

State Level

- ★ Attended 4/Led 1 state conferences (and competed)
- ★ Led 2 workshops at the 2024 Utah FLC (Fall Leadership Conference)
- ★ Attended 4/led 1 FLC
- ★ Completed the 2024 Utah CTSO Leadership Training Institute

Regional Level

- ★ Attended 4/Led 1 Regional Conferences
- ★ Attended 4/Led 1 Region Activities

Chapter/Local Level

- ★ Raised money for We Help Two Fundraising
- ★ Club Rush and Back to School Nights to advocate for FCCLA

Star Events

- ★ Interpersonal Communication
 - Placed First at the National Level
- ★ Sustainability Challenge
- ★ Fashion Design
- ★ Entrepreneurship

FCS Classes

3 and ½ years of FCS Education

7th Grade (.5 Credit)

- ★ College and Career Awareness 0.5 Credits)
 - Occupational Training: Sewing, Food Service, Interior Design

8th Grade (.5 Credit)

- ★ CTE Exploration 0.5 Credits)
 - Occupational Training: Sewing, Food Service, Interior Design

11th Grade (2.5 Credits)

- ★ Foods 1 (0.5 Credits)
 - Occupational Training: Food Service
- ★ Culinary 1 (0.5 Credits)
 - Occupational Training: Food Service
- ★ Child Development (0.5 Credits)
 - Occupational Training: Childcare
- ★ Fashion Design Studio (0.5 Credits)
 - Occupational Training: Sewing
- ★ Interpersonal and Family Relationships (0.5 Credits)
 - Occupational Training: Interpersonal Communication

FCCLA Offices Held

State

- ★ First Vice President: 2024-2025

Chapter

- ★ VP of STAR events 2023-2025
- ★ President: 2022-2023
- ★ Secretary: 2021-2022

Contributions to FCS Education

- ★ Advocated for FCS Education to Utah Representatives at the 2024 Utah CTSO Day on the Hill Conference.

School and Community Involvement

School Involvement

- ★ National History Day 2021-2024
- ★ Yearbook Chief Editor 2022-2023

Community Involvement

- ★ [REDACTED] Teen Library Council 2021-2022
- ★ Involvement in Service Projects
 - “End of Treatment” Carnival and Fundraise ~ Raised Money for families affected by cancer.
 - Local Food Drives
- ★ Work Experiences in Community 2022-2025



NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 1 The essay question below is limited to one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Joey Miller **State:** Virginia

Reflect on a time you led a project requiring collaboration, innovation, and dedication. How did you engage members and align the project with FCCLA's mission?

Throughout my time in FCCLA, almost every project I worked on required collaboration, innovation, and dedication. One specific instance of this is my chapter's Stand Up project from last year, titled: "Clearing it Up: The History and Restoration of [REDACTED]". This project involved researching who was buried in a historically African American cemetery in our community, then cleaning and restoring the area. This cemetery had long been forgotten about by most, so this project was a great opportunity to educate my community about this lost history. I took on a leadership role in this project and assisted other chapter members in the research and cleanup.

To start the project, my chapter developed a plan and began to do research. First, we had to contact and gain permission from the property owner. After discussing our plan, we were able to partner with the owner of the land to let us restore the cemetery. Next, we had to work together to find information about the individuals buried in the cemetery. This took a while, but we were eventually able to piece together a good map of who was buried in the cemetery using records and census reports from up to one hundred years ago. Each person working on the project focused on a different website; this made the research go much faster. Without everyone collaborating, this step of the project would not have gone as smoothly as it did.

With this information, we began the restoration process. We seriously underestimated how much effort would really be required. Therefore, this part took much longer than originally thought. Additional supplies had to be purchased to adjust to this change. During cleanup, each person played a different role. Some people were trimming trees, some were raking leaves, and others were cleaning and polishing the gravestones as they were found. Once all of the leaves had been taken away, we worked on restoring the pathways and making sure the path led to all of the graves.

During this project, we wanted to include more Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) students than just the members who normally participated in our chapter's projects. To do this, we recruited members from different FCS classes, as well as volunteers who had not worked with us in the past. We were able to introduce these students to help with the project, which led to word of what we were doing getting out into the community. Some of those members are now more active in my chapter, so this project also served as a successful recruitment opportunity.

While this project took many weekends, it was a great opportunity to help restore a part of history and to educate members of the community about the cemetery. This project perfectly encapsulates FCCLA's mission by encouraging personal growth by teaching volunteers how to work as a team and how to adapt to various situations. It also encourages leadership development by recruiting volunteers who may not have completed an FCCLA project in the past. This project was a great example of an FCCLA project where collaboration, innovation, and dedication were required for us to be successful.

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NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE ESSAY 2 The essay question below is limited to

one page only, do not alter this format, and do not attach additional information.

National Officer Candidate: Joey Miller **State:** Virginia

How does the Financial Fitness National Program empower members to develop better money management skills?

Before I learned about the four units of Financial Fitness, I had no financial literacy skills. I would spend my money on everything I wanted, and I would never save for anything I needed. After discovering the four units of Financial Fitness, my view on money was completely changed. If a member can embody these four units, they can become much better with their money, enabling good financial habits for life.

The first unit of Financial Fitness, earning, is where it all begins. You have to earn money to have it, and this unit enables you to maximize your income. It also helps members understand different job opportunities, which can be beneficial for members throughout their whole lives. This unit also helps members understand exactly what they are earning, and how and why money is taken out for taxes, which is a very important thing to learn.

The second unit, spending, is arguably the most important. Spending too much can be detrimental to your budget, and good money restraint is a very important skill. The spending unit teaches members how to create a budget, how to make informed purchasing decisions, and how to avoid debt. All of these skills are good to learn at a young age, as they will be used when members become adults.

Saving, which is the third unit, is also immensely important. This unit helps members navigate the world of banking and credit, while also teaching members how much money they should be saving. Figuring out how things such as interest rates work can be a challenge, and the saving unit focuses on making these things easier for members to understand. Understanding how things like credit cards and your credit score work is something that members will need to know their whole lives, which makes the saving unit vastly important.

The final unit of Financial Fitness is Protecting. This unit focuses on teaching members how to keep their money safe. This is done by educating students on cybersecurity, identify theft, and fraud. This can stop members from being subject to losing money due to these things, which can come in handy in the future. If members were not educated on these things, they could fall victim to these, which is a very dangerous thing. For example, members could learn how to create strong passwords and how to spot dangerous phishing scams.

In conclusion, the four units of Financial Fitness: earning, spending, saving, and protecting- form the foundation for developing strong financial habits that can last a lifetime. Peer educators can use free resources from the AFSA educational foundation. By understanding how to maximize income, create and manage a budget, save effectively, and protect their financial well-being, individuals set themselves up for success. Each unit is critical in fostering financial literacy, empowering members to make informed decisions and avoid the hazards associated with poor money management.

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JOEY MILLER



FCCLA Offices Held

- State VP of Parliamentary Law 2024-25
- State VP of Parliamentary Law 2022-23
- State VP of Membership 2021-22
- Chapter First Vice-President 2023-2024
- Chapter President 2021-22

Competitive Events Experience

- Repurpose and Redesign STAR Event, National 1st Place, 2023, Gold 2021
- FCCLA Knowledge Challenge National 1st Place 2023, 3rd Place 2024
- LifeSmarts Knowledge Bowl Participant 2023
- National LifeSmarts Knowledge Bowl Top 8 2022
- Skill Demonstration Events Creed Speaking National 3rd Place 2019

National Participation

- National Finance Network 2024-2025
- Fall Leadership Institute 2024
- National Leadership Conference 2024, 2023, 2022
- National Voting Delegate 2024, 2022
- Power of One Completer 2024, 2022
- Stand Up National High School Winner 2023
- Capitol Leadership 2023
- Franklin Covey Leader in Me 2023
- National Fall Conference 2023, 2022, 2021, 2019
- Families First National High School Winner 2022
- STOP the Violence National Runner-Up 2022
- Spotlight on Projects Participant-2022, 2023
- National Programs Network 2022-2023
- National Membership Network 2021-2022
- Hybrid National Leadership Conference 2021
- Virtual National Leadership Conference 2020

State Participation

- State Leadership Conference 2021-2025
- Secured Foundation Partnerships totaling \$3734
- State Bylaws Revision Task Force 2024-25
- State Officer Scholarship, Gold Level 2022, 2023, 2025
- Board of Directors Operating Policy Committee 2024
- SEC Leadership Training 2021, 2023, 2024
- VA FCCLA College Days Presenter 2022, 2024
- State Officer Candidate Recruitment 2023, 2024
- State Fair Competition Evaluator 2021, 2022, 2024
- State Contests Evaluator 2021, 2022, 2024
- Presented at County Fall Rally 2022, 2023
- VA FCCLA Contest Participant 2020 (Virtual), 2023
- Created Three Videos promoting membership and officer candidate recruitment 2021, 2022, 2024

██████████ HIGH SCHOOL | JUNIOR
VIRGINIA FCCLA | 6 YEAR MEMBER
GPA:3.97

Family and Consumer Sciences Education

- 6th Grade- FCS Exploratory 1
- 7th Grade- FCS Exploratory 2
- 8th Grade- FCS Exploratory 3
- 9th Grade- Nutrition and Wellness -1.0 credit
- 10th Grade- Introduction to Culinary- 1.0 credit
- 11th Grade- Student Choice FCS Period

Local Participation

- School Board Presentation 2021, 2022, 2025
- Pink Drinks for Brianna Service Project 2024
- NOYS Traffic Safety National Winner 2023
- Pop-Up Sweet Shop Service Project 2023
- Student Body Mental Health Week 2023
- Families First Calendar Food Drive 2023, 2024
- ██████████ Cemetery Project 2023-2024
- Wreaths Across America 2022-2024
- Budget Bites Financial Fitness 2022-2024
- ██████████ Student Body Project 2022-2023
- Planned and participated in FCCLA week activities 2019-2025
- Open House FCCLA Volunteer 2022-2024
- Helped raise over \$200,000 through fundraisers

Contributions to FCS Education

- School Board advocacy for FCS, FCCLA, and CTE 2021, 2022, 2025
- FCCLA session presenter at state FCS Teachers Professional Development 2021, 2022, 2024
- Advocated for FCCLA, FCCLA, and CTE at Capitol Leadership 2023
- Received achievement award for Family and Consumer Science Department 2021, 2024

School and Community Participation

- National Technical Honor Society 2023-2025
- National Honor Society 2024-2025
- Community Youth Achievement Award 2024
- Gifted and Talented Program 2019-2025
- ██████████ Tour Guide 2023-Present
- FBLA 2023-2025
- Cross Country 2021-2025
- Track and Field 2024-2025
- Honor Roll 2019-2025
- Speaker at Veterans Day Assembly, 2024
- Hiking Club 2022-2023
- Recycling Club 2022-2023
- JV Baseball 2022-2023
- Morning Announcements 2019-2022
- FFA Member, 2019