Hey Virginia Scene readers! It’s Evan Sooklal here, your Virginia TSA State Reporter! Before anything else, I just want to say thank you for taking the time to read this second volume of The Virginia Scene; everyone who is featured in here has put in a lot of work writing their awesome articles!

The Executive Council and I have all been hard at work trying to make this year of TSA the best you’ve ever had! Not spoiling anything, but we’re reading your feedback and using our personal experiences to mold and shape Technosphere 2017 into one that you all will remember!

Let me be the first to tell you how excited I am for the new TSA year to really begin! I’ve been putting in some work for my competitions these past couple weeks (Chapter Team, Video Game Design, and Webmaster) like all of our members across the state should be doing *cough cough*.

TSA conference season is in the air; I can smell the CDs burning. I can practically already hear the title pages sliding into portfolio covers in the dark of night and the early morning clacking of keyboard keys in preparation for everyone’s respective regionals. Even if you are competing at your regionals this year, I still encourage you to go; you’ll have a chance to hang out with your friends and get in that hyped-up TSA mood. Even if your region is one of the smaller regions in Virginia, you should still be doing the best that you can do. Being from the small Southwestern region myself, I could not imagine having major competition at regionals, mainly because everyone would make it to states anyway! But Virginia TSA has taken notice, and they have made a couple changes this year…

A few new rules were implemented this year to ensure everyone is at the top of their game; make sure to take note especially if you are competing at regionals! Added at the top of the judges scoring sheet is a “GO/NO GO” list; it is a list of preliminary requirements the judges must check for prior to judging your entry. That means if you do not have one of the items listed, mainly consisting of portfolios and LEAP resumes, your entry will not be considered for judging. This exemplifies the point that you and your
team need to **double and triple check** to be sure you have brought everything with you to conferences; your main project, the portfolio with all the pages, extra supplies *just in case*, pencils and pens, etc.

Another rule implemented is one requiring that teams must score a minimum of at least **60% of the total points** in an event to be qualified as an award winner. It might not seem like a need to check because it seems so obvious you have more than 60%, but it would still be beneficial if you or your team had someone to mock score your competition just to check and see whether your entry would break the 60% threshold or not.

To see all the new rules and changes for the 2017-2018 year, be sure to check the Virginia TSA Addendum on the Virginia TSA website under the ‘Resources’ tab: [http://virginiatsa.org/resources/](http://virginiatsa.org/resources/).

Respectfully Submitted,

Evan Sooklal

Virginia TSA Reporter

Pictured: The State Officers celebrating the past holidays in festive sweaters and shirts

**Happy Holidays from the State Officer Team**

*albeit a little late*
New Changes in Competitions

The 2017-2018 Addendum lists new and significantly redesigned high school TSA events

New High School Events:

1. **3D Animation** Participants (one team per chapter) demonstrate their knowledge of 3D animation technology and design skills to creatively solve the challenge posted on the national TSA website.

2. **Coding** Participants (one individual or one team per chapter) respond to an annual coding-related design challenge by developing a software program that will accurately address an on-site problem in a specified, limited amount of time.

3. **Computer Integrated Manufacturing (CIM)** Participants (one team per chapter) design, fabricate, and use Computer Integrated Manufacturing (CIM) to create a promotional TSA product that will showcase the current conference city and/or state.

4. **Promotional Design** Participants (five individuals per chapter) use computerized graphic communications layout and design skills in the production of a promotional resource for TSA.

5. **STEM Careers** Participants (one individual per chapter) develop a skill and complete a thorough project about the skill’s relationship to a STEM career area of their choice. Participants research and prepare documentation related to the skill and prepare a video that demonstrates the skill. Semifinalists participate in an interview to discuss the skill developed.

Significantly Redesigned High School Events:

1. Architectural Design
2. Engineering Design
3. Fashion Design and Technology
4. Flight Endurance
5. Prepared Presentation

* make sure to review and reread the rules for these if you are competing in them*

Important:

*MIDDLE SCHOOL VIDEO GAME DESIGN*: All components of the chapter’s entry, including the website (URL) for entry, must be finished, submitted and accessible via the internet by 11:59 EST on March 31, 2017. All Components Shall be submitted to stateadvisor@virginiatsa.org and shall be identified by team.*
Especially if you attended the national conference last summer, you’ve probably asked this question: *What is LEAP?* LEAP, which stands for **L**eadership, **E**ducation, **A**chievement, and **P**ersonal Growth, is the latest development in National TSA. LEAP will be integrated into every high school competition this year as part of the scoring process. The two components of the LEAP portion of your competitive events are a resume and a semifinalist interview.

The LEAP resume is a packet that you or your team will turn in along with your project. The resume is required for you to compete in your event in a Go/No Go filtration process, so it can’t be something you just thought up in one evening! The goal of the resume is to highlight the leadership skills you’ve gained from TSA, showcase your experience in leadership roles, describe your community service activities, and elaborate upon how your competitive event is relevant to your future plans. The resume format is mostly simple bullet points along with some other standard information; you can find a template on the National TSA website. The LEAP interview will only apply to individuals and teams who make it to the semifinalist round of their event. The interview is between you and the judges, and it’s only five minutes maximum in length. This is just another opportunity for you to share your leadership experience and how TSA has impacted you or your team.

LEAP sounds like a scary new development in the competitive field, but it’s really just a chance for you to tell the judges about what TSA means to you! TSA has shaped every member’s life in some way, giving us the confidence to take on new challenges and flourish in leadership roles. If you want to access the resume template or learn more about the specifics of LEAP, you can view the “LEAP Overview” under the Leadership tab of the National TSA website. Take this opportunity to grow in leadership, and it’ll pay off when the competition score sheets come in!

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica Strait
Virginia TSA President

For More Info on LEAP, visit the national TSA website under ‘LEAP’:
http://www.tsaweb.org/LEAP-overview
Try and wrap your head around this one! Answers are located on page 14

Oh no! Do you know the names of all the Virginia TSA State Officers? If so, help poor old Tyler put the reports back together again...

Unscramble

1. I eye no vulgar
2. I, sirs, act a jest
3. Pig jails deer
4. Alas! An air
5. Log, sin, math?
6. He hid a tuna
7. Evil hunk mails tuna
8. Plant evade
9. Ye, rent’s lit
10. Ouch niece
11. Lava on elk so…
12. Began Zen Jinn
13. Nurse villain
14. Starving eel
15. Hedge school
16. Harsh eyeballs

Answers

1. _______ _____
2. _______ _____
3. _______ _____
4. _______ _____
5. _______ _____
6. _______ _____
7. __________
8. _______ _____
9. _______ _____
10. _______ _____
11. _______ _____
12. _______ _____
13. _______ _____
14. _______ _____
15. _______ _____
16. _______ _____
The entire purpose of public relations is communicating the importance of an organization to the general community. Thanks to the work of our state delegation’s Public Relations Committee, members are now equipped with an informational packet containing everything that people should know about Virginia TSA in a single, convenient location. Because the packet is suited for the general public, it can be easily repurposed to fit the needs of individual chapters. This provides a wide range of applications such as recruiting new members and increasing the overall presence of TSA in schools and counties. I encourage everyone reading to check it out and distribute copies during chapter functions in order to spread the knowledge of Virginia TSA.

For a copy of the Public Relations Packet or a question about it, please feel free to email me at tstein0913@gmail.com.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tyler Stein

Virginia TSA Secretary
The Texas TSA Reporter shares some of Texas TSA’s best fundraising tips

Students asking if you want to buy chocolate, decorations for an upcoming event littering the floor, order forms covering your advisor’s desk, and the chapter treasurer swamped counting money. It’s the typical scene of fundraisers, and as the TSA year kicks into full-swing, chapters everywhere are experiencing it as fundraisers are planned to help chapters participate in leadership conferences and competitive events. Some events are common among chapters: popcorn sales, candy apples, selling at school events, and the classic chocolate box fundraiser. However, if I have learned anything from talking to members from across my state and nation during my five years as a TSA member, it’s that there are countless chapters creating their own unique fundraisers to help fuel their activities.

For example, one of Texas TSA’s chapters, Roosevelt High School, incorporates engraving into some of their engineering classes and already has the equipment for it. In a unique fundraiser that allows students to practice their engraving while supporting their chapter, they sold custom engraved holiday ornaments and Valentine’s Day grams. As for the schools that do not have the equipment for something like an engraving fundraiser, I have seen chapters use the common resources often found in any school. Utilizing a simple computer lab, one of our chapters created a “Minecraft Mania” event, charging students to go in and play the popular game. As a result, they were able to raise money while providing students the opportunity to relax and play with their friends.

However, it is not just our chapters that fundraise. Texas TSA works to raise funds for the American Cancer Society, TSA’s official service project, by hosting a bingo night at our annual State Leadership Conference in December. To fuel the event, we turn to our State Leadership Team and members who help in donating different prizes to be given away. On the second night of our conference, the games begin. As dorky as a bingo night may sound, it is actually a huge hit among members as a way for them to play against friends, including those they have just met, while also supporting a great cause. From time to time, we also like to shake things up with bingo night by adding different incentives. For example, the 2014-2015 Texas Officer Team said that if $500 was raised from bingo night, members could dump buckets of ice water on them. That year, we ended up raising over $2,000 for ACS, four times our initial goal, and the bingo night tradition continues.

Fundraisers can all have different purposes, but whether the money is for a charity or a chapter, it is still going towards a good cause. TSA is a place to foster leadership and experience, and fundraisers are just one great way to help unite members to reach a goal.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydney Berry

Texas TSA State Reporter
Press Releases

Our Secretary highlights how important it is to contact your local media about TSA

Informing the general public about what Virginia TSA is and what we do is the most effective and efficient way to gain support, grow chapters, and increase membership. With Regional Fairs being this weekend (AHHH!!) we are given an opportunity to take full advantage of this method by creating press releases. Press releases are brief yet formal articles issued to newspapers, websites, and many other forms of media. By publishing them, we will be able to reach out to people and students who might have never been exposed to TSA and could even spark interest. In turn, this may encourage students to take initiative to join or possibly establish their school’s very first chapter --- which would not only increase membership and participation but also expand our presence as a Virginia CTSO --- all because of one small article. I highly encourage you to write a press release about your Regional Fair and submit it to your school or local newspaper/county website to fulfill your obligation to promote Virginia TSA and to leave your mark as a contributor to our legacy.

If you choose to (and you should) to write a press release, it should include:

- Date of conference
- Location of conference
- Competition placements and/or elected officers from your school or county
- Any Relay for Life fundraisers held
- Any information relevant to your school’s or county’s participation
- Fun information! (TSA is a fun one-of-a-kind experience, so tell people about it! However, be sure not to overshadow the specific facts about the event; keep it straightforward.)

I know it seems that I am asking a lot from you to do this, but remember --- progress is only made when initiative it taken. This small task can and will make a huge difference in Virginia TSA. Please do your duty to our association in order to promote our presence, growth, and development as a preeminent Virginia STEM CTSO by writing a press release article. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to email me at tstein0913@gmail.com.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tyler Stein
Virginia TSA Secretary
This past couple months, the regions of Virginia each held their own Fall Rallies as a way to raise money and promote TSA. Here’s how they went:

Blue Ridge Fall Rally

The Blue Ridge Fall Rally was held at Blacksburg Middle School, on October 7th. The officer team put together leadership activities, STEM activities, and a robotics expo held by the local FTC robotics team, Team 401 Hokies. The guest speaker was Kelsey Stoner, who talked about her experience in TSA, and what made her join TSA.

“When I was in sixth grade, I thought that photography and graphic design was going to be my thing, and then I found TSA, where I could do that and be part of something I loved,” she said in her opening remarks.

Most of the schools in attendance were new to TSA, so many of the activities focused on exactly what TSA was about. One workshop was a STEM workshop held by CEED, an engineering outreach program at Virginia Tech, where students learned about nuclear half-lives and the harmful effects of radiation. Another workshop was headed by our two state officers, and introduced TSA members to what TSA was all about: STEM competition, leadership, and community service. The last workshop was a programming and robotics demo held by Team 401 Hokies where students worked to program a robot to navigate an obstacle course.

“This is my 2nd year in TSA,” says Stu Forsman, a student at Blacksburg High School, “and I really love Fall Rally. I get to hang out with my friends in TSA and work with things I didn’t necessarily think about before”.

Respectfully Submitted,

Unmesha Vullikanti
Blue Ridge Regional President
South Central Fall Rally

South Central started the 2016-2017 scholastic year with an amazing, STEM-filled Fall Rally - around 100 students came from all around the region! Students started the day by making an Egg Drop Device, sponsored by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. They then proceeded to rotate around planets, or breakout sessions, which were centered around TSA, leadership, and some competitions. Our annual Relay for Life event occurred during the middle of these breakout sessions, and we had a plethora of activities such as guessing the amount of candy in a jar, decorating bags towards those with cancer, and just playing some fun games with each other! Overall, we raised more than $200 for the American Cancer Society. Before Closing Ceremonies, we held the actual Egg Drop itself to determine who the winner was - Team Mercury! To conclude, the South Central Fall Rally could not have been better.

Respectfully submitted,
Valerie Young
South Central Regional President

Southwestern Fall Rally

The southwestern region did a cupcake bake off. We split up into teams, including state and regional officer teams. The contestants then began making their cupcakes. Then the meeting came to order, and began selling relay for life raffle tickets. The prize for the raffle was for “spooky baskets” which consisted of candy. I then introduced the tab collection of the soda tabs for anyone that was not alerted about it. We then began the judging of the cupcakes. The judges were Mr. Collins, Mrs. Tolliver, and Mrs. Gross. The winners if the cupcakes received 3D printed cupcakes. We then drew for the winners of the “spooky baskets”. Afterwards we then brought the meeting to a close. The meeting was from 6-8:30 Oct 11th at the Washington County Career and Technical Center.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gavin Lester
Southwestern Regional President
Tidewater Fall Rally

The Tidewater Fall Rally was held on Saturday, October 22nd at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and was attended by over 100 students and staff. Students were introduced to underwater ecosystems in a seminar, and had a chance to explore various seawater laboratories.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chloe Hodges
Tidewater Regional President

Valley Fall Rally

The Valley Regional Fall Rally occurred on Saturday, October 8, 2016 in James Madison University’s Engineering Building. It began around 9:00 am and lasted until 3:00 pm. Around 150 TSA members attended, the most in recent memory. During the opening ceremony, Dr. Cindy Klevickis made ice cream with liquid nitrogen while explaining the science behind it and telling corny jokes. Ice cream was distributed to all TSA members. After the recess, members attended two of seven 45 minute breakout sessions. Some workshop titles included LEAP, the Valley Star Test, College Life, Tech Bowl, and Flight. After the conclusion of the workshops, the regional officers adjourned to lunch. During lunch, officers collected members’ soda tabs for charity. Most TSA members then attended the JMU vs. William and Mary football game.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenna Benzing
Valley Regional President
Success at Leadership Academy 2016

Our State Treasurer reflects on Leadership Academy and teaches how to run for state office

Serving as a state officer for Virginia TSA has been such an amazing experience. From public speaking to interacting with my 2,000+ friends, I have enjoyed every bit of this experience. Throughout this TSA year, I have worked to increase funding for STEM education within elementary schools, increase membership, and manage and balance the budget for the 2016-2017 TSA year. Not only have I strived to achieve these goals, but I have also strived to make new friends and create new memories. In the end, I can gladly say that I have achieved all of my goals.

To be honest, one of my favorite opportunities associated with state office is getting to work directly with the members, specifically at Leadership Academy. In fact, I really enjoy watching the inner leader come out from every person who attends Leadership Academy. In my opinion, Leadership Academy 2016 was a great success. At my workshop, America’s Next Top Model, I witnessed the creation of many new leaders. I saw creative ideas put to use and teamwork at its finest, not to mention the tremendous amount of makeup that was put to use! Not only did I see the bright minds of young people bloom, but I also saw some interesting presidential campaigns! As it happens, my partner and I saw that many TSA members had great ideas which could be applied to TSA itself.

After seeing all of the bright minds brought to Leadership Academy 2016, I feel confident when I say that I feel safe in the hands of our future TSA leaders. With that being said, like me, you too can become a regional, state, or national officer. As an officer, you can work to make positive change within our TSA community. From implementing your ideas on membership promotion to designing a t-shirt for a state conference, officers do it all. Even though regional officer applications were already due, you can still apply to become a state officer! Visit: “virginiatsa.org/leadership/running-for-office” to fill out an application for state office or to find more information. Beware, applications are due on March 31, 2017! In addition, for those current or past state officers, you can run for national office by visiting, “tsaweb.org/National-Officer-Candidate-Program” for more information. Trust me when I say that that being a state or national leader is one of the best experiences ever; it is life-changing! Whether you are running for office or simply competing, I look forward to seeing all of you leaders at Technosphere 2017. Feel free to stop by and talk to me or any of the other state officers if you have any questions about running for office, or stop by if you would just like to talk (we would love to speak with you)!

Good luck at regionals!

Thank you,

Respectfully submitted,

Devan Patel

Virginia TSA Treasurer
Greetings from National TSA!

Our National TSA Secretary, Erin Sullivan, extends a happy new year to the members of TSA!

Hello, Virginia TSA! Welcome to the new year! I hope everyone had a good holiday break and you are working on finalizing your list of resolutions for this new year. With that said, I am going to challenge you to add a resolution to your list - strive to become a stronger TSA member in 2017.

Make a promise to yourself to become a more motivated competitor. Norman Ralph Augustine once said, "Motivation will almost always beat mere talent." It doesn't matter if you are at the top of your class or a really creative person if hard work is not in place. I urge you to put the most effort you can in each of your projects to not only better yourself, but to better the competitive field as a whole.

Take on a leadership role. Run for that chapter or region office you've had your eye on since your first year in TSA. I will tell you that the first step is the hardest but once you have taken that step towards leadership you will never want to turn back. If you feel unsure, ask any regional, state, or national TSA officer and I am confident they will tell you that becoming more involved in leadership has impacted them positively.

Make a commitment to give back to your school or community. Start an American Cancer Society Relay for Life fundraiser. In TSA we have the unique opportunity to raise money for our national service project, the American Cancer Society. Get involved and gather support for this great cause. There are many of our friends and relatives that have been touched by cancer in some way and we can make a difference in the lives of the millions who have the illness. Help others, I promise you will learn from the experience.

Happy 2017 and I can not wait to see everything you do this year!

Sincerely,

Erin Sullivan
National TSA Secretary
See you next time!

In the next edition:
- Regional Fairs
- Technosphere Prep
- Getting Involved after Graduation
- Insight into Technosphere

- Important Websites -

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