The Virginia TSA Scene

Virginia TSA Gets Loud and Proud

On Friday, November 16th, a group of 120 students, advisors, chaperones, and alumnus from across the state came together in Richmond, Virginia to kick off the 2012 Virginia TSA Leadership Academy. For the last six years, Virginia TSA has been leading the way as one of the few state delegations to host a conference specifically dedicated to enhancing the leadership skills of its members and highlighting opportunities for involvement within the association. The Friday night activities began with a brief overview of the upcoming weekend, each officer presenting the reason they ran for office, and an ice breaker activity before the students split into groups to take a deeper look at leadership. Students came up with their own definitions of what it means to be a leader and analyzed the different ways they could serve as mentors to other students in their chapters and other organizations at their schools. The evening wrapped up with the Virginia TSA Executive Council teaching the Virginia TSA cheer to the membership and an open forum for students to ask questions about serving as a Regional or State officer.

The activities picked up again Saturday morning with our first breakout sessions. Each group was able to attend three sessions led by Executive Council officers covering topics from communication between leaders and teams, public speaking, how to compromise and come to a consensus, taking your chapter to the next level, and how to get more members involved. The sessions combined hands-on activities, presentations, and impromptu speaking games to create a fun atmosphere to get the importance of each message across. Afterwards a professional team-building company, Challenge Discovery, led the students in a series of activities focused on increasing communication, promoting understanding of other individuals, and building new friendships within the delegation.

The 2012 Virginia TSA Leadership Academy was a fantastic opportunity not only to meet and interact with members from across the state, but also to watch them step out of their shells and embrace the leaders within themselves. Thank you to everyone who made the event possible and for the continued support of the mission and goals of Virginia TSA. We truly have a remarkable set of students and advisors within our organization and I cannot wait to see what new heights we reach in the coming years under their guidance!

Best wishes,
Jill Pritts
Virginia TSA President
Blue Ridge Region Fall Rally

The Blue Ridge Region held their TSA Fall Rally at Virginia Western Community College on Saturday September 15th 2012. Students participated in workshops using Inventor, the Mechatronics Lab, and the Alternative Energy Lab. Instructor Dan Horine, made sure that students had ample hands on activities that challenged the students to think about applications of advanced Technology. It was a great way to kick off the TSA year in the Blue Ridge.

The 2012-2013 Blue Ridge Regional Council.

The Mechatronics Lab at VWCC. Instructor Dan Horine demonstrates the systems approach to high tech manufacturing for TSA fall rally participants.
The Northern Region held their annual Fall Rally at Oakton High School on November 10th. 75 members from local middle and high schools came together on a Saturday afternoon to learn about the key tenants of TSA, leadership, and STEM education. Over half of these participants were new to TSA, so it was very important to introduce them to as many aspects of our association as possible. The event began with a welcome from Madam Northern Regional President and Mr. State Advisor. Then the Northern Regional Council demonstrated and opening ceremony. After the opening ceremony, guest speaker John Parera talked to the students about STEM in his field. He works for the Department of Homeland Security as well as the Transportation Security Administration and talked about major projects that he has worked with including Titan, the world fastest computer, and Curiosity, the rover on Mars. He spent time addressing other positions in the technology field and enforcing how important this field is now and will be in the future. Then, students broke up into three groups to participated in team building activities. The activities focused on communication, team work, and leadership. Each challenge seemed to be well enjoyed by all participants and was a good representation of tactics used in TSA. The event ended at noon with a closing ceremony and it was a successful day overall.
South Central Fall Rally

On Saturday, October 13th, the South Central Region held their Fall Rally at Tuckahoe Middle School. Throughout the day, members attended hands-on workshops that focused on how you can improve your results in different competitions such as photography, dragster, and problem-solving. The workshops were planned to increase regional and state competitiveness. Mr. Stephenson, our state advisor, was present and able to offer some words of inspiration and information on upcoming Virginia TSA events. The Fall Rally was an incredible start to the year for the South Central Region.

The student above gets involved during a catapult workshop.

Students participate in a demonstration

Students act as one during an officer team workshop!
Southwestern Fall Rally

On October 18, the Southwestern Region held their Fall Rally, hosted by the Washington County Neff Vocational Center. With over 100 parents and students in attendance, and four schools, it was our largest one ever! Students competed in a series of icebreakers and activities, while parents had an info session with the advisors. Schools in attendance were Vance Middle, E. B. Stanley Middle, Abingdon High School, and Honaker High School.

Two groups of students strike a pose while completing challenges for their team building workshops.
Tidewater Region Fall Rally

Tidewater Fall Rally was held on Oct. 13, 2012 at Norfolk State University. First we opened with the opening ceremony, the rally was kicked off with two great speakers. The first was Brett Conn, a student at the university, talked about the transition from high school to college. He also informed the members present about a great charity, Habitat for Humanity and what we can do to help them. The second speaker was Dr. Banks. Dr. Banks is the department head of technology at NSU. He gave the students a lot of information about Norfolk State University.

After the opening ceremonies the TSA members went to the breakout sessions. There they talked about the leadership opportunities currently open within the region and upcoming competitions in the region and state. They also explored aeronautical properties involving balloons and paper airplanes. The rally was finished up with a tour of Norfolk State and closing ceremonies. The rally was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

A special thanks to Norfolk State University for providing us with a wonderful venue and, Dr. Banks and Brett Conn for speaking to us. We hope everyone is doing well on preparing for their competitions and hope to see everyone at The Tidewater Regional Fair in March.
Valley Region Fall Rally

The Valley Regional Fall Rally took place on October 13, 2012. James Madison University generously provided us with space in their Integrated Science and Technology (ISAT) building, and provided the guest speaker, Dr. Eric Maslen, head of the ISAT department.

The Valley Regional Officers opened the rally with an opening ceremony. Afterwards Dr. Maslen gave a presentation titled Seeing Yourself as a Scientist, where he covered similar characteristics shared by innovators and scientists.

Following our opening, we recessed for workshops. Every member had a choice of attending two of the six workshops offered. These workshops were:

- High-Tech Ice Cream
- Flight
- Problem Solving
- Leadership/Team-Building
- 1st Robotics
- Computer Animation

After both workshop sessions, the officers reconvened the meeting and performed a closing ceremony. Then, lunch was served, and the rally moved on to attend JMU’s football game against William and Mary. JMU won the game in a thrilling fashion, 27-26.
**Fundraising Tips!**

Hello, Virginia TSA. One of the most helpful things that any TSA chapter can do to support its members is to fundraise. In changing economic times, these fundraisers which support our members’ trips to conventions are in danger. Over the last five years, I have seen a lot of fundraising projects succeed, and some that have failed, and there are several types of fundraisers that always seem to work well.

**Outreach:**
First, try to find something to do out in the community. My TSA chapter has a long-running relationship with our county fair, and one major fundraiser we perform every year is setting up for each of the bands that play in the grandstands. We get paid a sum which our advisor divides up amongst the workers by hours worked, and we get to interact and meet the bands and their crews and have a good time together. Working out in the community like this is good because it not only provides good funds, but it builds the reputation and image of TSA in the eyes of the public. The county fair knows that our members always have a good work ethic and will do better each day the task before us.

**Joint Fundraising:**
As a secondary fundraiser, my middle school TSA chapter would tag along with our school’s FFA chapter for two of their fruit sales. That is, our members sold product for their club, but whatever revenue the club received from our members was given back to TSA. While this may not work for every school, it is a good way to build relationships between clubs and is a good start off for planning your own fundraisers.

**Concessions:**
One of my favorite fundraisers that I do every year is selling concessions at our school’s track meets. If possible, try to get your chapter to take over or assist in the concessions stand for a sporting event. You can have members take shifts cooking, being runners, and even selling sports drinks to thirsty athletes! This kind of fundraiser is great because if run correctly it can yield a great profit and lets TSA members show their school spirit too. You get to watch your team compete while earning money to help send you to Technosphere and beyond!

These are just a few great ways to help your chapter raise money to support you. If you ever have any questions about fundraising or anything, please feel free to email me at calebgumtsa@gmail.com anytime.

Respectfully Submitted,
Caleb Gum
Virginia TSA Secretary
Relay for Life

What is a goal? According to dictionary.com, a goal is the result or achievement toward which effort is directed. In simpler terms, a goal is something that you set and work towards for a specific amount of time. The 2012-2013 Executive Council has set a goal to raise $3,000 for the American Cancer Society that will be presented to National TSA on behalf of Virginia TSA. The goal is achievable, but we need your help. It’s time for YOU to start fundraising and spreading the word about Relay for Life and how it benefits the people in our communities. Get busy. Have fun. Make a difference. Every service or fund donated to the American Cancer Society could help save another life.

If you have any questions or suggestions, do not hesitate to contact Sierra Swisher, the State Community Service Project Committee Chair at sierracswisher@gmail.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sierra Swisher

Join the Resolutions Committee

Greeting Virginia TSA! The Resolutions Committee is in need of your help. The purpose of the Resolutions Committee is to handle all resolutions submitted to the Executive Council and ensure that they are presented and evaluated appropriately at both the Executive Council meetings and at Technosphere. The committee has one problem: No resolutions have yet to be submitted. A resolution is an important form of a main motion usually used to address lengthy issues.

The form is as follows:

Whereas, We consider that suitable recreation is a necessary part of a rational educational system; and

Whereas, There is no public ground in this village where our school children can play; therefore,

Resolved, That it is the sense of this meeting that ample play grounds should be immediately provided for our school children.

Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed by the chair to present these resolutions to the village authorities and to urge upon them prompt action in the matter.

On behalf of the Virginia TSA Resolutions Committee, we hope that you will use this information about what a resolution is and its purpose to bring an issue of importance to the attention of the Executive Council and the Virginia TSA. If you have any questions or would like to submit a resolution, feel free to contact any of the Executive Council officers or Mr. State Advisor.

Resolution example taken from: http://www.bartleby.com/176/4.html
Hello Virginia TSA! By now we have experienced Fall Rally’s and Leadership Academy! The year is off with a BANG! Now it is time to look towards Regional Fairs & Technosphere. I hope you are excited as I am. I was fortunate enough to attend the South Central regions fall rally and I spoke for a few minutes during the opening session. Part of what I spoke about was Learning and displaying professional behavior. TSA is about many things, I know mostly you want to show off your mad skills in your events of choice. That’s great and I wish every one of you the best, but TSA is about so much more. As Teachers and Advisors we are not just attempting to teach you content and prepare your technical skills, but we are trying to prepare you for a world outside the classroom, no matter your chosen field of endeavor. Leadership, organizational, problem solving and professional skills are behaviors you will use in any and all career choices. By being involved in TSA you have given yourself a leg up on the competition in the job market. You are to be congratulated for that.

One of those import skills is Professional behavior. There are certain times and certain occasions that prescribed behavior is to be followed. The behaviors are not developed to have reasons to force students and advisors alike to do something unnecessary, but for legitimate reasons. Particular competitive events require a particular level of professional behavior and the required dress codes for those events are outlined in the Total TSA competitive events guide and the Virginia TSA Addendum. Make sure you follow these guidelines and display the appropriate level of professionalism for each event by showing up in the proper attire.

Another level of professional behavior that should be displayed is not only wearing the appropriate attire to the appropriate events, but to attend those events planned specifically for you and to help you become a more prepared professional. It is expected that everyone will attend the General sessions at Technosphere and show up in professional attire, at minimum. Your State Executive and Advisory council have been working hard to prepare an awesome conference for your benefit. They deserve the respect of your attendance and participation.
Finally, each and every one of you spend the entire year developing your skills & preparing for competitive events with the goal of being on the stage as a Finalist on the First Sunday in May. You need to respect that opportunity by showing up properly attired to receive that award. Also to give honor and respect to those who will be honored in other events. Students & Advisors are required to attend General sessions in a minimum of Professional Dress according to the Virginia TSA addendum. It would be a shame to have been a Finalist or even place 1st, 2nd or 3rd and not be recognized on the stage in front of your peers and parents, because you failed to show the proper professional respect for the event, association and your fellow competitors. However, if your name should be called on the First Sunday in May and you approach to line up in unprofessional attire, you will not be allowed to receive your award during the ceremony and your advisor can pick up your award after the ceremony.

We already know Virginia TSA is Tops!

Let's kick it up a notch and set the Professional example!

It's All about “Learning to Live in a Technical World!”

Yours Truly,
Andy Stephenson
Virginia TSA State Advisor
Blue Ridge Games to Raise!

On Saturday, October 20th, the Patrick Henry High School TSA chapter participated in a worldwide event called Extra Life. Extra Life is a charity event held annually that benefits children’s hospitals through the Children’s Miracle Network. The money raised goes towards improving the facilities and care for children with life-threatening diseases at the hospital of the team’s choice. The students raised money by having friends and family sponsor them to take part in a 24-hour gaming marathon, in which members of our chapter met up to play video games, board games, and card games together until the next morning. Working with another local TSA chapter from William Fleming High School, the students raised over $800 to benefit the local children's hospital. This was the second year that the PH TSA chapter took part in the event and they would encourage other chapters to register teams as well. Overall, the event was a lot of fun for the chapter members and a great way to give back to the community!

Ben Polk
Patrick Henry High School
Blue Ridge Region

See Your Pictures in the TSA Yearbook

As this year's State Historian and this year I would like to make a digital yearbook for TSA. In order to do this, I need your help. I am requesting that you send in pictures of your fall rallies, regional fairs, this past year's state and national conferences, and any other TSA functions you have participated in. The yearbook will be made in a PDF format so you will be able to upload the pictures or make a hard copy for yourself. In doing this, you will help me in making TSA's very first yearbook.

If you have any pictures please send them to gretchenmae144@gmail.com

Thank you for your help,
Gretchen Gross

http://aftonstationblog-laurel.blogspot.com/2012/05/what.html
ATTENTION ALL WRITERS, JOURNALISTS, NOTE TAKERS, POETS, STORYTELLERS AND COLUMNISTS!

Get your pencils ready for this great opportunity! There is one thing this issue of the scene is missing, and that’s YOUR story! The Virginia TSA Executive Council wants to hear from you. So here’s the deal. Whenever you see your school, chapter, community, an individual, an advisor, or anyone else doing something awesome, write an article and send it in to mkirbytsa@gmail.com. The council will review them at the next meeting and, who knows, yours might show up in the next issue of the scene! Get writing!

Upcoming Events

Blue Ridge Region Regional Fair - March 2nd
Northern Region Regional Fair - March 9th
South Central Region Regional Fair - March 2nd
Southwestern Region Regional Fair - March 2nd
Tidewater Region Regional Fair - March 2nd
Valley Region Regional Fair - March 9th
Deadline to register for Technosphere - March 29th
Deadline for State Officer Applications - March 29th
Deadline for Statewide Awards - March 29th
Virginia Scene Submissions Due - February 13th

Contact Us

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Explore!
www.VirginiaTSA.org