The Presidential Experience

Wow. What a great week. I know that I can speak for all of our executive council members who were at this year’s National Conference when I say that 2013 was a great year to be in TSA. For every member attending, the Orlando experience was definitely a memorable one. The competition was fierce and exciting, the general sessions were well run and interesting, and as always the Conference was full of some of the most interesting people in the world. However, this National Conference truly stands out as something special in my mind for several reasons.

Firstly, traveling on the State charter bus was a great experience. There’s no way to bind with the people around you faster than enjoying slightly-comfortable bus seats, a lack of sleep, and a mutual love of TSA. Traveling down and back from Orlando on the bus was a great way to start and end the trip. Also, I feel like I really got to know a lot more people than in previous years, both within the Virginia Delegation and from across the world. Having those new interactions made the trip really special for me. But of course, what truly made this National Conference amazing was serving as your State President during the week.

Respectfully Submitted,
Caleb Gum
“You can do this, I believe in you”. This was told to me right before I sprinted and pushed into the ballroom, desperately looking for seats to accommodate our whole delegation. Adrenaline pumping, feet jumping, heart racing, and of course a slick smile on my face knowing I’m about to get hardest job of all done. If only I could see this moment in slow motion. The total amount of seats that the Virginia TSA Delegation takes up was somewhere in the range of 200-300! Officers from every state rushed into the ballroom hoping to find the perfect seats. Luckily, every session was a success and we grabbed the perfect spots! What can I say, I’m an excellent pusher.

Flag girl? I guess you could call me that! I was honored to hold the Virginia TSA flag in all general sessions at Nationals 2013! Now it doesn’t sound like a very hard job, but it was stressful at times. The Virginia TSA flag is more complex than most people would think. It takes about 10 minutes to put together and breaks here and there every few minutes. The breaking could also have been from the dancing shown by your state historian, Amanda Billips, and me. It was very fun dancing and singing to Fergalicious and fist pumping to some techno remixes. I enjoyed posing with other students from the delegation and loved talking to everyone! In the future, I would suggest not standing on the chairs… we did get spoken to about that twice and that was not a good situation. Otherwise, there was always a smile on my face and hopefully I will be honored to do the job next year!

Nationals 2013 was a success and I hope to see more friendly faces at Nationals 2014 in D.C.!

Respectfully Submitted,
Kelsey Stoner
The 35th annual business meeting was not lacking in excitement, for those Robert’s Rules fans out there. The proposed business was going to change TSA if adopted. Amendments to the National TSA Bylaws were proposed by Texas TSA, attempting to change the system of electing candidates. If passed, every candidate except those for president would be placed in a common pool. Each voting delegate would cast their vote for president, then have five votes to select five candidates for a non-specific office. Whoever received the most votes would choose any office they wanted, and so on.

Of course, there were benefits and drawbacks of these amendments, like everything else. States all over the nation had different opinions, some same and others different. Virginia TSA had decided to vote against these amendments, along with other states like West Virginia, Alabama, Utah, and North Carolina. The National delegation was divided almost in half.

The annual business meeting came to order. Andrew O’Connor, Texas State President, moved to adopt the amendments that have been proposed. The motion was seconded, and debate was opened. Mr. O’Connor opened debate, followed by a response by the side against. The response was a little different than expected, the motion to postpone indefinitely, therefore killing the motion, was made and seconded. Immediately after, a previous question was also made and properly seconded. The previous question passed with a two-thirds vote, and vote immediately went to the motion to postpone indefinitely.

Mr. National Vice-President moved to refer the pending business to a committee, which was shot down by a point of order. Vote continued on the motion to postpone indefinitely continued. A standing vote was unclear, so a roll call vote was taken. The final vote was 535 for, 507 against. The motion passed, and the motion to adopt the amendments was killed.

The meeting adjourned, and voting delegates stayed to continue to vote for the candidates. A motion was made to reconsider the motion to postpone indefinitely, and was seconded. Immediately following, another previous question was made. This previous question failed, but Mr. National President said debate was closed and the assembly went to a vote. The motion to reconsider failed, keeping the motion to postpone indefinitely passed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Erin Sullivan
The national conference gives student delegates the opportunity to experience Robert’s Rules on a larger stage. This year presented a broad pool of officer candidates, resulting in many rounds of run offs, as well as the opportunity to vote on an amendment that could have changed national election procedures. Text voting proved a unique experience and gave me several ideas on how to improve voting efficiency in our own state. Virginia took an active role in the proceedings with three officer candidates and by leading discussion on the proposed amendments. During the annual business meeting, the roar in the general session room with each round of debates and voting rivaled that of some sports games. Overall, the national business meeting was a great opportunity to participate in the practical application of Robert’s Rules.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathryn Hutchins Duda
The Journey

The 2013 TSA National Conference was held at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort in Orlando, Florida. To the members of the Virginia delegation, the journey was about an 11 hour drive down I-95. Some flew, but a few road warriors met in a parking lot in Richmond and boarded Virginia TSA’s charter. That is where I found myself the night before conference kick-off, along with many other members of the Virginia delegation. The bus was a “huge time saver,” says Jerry Ridgeway, Turner Ashby High School’s advisor. And while our hard-working advisors do deserve a load off, that didn’t make me feel any better as I settled in for a long night of restless sleep. The problem arose from the fact that the window seats, of which I was an occupant, were directly next to a vent which pumped freezing cold air into the bus. This kept the entire bus at a bearable level, but to me, dressed for summer, it was a bit chilly. And the vent was the only place to rest my head.

Attempting to channel “the Spirit of Innovation” (that’s next year’s National Conference theme, by the way; it’s never too early!), I used my only available resource: my summer reading book. Placing it on the vent, I then rested my head on the book and managed to dose off. To be fair, I was warned numerous times to pack a pillow, blanket, or at least a sweatshirt, since in order for the entire bus to be comfortable some would be a little cold. One Caleb Gum, your state president, intelligently brought both a blanket and a pillow, and slept quite comfortably for the entire ride. I, however, was not nearly so prepared (though I did discover how to recline the seat on the way back, much to the chagrin of the person sitting behind me).

Despite my foolishness in packing, I do recognize the great value the charter bus served for Virginia TSA. The bus made transportation for Virginians to National Conference far smoother, and enabled more students to attend. All it took to get the most out of it was a little foresight and a bit of mental toughness. I guess some things are true of everything. So, for the list of positives of the Virginia TSA charter bus, we now have: easier on advisors; helps more students go to Nationals; cheesy metaphor material for your Vice President…

Respectfully Submitted,

Caleb Hurst
I’ve said this before, and I truly mean it: The Commonwealth of Virginia is awesome. Our State knows what’s going on. Because of the dedication and drive shown by our membership, I was able to carry the Virginia flag for the 3rd largest state delegation attending the Conference. Because of the skill and perseverance of our delegation, I was able to witness a mind-blowing number of Virginia finalizations and trophies being brought home on both the middle and high school levels. Because of our awareness and passion for TSA, I was able to represent a state whose voice was instrumental in shaping the future of National TSA in our business meeting.

Throughout the week, having meetings with and talking to our Virginia Delegation just made my awesome Nationals week even better. While I won’t be able to serve as your President next year, I hope to be right there beside you for my last National Conference as a high schooler. Let’s show the world how great Virginia truly is next year, when the Conference is in our own backyard, Washington D.C! Thank you, Virginia TSA, you made my Nationals great.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caleb Gum
The National TSA Conference is not just for competition. Many in the Virginia Delegation used their free time to mingle with others from around the country and, in some cases, around the world. Even the Executive Council reached out and made connections with other delegations. From West Virginia to Utah and down to Arkansas, the Virginia Executive Council has made friends with everyone, from State Presidents to Chapter Sergeant-At-Arms. Whether through pin trading or the Annual Business Meeting, Virginia TSA showed that, even though we were there for the competition, we arrived for the experience.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Billips
Colonial Forge High School: Biotechnology Design (HS) Third, Open Source Software Development (HS) ---Finalist (6th)

Grassfield High School: Fashion Design (HS) ---- Finalist (5th), Technology Bowl, Written (HS) Cody Robertson ---Finalist (7th)


James Wood High School: SciVis (HS) --- Finalist (8th)

Richmond Technical Center: Prepared Presentation (HS)---Finalist (9th) Ke’aja Jefferson, Transportation Modeling (HS) Second - Warren Braxton

Surry County High School: Engineering Design (HS) --- Finalist (4th)


Turner Ashby High School: Debating Technological Issues (HS) ---Finalist (9th) Extemporaneous Speech (HS) Second, Caleb Hurst System Control Technology (HS) --- Finalist (4th) Technology Bowl (HS) --- Second Technology Bowl, Written (HS) --- Finalist (8th) Caleb Gum

West Springfield High School: Biotechnology Design (HS) --- First Manufacturing Prototype (HS) --- Finalist (6th)
The Virginia Scene

RESULTS

Middle School

A.G. Wright Middle School: Digital Photography (MS) --- Third, Sky Summers, Tech Bowl (MS) --- Second, Tech Bowl, Written (MS) --- Third, Sam Lichman, Finalist (8th) Ethan Hamilton, Website Design (MS) --- Finalist (10th)

Blacksburg Middle School: Electrical Applications (MS) --- Finalist (5th) Juhyoung Lee, Global Manufacturing (MS) --- Finalist (4th) Problem Solving (MS) --- First Transportation Systems (MS) --- First Video Game Design (MS) --- Third

Eastern Mennonite School: System Control Technology (MS) --- Finalist (9th)

E. B. Stanley Middle School: Chapter Team (MS) --- Third, Chapter Team, Written (MS) --- First, John David Mullins Third, Jessica Strait Finalist (6th) Erin Sullivan Finalist (8th) Evan Sookal, Community Service Video (MS) --- Finalist (6th), Construction Challenge (MS) --- Third Environmental Focus (MS) --- Finalist (7th) Global Manufacturing (MS) --- Finalist (4th) Multimedia Production (MS) --- Finalist (10th) Promotional Design (MS) --- Finalist (4th), Technical Design (MS) --- Finalist (10th) Alexander Smith Website Design --- First

Franklin Middle School: Electrical Applications (MS) --- Finalist (10th) Richard Gibbons Environmental Focus (MS) --- Third Medical Technology Issues --- Finalist (7th) Technical Design --- Finalist (4th) Quinn Dawkins

Holman Middle School: Construction Challenge (MS) --- Finalist (9th), Electrical Applications (MS) --- Finalist (9th) Panth Doshi, Global Manufacturing --- Finalist (4th), Prepared Speech (MS) --- Finalist (7th) Natasha Doshi Tech Bowl --- Third, VEX Programming Skills --- Second, VEX Tournament --- Second, VEX Excellence --- First

John Yeates Middle School: Career Prep (MS) --- Finalist (9th) Chiamaka Nnawulezi, Video Game Design (MS) --- Finalist (4th)

Mark Twain Middle School: Agriculture & Biotechnology Design (MS) --- Finalist (8th) Construction Challenge (MS) --- Finalist (5th) Environmental Focus (MS) --- Finalist (6th) Go Green Manufacturing (MS) --- Finalist (9th)
Robert Frost Middle School: Agriculture & Biotechnology Design (MS) --- First, Challenging Technology Issues, ---Second, Electrical Applications (MS) --- Third, Katherine Barbano, Environmental Focus (MS) --- First

Essays on Technology (MS) --- Finalist (4th) Uzma Rentia, Leadership Strategies (MS) --- Finalist (9th) Medical Technology Issues (MS) --- First, Prepared Speech (MS) --- Finalist (6th), Tech Bowl (MS) ---Finalist (9th)

Tech Bowl, Written (MS) --- Finalist (4th) Millan Welman

Saint Clare Walker Middle: Communication Challenge (MS) --- Finalist (9th) Jack Graulich

Transportation Systems (MS) --- Finalist (5th) Tyler Radabaugh Website Design (MS) --- Finalist (4th)

T. Benton Gayle Middle School: Techno Talk ---First Transportation Systems (MS) --- Finalist (9th) Spencer Boucher

Tuckahoe Middle School: Flight (MS) ---First, Daniel Gurganus, Finalist (4th) Ross Metcalf
The Virginia Scene

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