The Leadership Academy was a huge success this year! For those of you who went or are hoping to go next year, take initiative on some basic steps to becoming a leader. Whether you dream of national presidency or would be happy as a chapter officer, leadership is the heart of TSA! Remember that the Chapter Team competition is based around something called "parliamentary procedure." Parliamentary procedure is how to run a formal business meeting. This proper procedure, along with how you plan to win votes, is a great way to start planning.

Don't worry if this all sounds overwhelming; it's really fun! For a first year in Chapter Team, don't stress yourself out studying the most advanced books on Robert's Rules, memorizing the motions, and hashing over the slight details. It's totally okay for you to just read Robert's Rules for Dummies (same information, and easier to comprehend) and study it until you feel comfortable. When running for office, remember to be confident. If you weren't capable of being a leader, you wouldn't have had the courage to run for office! Remember to make your campaign platform strong (if you attended the Leadership Academy, you probably had a breakout session about this). The speech is one of the most important parts of the campaigning process. Plan your speech ahead of time, and outline the key points you wish to accomplish as an officer.
So if you are interested in becoming the leader you've been preparing for, remember these basic tips:
1) Learn your parliamentary procedure; officers should be competent with their material.
2) Have a strong campaign platform. You know what you want to accomplish, and make sure the voters know too!
3) Make sure your speech is professional, easy to understand, and clearly states your goals as an officer.

If you are considering running for office, feel free to contact one of your regional or state officers! They have plenty of great advice to help you make your goals a reality. You CAN be a leader, and now is the time to act upon it!

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Strait, Southwest Regional President
Believe it or not, this year was my first ever Leadership Academy. During the planning process for the event, I had no idea how to contribute suggestions because I had no idea what to expect! It was far from ordinary though, definitely one of the best experiences I have had through my time in TSA.

Leadership Academy is where Virginia TSA members come together and learn different skills on how to be the leader they want to be. It may sound strange, but the Executive Council learns in the process too. While leading sessions and competitions, we learn the best ways to connect with the members through trial and error. The best part is seeing the members enjoying themselves because of something we put together. This was also a time for the council to hang out and get to know each other better. We had a great time, and we have some great things in store for Virginia TSA come Technosphere 2014.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelsey Stoner
Running For State Office

So you decided to run for state office. Or maybe you’re still on the fence, and just because some really cool people told you you should run, you have questions. Or you might even be a curious, average, everyday member of TSA who wonders what those state officers do all the time. It doesn’t matter, because if you’re reading this you’re going to find out regardless.

Being a state officer is a sweet gig. You get to travel, work behind the scenes in TSA, meet people from all over the state, and bond with some really great people on your officer team. But it isn’t all partying it up with the TSA elite. It’s a lot of work.

At least, it’s supposed to be. You could just blow off all of your responsibilities and do nothing all year, but then all of your officer buddies will all get mad at you and Virginia TSA will be slightly less awesome. And what’s the point in running if you aren’t going to do anything there? So, because you’re a rational person, we’re going to assume you actually want to do something as an officer.

State officers have five formal meetings a year as a council, and a sort of informal one at Nationals. At those meetings, the formal business of Virginia TSA gets done. The business meeting at Technosphere is an example of one that’s viewable to the general public.

But you, being the super genius that you are, know that there are 365 days a year. Five formal meetings leaves... Let’s see... Carry the one... Most of the year left! So what, you ask, do the officers do for that massive chunk of time?
The answer is committees (unless you’re the president; he has some other weird stuff he does that the rest of us mere mortals only hear about). There’s pretty much a committee for everything, from Green Initiative to Resolutions (there’s even some interesting sounding ones!), and these committees handle the day to day work of Virginia TSA. Each one is chaired by a state officer (anyone in TSA can join), and they meet as often as the committee chair sets meetings. How, you wonder, could they possibly work around every dance practice and underwater basket weaving lesson to find a time when everyone can drive to one place? Well, intrepid TSA member, the answer is quite simple. They don’t! They hold meetings using Skype or Google Hangout and commune *electronically*. Then, the committee chair reports on the committee’s activities at each state officer meeting. Hopefully they actually have something to report, or they get dirty looks and no cookies.

**List of Committees**

- Leadership Development
- Resolutions
- Public Relations
- Auditing
- Publications
- Archives
Constitution and Bylaws
Nominations
Business Partnership
Alumni Liaison
National TSA Concerns
Enterprising Projects
Membership Promotion
State Community Service Project
Green Initiative
Technosphere Recommendations

So, if you’re thinking about running for state office, look yourself in the mirror and ask yourself: “Self, will I actually be willing to put in the time to honor the commitment I have made to my constituents?” After you’ve googled the meaning of ‘constituents’ to respond to your own comment, you would hopefully respond with something like: “Um... Yes?” But with confidence and gusto!

In all seriousness, it isn’t easy being a state officer. It’s a lot of work. It’s also one of the most fun and most rewarding experiences of my life, and an experience that, if you’re up to it, I’d encourage all of you to strive for. This was oddly a pretty serious one for me, so next time, maybe I’ll write about some of the fun moments of the job. You’ll have to read that one to find out, since I really don’t know yet.

Respectfully Submitted,
Caleb Hurst
Systems Control. Chapter Team. Prepared Presentation. What is your TSA chapter’s special competitive event? In my now fifth year of TSA, I have seen the rise and fall of my chapter’s best competitions, and I’ve noticed a few key factors that could help you too. Looking back at our most successful teams in various events, one main constant comes to mind.

The most prevalent factor these teams had was a keystone player. While this person may not have been loud, or the leader, or even that noticeable, he or she had some essential skill that gave the team an edge. For example, for several years we had a member in TSA who knew his way around a certain design program we used for Video Game Design. Now, he wasn’t the leader type, he was much more content to create the game to the ideas of his teammates, but he had the skill. After he graduated, our team could make no organized attempt at Video Game Design for years. We didn’t have anybody with a keystone skill to replace him. However, recently a freshman showed up who knows the program, and if he works at it we have the potential to return to the running. The valuable skills of individual members are what make up a team. In TSA, we have many competitions that capitalize on these unique skills and abilities. If your chapter finds a steady supply of these members who are ideal for competitions, then you probably will find yourself on stage a good amount at states. However, I don’t think the game has to end at the chance of having good members.

It has been a personal project of mine for the last several years to be a student of TSA. I know that I will graduate this year with much more knowledge of the technical and real world because of my TSA participation, and I enjoy it greatly. Now that I’ve seen the mechanics of the competitive field and social atmosphere of our chapter, I have a new goal. I want to stop focusing on being a student and start focusing on being a teacher. My goal, a goal which you could take to heart, is to make sure the next generation of TSA members in my chapter is prepared to take my place and the place of my fellow Juniors and Seniors. My challenge to you is to try to find those students with keystone skills and make sure those keystone skills don’t leave with graduation. Learn. Ask those keystone members to teach you the skills you need. If you find that you just can’t pick up the talent, find somebody who can. It is every member’s responsibility to make the chapter strong, and making it strong for the future is just one gift you can give back to TSA.

Respectfully Submitted,
Caleb Gum
As you are preparing for your regional and state competitive events I would like to remind you of several items to look at when preparing for your events. These are items that are very important and should allow you to be the most prepared you can be.

The first item to be aware of is the **Virginia Competitive Events Addendum** it can be found here: [http://virginiatsa.org/resources/](http://virginiatsa.org/resources/) the addendum is published each year to be used in conjunction with the Total TSA guide. The Total TSA guide contains the rules and regulations for each event and is provided to your advisor upon affiliation of your chapter. The Total TSA guide is developed at the national level and considers the length of time for events allowed at the National conference. Our Regionals are 1 day & State, Technosphere, 1.5 days. The addendum makes adjustments for these time and space differences. During Virginia TSA Regional & Technosphere events, information in the Addendum trumps any information in the Total TSA guide. In other words, if the Addendum says something different you are bound by the Addendum. The addendum does get adjusted from time to time as the planning process moves along. So make sure you are following the most current version. As of this writing we are on Version 6 dated November 7, 2013. Check back from time to time to ensure new adjustments have not been made.

The second item to be aware of is the **Updates and Clarification** page on the national TSA website: [http://tsaweb.org/Updates-and-Clarification](http://tsaweb.org/Updates-and-Clarification) This spot often changes information related to the Total TSA guide from the national office. Questions regarding competitive events often lead to a tweak or clarification of the rules. This link can have changes AT ANY TIME! You should form a habit of checking this link on a regular basis as well.

Of Course for those events that have a theme or prompt you will find those at the following link: [http://tsaweb.org/Themes-and-Problems](http://tsaweb.org/Themes-and-Problems)
This spot often changes information related to the Total TSA guide from the national office. Questions regarding competitive events often lead to a tweak or clarification of the rules. This link can have changes AT ANY TIME! You should form a habit of checking this link on a regular basis as well.

Finally, I would like to discuss the procedure for obtaining feedback on your event. At the following link you will find a PDF version of the Rubric for your Regional Events: http://virginiatsa.org/resources/

Download and print a copy of the rubric, using a Sharpie Mark across the top of the form in **BOLD PRINT** **FEEDBACK FORM** place an event sticker, for identification, at the top left corner of the form and place it with your notebook when turning it in. Event Coordinators will do everything they can to encourage judges to provide feedback to assist you in moving forward. For Technosphere, YOU must print a Rubric from the Total TSA guide, Mark it as FeedBack Form, place an event sticker on it and turn it in with your materials. If you desire feedback, you must provide the form.

Hopefully, you will read this article and heed its advice. I truly wish you best wishes in your events. I will not wish you luck as I am a firm believer in the Quote that “Luck is when preparation meets Opportunity!” We are providing the opportunity, Will you be prepared?

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Stephenson

State Advisor
Hey Virginia TSA,

I want you to do something for me today. If you see your TSA advisor, thank him or her for everything they’ve done for you and your chapter. Without these great teachers and friends, there would be no TSA. Because of them, you receive transportation to conferences, fundraising, and the motivation to make your chapter awesome. Believe it or not, our advisors do a lot of behind the scenes work to make sure the chapter runs smoothly. They take time out of their lives to make this happen because they love TSA too, and it would be great if we let them know that we appreciate what they do.

Sincerely,

Caleb Gum

Virginia TSA President
Virginia TSA Is Now On Twitter!

Hello Virginia TSA! From Technosphere 2013, many members said that they wanted to be connected through more social networking sites. Now, guess what? Virginia TSA recently got a Twitter account! If you have a Twitter, or intend on creating one, make sure to follow Virginia TSA @VirginiaTSA! By following us, you will get up to date information about any news, events, changes, etc. All in all, the Virginia TSA Twitter account will be a great asset for all Virginia TSA alumni, current members, and perspective members!

Make sure to follow Virginia TSA @VirginiaTSA on Twitter!

Respectfully Submitted,

Rajan Jani
Upcoming Events

. Regional Competitions
  - Location/date vary by region

. Technosphere 2014
  - Held at the Richmond Convention Center in Richmond, Va
  - May 2nd-4th, 2014

. Nationals 2014
  - Held at the Gaylord National in DC
  - June 27th-July 1st, 2014