Welcome to the second edition of the 2018 Virginia Scene! It is finally fall; the leaves are falling, the temperature is dropping, and TSA is starting to kick into gear. In this edition we’ll be discussing many different topics such as: Fall Rallies, Leadership Academy, Member of the Month, and How to submit advice or suggestions for the Virginia Scene. I hope you all enjoy this exciting edition of the Virginia Scene!
Fall Rallies

In this section you’ll read all about each region’s Fall Rally. Whether your region has done its Fall Rally yet or not, you’ll get the opportunity to read about each region’s plans for it or how the event went. Anyway, that’s enough from me. I’m sure you would much rather read about these exciting Fall Rallies!

Blue Ridge Region

The Blue Ridge region had an informative and engaging day at the our Fall Rally on October 5th! TSA members from Blacksburg Middle School, Blacksburg High School, Christiansburg Middle School, and Staunton River High School switched between sessions at the Unmanned Systems Lab with Dr. Kochersberger and a Pollutants Biofilter demonstration at Virginia Tech. We wound down the day with robotics demonstrations from FIRST Team Robotics Team 401, a VEX demonstration, and a photography drone display by Mr. Mike Kaylor.
Special elections were also conducted to fill the remaining regional council positions, and have since placed Defne Olgun in the position of Vice President, Eliza Wapper-om as Secretary, Ayca Bulbul as Treasurer, Ava Lazar as Sergeant-at-arms, and Luke Hendershot as Parliamentarian.

Northern Region

The Northern Virginia Fall Rally will focus on strengthening the Northern Virginia TSA community, and furthering ourselves through collaboration. We'll have panels such as how to run your chapter and how to get involved in TSA Leadership. We will hold workshops on how to succeed in various events, and how to tackle events in general to have the best outcome. Finally, we'll have activities to get to know our Region's officers as well as other members of the region through games and icebreakers. It should be a great experience, and we look forward to seeing you all there!

Respectfully submitted,

Rishin Pandit
Northern Regional President
South Western Region

The Southwestern Region’s Fall Rally was held on September 22nd at Munchkin Park, in Abingdon, VA. It started off with icebreakers and everyone getting to know each other. We played a variety of fun games. Then, off to lunch it was. There were hot dogs, chips, and drinks for everyone. Everyone then broke off into middle and high schoolers and discussing their accompanying competitions and LEAP guidelines. We then ended the time with an epic water balloon fight and pictures. Our region’s Fall Rally was a huge success and great time to experience our first glimpse of our TSA year.

Valley Region

The Valley Fall Rally was held at the JMU ISAT building on September 22, 2018. Directly after our opening ceremony, Dr. Cindy Klevickis gave a demonstration on how to make ice cream with liquid nitrogen. Her presentation was enjoyed by all. We then had eight workshops available for members to attend, and finished the day with a Papa John’s lunch. Members then had the opportunity to see the JMU football team shut out William and Mary, 51 - 0.
Tidewater Region

The Tidewater Region Fall Rally will be held at ODU on November 10, 2018. The event will start at 8:00 am and end at 12:15 pm. There will be a tour of the modeling simulation lab conducted by the ODU students. At the rally we will have a keynote speaker from the college and other fun activities run by the regional officers. This includes team-building challenges, a seminar, etc. Opening and Closing ceremonies will also be held. We will also conduct a few small fundraisers for the American Cancer Society, so be sure to bring some money! You can pre-order Chick-Fil-A lunch when you register. We hope to see you there!

Rebecca’s Financial Fiasco

Oh no! Rebecca misplaced the Virginia TSA money bag! Now she needs your help to figure out which bag belongs to us by finding the largest sack of cash!

Answer on last page
Do you know a person in Virginia TSA that has greatly contributed to their chapter, school, region, or state?
If yes, then you should consider nominating that person for Member of the Month! Member of the Month is one of the many ways Virginia TSA likes to recognize members that have shown outstanding leadership and best represented TSA as a whole in their community. All one has to do to recommend a person for Member of the Month is contact secretary.virginiatsa@gmail.com with that person’s name and why they should represent Virginia TSA for that given month. If you have any questions, please contact your State Secretary, Virginia, using the email above.

Leadership Academy is at a camp this year! It will be a new experience in many ways, and has a survivor theme. Come join the fun and make new friends as you learn leadership skills!

Answer on last page
Calling all Virginia TSA members! Virginia TSA will be holding a writing competition that will feature one winner and two runner-ups on the November edition of the Scene.

The top three winners will be featured on social media as well. This competition will require only one short story consisting of 250-500 words based on the given prompt. The prompt for the competition will be given during the month of October on the Virginia TSA Instagram. (@virginiatsa) Each person may only submit one entry. If an individual submits more than one entry, we will only judge the first one.

All entries in the competition MUST be turned in to reporter.virginiatsa@gmail.com by November 20. This is absolutely necessary to ensure we have time to select the best story and perfectly situate it in the Scene.

All members of Virginia TSA are able to participate in this competition as long as they are active members that have payed their dues during the time of the competition.

On the following three pages will be an example of how to properly submit your entry, some basic rules for the contest, and what the featured stories will look like.
How one should submit his or her entry:

To: reporter.virginiatsa@gmail.com

Subject: Virginia Scene Competition Entry

This is where you should attach your short story that must be 250-500 words. Please do NOT copy and paste the link because I may be unable to successfully access the document if it is attached using that method. Attaching your story from Google Docs is the preferred way of sending it. Your story should also have a title, your name, grade, school, and region somewhere on the document. Some other rules for the story is that mature themes, vulgar content, and foul language will result in instant disqualification. Please make this story the best possible representation of you and Virginia TSA. If you have any questions at all please contact me via email. (at the top of this document) Thank you and best of luck to you all!

-Lexi Vencill
Virginia TSA State Reporter
How the winners will be displayed on the Scene:

1st Place Winner:
Name:

Grade:

School:

Region:

About (Name):

Maggie’s Title for her short story

The first place winner of the contest will receive an entire page on the Virginia Scene. For instance, let’s say that Maggie Dube, your State Vice President won the competition. This entire page would be dedicated to her and feature her winning entry. The first place winner may also create a small blurb about their life and how TSA plays a role in it, though that is not required.
How the winners will be displayed on the Scene:

2nd Place Winner:
Name: 
Grade: 
School: 
Region: 
Preview of (Name’s) Story: Just as the first place winner, each runner-up will receive their on section on the scene. The only difference is that 2nd and 3rd place winners will share the same page.

3rd Place Winner:
Name: 
Grade: 
School: 
Region: 
Preview of (Name’s) Story: In this area, each runner-up will either create a summary of their story or a paragraph of their choice from their entry to go here.
Leadership Academy is right around the corner. Whether this will be your first or last one, we are going to make this Leadership Academy better than ever before! We want everyone to be ready to have the time of your life at this year’s Leadership Academy. In order to get you all hyped for it, I think it’s time we hear some first hand experiences from our state officers!

“Welcome to Project Runway,” I said to the new group who waltzed into King William Room. It was my second year as a state officer—serving as Treasurer—and I had no idea that anyone even knew what Project Runway was—I know I didn’t.

Well, the ultimate goal of my workshop was to help prospective officers build up their outer image through designing campaign boards, flyers, and even working on presentation skills. This group, however, was unlike any other; they brought their lipstick, eyeshadow, and makeup brushes along with them and prepared for a real Project Runway show...

Before I could comprehend, a young man was covered forehead to chin with makeup of different sorts. Don’t get me wrong, he was flawless. His ability to get out of his comfort zone and connect with others was impeccable; it was extremely praiseworthy. The rest of his group created a beautiful presentation display for him to stand in front of, and let me tell you: I would’ve voted for them.
Hello Virginia TSA, it’s your state secretary, Virginia. I think the whole “same name as the state” situation stopped being funny to me when I was four just due to repetition, but the name is rather cool if I don’t say so myself. I hope everyone is doing well (especially my fellow seniors because college applications are rough and I know you’re doing fantastic).

Anyway, I was told to write a little blurb about past leadership academy experiences. Thing is... I’ve actually only attended one. It was last year with the theme of “Get a Clue” and it was such a pleasant time. I’d equate it to the first snowfall of the season when you get all excited and giddy. Since my experience is limited to solely last year I can’t give you too many stories, but last year was still pretty eventful by itself. First off, the building it was held in last year was a little spooky in my opinion, so I basically forced all the girls in my room to go ghost hunting with me (at like 8pm because curfew life is real but we still live for the thrills). Clearly we didn’t find any ghosts, but we did find a vending machine and I ate like... two cinnamon buns (I don’t regret that). I actually vlogged the entire thing just to embarrass my friends but after re-watching those videos about a year later the only person that is embarrassed is me (I do regret that). Also, among the ghost hunt videos I found a few videos of Hirak falling asleep in the most random places (the most notable of which being Chipotle).
Moving on to a more serious aspect of leadership academy, I did learn A LOT. I felt because the groups we were in were on the smaller side I was able to get a better understanding on leadership, communication, and teamwork. Of that, my favorite session was the one where we debated because I remember creating the argument with my group made me feel so much more comfortable around them. It was a very small thing but it allowed me to grasp the easygoing environment. On a side note, the session where Hansika and Archita had all the strings set up and you had to guide your blindfolded partner through it was no doubt the funniest to participate in.

Other than the sessions and the unsuccessful ghost hunt, I remember the food was really good. Basically the entire experience for me was meeting really cool people + learning a lot of leadership skills + bonding with my chapter + good food, the summation of all of this being a really delightful memory.

Reflecting on all of this makes me anticipate this upcoming Leadership Academy all the more. I actually think it might be impossible to be more excited than I am currently and I hope all our planning leaves everyone with new skills and experiences that will benefit them in the future. In the meantime, if anyone has any questions, comments, concerns, or just wants to talk don’t hesitate to email me at secretary.virginiatsa@gmail.com! (ALSO- please email me if you would like to nominate someone for member of the month!!!!)

You’ve tuned into this Scene article!

Two years ago, I had the opportunity to attend Leadership Academy and it was one of the greatest weekends of my life. My chapter and I had an amazing time every part of the way. From bus rides filled with Mario Kart to leadership sessions filled with memes and awesome officers, hands-down this was one of the most phenomenal experiences ever.
Believe me, I could write a book about how fantastic Leadership Academy is, but perhaps my favorite part is meeting new friends. Before that year, I was a very shy kid; however that weekend changed that. Through icebreakers, leadership sessions, and hanging out at meals, I was able to meet so many amazing people from all across the state. Before attending, I never thought I would ever form the kinds of friendships like I did. I was fortunate enough to be in a group where I didn’t know a lot of people. At the time, I didn’t really enjoy it, but looking back I’m so thankful for that opportunity. I became close friends with several kids in that group, and we still communicate on a very regular basis.

I’m so thankful to be a part of a state delegation that is able to hold a conference like this for its members. I don’t want this to sound like a boring infomercial, but Leadership Academy is truly amazing. If you take away anything from Leadership Academy, whether it be new skills, friendships, or memories, treasure them (pun intended :) )!

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Collins

Abhisheks’s Fashion Failure

Virginia TSA Leadership Academy Experience. My first VA TSA Leadership Academy memory is from my freshman year in high school. It was my first year in TSA and I did not know what Leadership Academy even was. Since I assumed every TSA event is formal and requires the official attire, I was unaware of what to wear on the first night. I walked into the hotel wearing the official TSA shirt, gray pants, black shoes, and a blazer in my hand. I met my delegation after spending 20 minutes trying to find them in the hotel; in the meantime, everyone stared at me as I walked around with a blazer and TSA attire on. My friend from my school told me I can wear anything I want on the first day and trust me, I have never felt more embarrassed. However, it felt nice to look more professional than the state officers at the time.
On the second day, I received the Leadership Academy t-shirt and I was ready to engage with all the other members and officers. Regardless of my embarrassing experience, I learned something from my first Leadership Academy. I learned that I am my own person and even though I was embarrassed, I should be myself and not listen to what anyone has to say. These are one of the qualities of a leader that are showcased at Virginia TSA Leadership Academy. At the 2018 LA, I hope to see a large group of members ready to interact with each other and not only learn from the state officers, but from each other as well about what it takes to be a leader in this organization and life in general. Thank you for reading and see you guys soon!

Respectfully Submitted,
Abhishek Singh

As I ran towards the main building, barefoot and in my pajamas, my heart was thumping. In my hands, I held a peach-colored wallet with nothing inside of it, other than my school ID and a single wrapped piece of gum. Rushing to the front desk of the main building in which LA activities were held, I opened my wallet, which initially contained 200 dollars, and presented it to the front desk worker; “it’s gone; all of it is gone,” I screamed. The front desk worker, confused as to why I had haphazardly returned as I initially came to claim the wallet calmly (I didn’t realize I lost money when I first claimed the wallet...), replied “hold on, let me call my manager.” After what seemed like years, the manager of the buildings in which LA activities were held, came in front of me and in a tone of extreme pity replied “I’m sorry, but we couldn’t get your money back...” The hour following my conversation with the manager of the main building, I called my mother and explained to her that I had ultimately lost all of the money that I had taken to LA.
Yes, it is true that last leadership academy, I learned better leadership skills such as public speaking, teamwork, and empathy; however, the true lesson I learned from the 2017 LA was to be more careful and learn from past mistakes. There is little question as to that fact that every Leadership Academy has and will be extremely eventful but some just a little more than others! I hope all of you will have so much fun at this year’s LA but make sure to be careful and use every experience, both good and bad, to better yourself.

Sruti Kamarajugadda
Virginia TSA Historian

The experience I had at Leadership Academy is very difficult to put into words, but I’ll try my best. Alright, where do we start? It was a cold Friday afternoon. I wasn’t sure what to expect, but I was looking forward to my weekend there. Keep in mind, this was about a year ago, so my memory is a hazy, but I can safely say the “meet and greet” the first night was my favorite part. From my first year in TSA, I knew I wanted to be in a leadership position and now I was standing in front of eight individuals that made it. I’ll be honest, I was ridiculously nervous to talk to them and it took a lot of convincing from a friend for me to get up and introduce myself. As soon as I released my butterflies, I came to realize the people on the council were some of the nicest people I have ever met. The advice they gave me led to me confidently saying that I wanted to run for the State Council, and I haven’t looked back. I learned that anyone and everyone can be a leader. That’s the first lesson. The second lesson is that Leadership Academy is a blast. The theme was “Get a Clue” and as a Sherlock Holmes fanatic, I was in my element. It would be a lo to say that it took me more than five minutes to figure out who the culprit was. I’m kidding, of course, the State Council obviously made it harder than that, so it took me 10.
But seriously, through my experience at Leadership Academy and my time spent with high schoolers and middle schoolers alike, I learned what TSA truly was: a culmination of people, perspectives, trials, and tribulations that make the world a better place. I highly recommend Leadership Academy for anyone and everyone that is in TSA that would like to participate. I assure you, you’ll walk away having learnt a few things. I know I did.

Respectfully Submitted

Hirak Shah

Last year was the best Leadership Academy I ever attended - not because I was an officer and could contribute but because I loved the concept of Get A Clue.

We were tasked with aiding the teams in each session by helping them discover the clues hidden in each session. They were hilarious to watch because they attempted to blame the stolen art on me and my fellow state officer, Sydney (2017-2018 Tidewater Regional President.) We tried helping them all we could without giving it away, and our last group came to the consensus that it was I who stole the painting.

Then it was revealed... and became one of my favorite moments in LA history. One of my favorite moments in Leadership Academy history was revealing that Tyler, the 2017-2018 Virginia TSA State Vice President, was the art thief. He came out “handcuffed” and everyone laughed. It was obvious, but it was still hilarious! I’m looking forward to seeing the new officers from each chapter experience our NEW AND IMPROVED Virginia TSA Leadership Academy this year!!
If you’ve made it to this point, I hope that this edition of the Virginia Scene was everything you were hoping it would be and more! If you have any questions relating directly to the Scene or any suggestions, feel free to email reporter.virginiatsa@gmail.com. I will happily answer any and all questions and take into account all suggestions because the Virginia Scene belongs to the members too! I count on you all to tune in to the November edition of the Virginia Scene. Until then, Have a wonderful Fall and keep lighting the way for a brighter future for TSA!

Respectfully Submitted,

Lexi Vencill
State Reporter