Welcome to the fourth edition of the 2018-2019 Virginia Scene! Since competition season is back again, it only seems fitting for this edition of the Scene to focus on Regionals and Technosphere. I hope you all enjoy this edition of the Virginia Scene!
Regional Fairs

Regional Fairs are right around the corner, so what better way to start off the Virginia Scene than by giving you all an update for what’s in store at your region. All the details of what your region will be doing are provided by your very own Regional Presidents, so be sure to give them a big thank you and tell them how excited you are for regionals the next time you see them!

Blue Ridge Region

The Blue Ridge Regional Fair will be conducted on March 2nd, at Blacksburg High School. Our regional council is planning a fantastic event, with trivia, a 3D printing workshop, VEX robotics demonstrations, and more! BRR TSA will be hosting Dr. Alexander Leonessa from the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Virginia Tech as our keynote speaker. We hope that all chapters attending will love the experience!

Valley Region

The Valley Region Spring Fair will be held on March 2, 2019 at Stuarts Draft High School. Competitions will be held along with various fundraisers including a silent auction and hideous hat. We will be welcoming the National Guard at our event and they will be bringing a climbing wall for use during down time. A board game room will also be set up with games like Nickel Hockey. In addition to all of this a T-shirt tie dye station will be available to members to tie dye their Valley Region T-shirts.
Hey Virginia TSA!

The Tidewater Regional Fair will be held on March 2, 2019 at Hickory Middle School. Hope you guys have been working on those competitions, Regionals is soon! At the event there will be multiple opportunities to raise money for the American Cancer Society. There will be a Corn Hole Tournament, Video Game Room, and other activities. There you will also be able to learn more about the American Cancer Society and for the first time, Mental Health America. Don’t forget that we are collecting can tabs for St. Judes. As we approach competition I encourage you to fine tune those projects and bring your best game! Lastly, I want to encourage you to run for Regional Office; there are positions open. While the deadline has passed, you can still run in the Special Election at Technosphere. I promise that it is a great experience that you will never forget! Also, thanks to all of the students who attended Fall Rally. See you at the 2019 Tidewater Region Spring Fair!

Respectfully Submitted,
Sierra Funk
Tidewater Region President

The Southwestern Region has been planning for our regional conference and are ready to add the finishing touches. The preparation has gone quite smoothly. We are especially excited to see how the members like the gaming tournament with all the new games that recently came out including the new Super Smash Bros and Fortnite. We are looking the put on the finishing touches in the near future and hope our members are looking forward to it!

Respectfully Submitted,
Sierra Funk
Southwestern Region President
The Northern Virginia Region is excited to see its members Saturday February 23rd. As planned, in addition to events, we held a bake sale fundraiser throughout the day with all proceeds going to the American Cancer Society! In addition to that, we hosted two panels throughout the day. One on how to run for Regional Officer, to get more of you all involved in regional leadership, and another on TSA's many scholarship opportunities. We're excited to see you all to compete but also to hopefully grow together as a region. Thanks for attending!

Respectfully submitted,

Rishin Pandit

Hello Virginia TSA! This is Tyler Yarow, your South Central Regional President. At the South Central Regional Fair, held on February 23rd, at Deep Run High School, you had all sorts of awesome and fun activities. While you weren’t busy competing, you were able to participate in awesome activities such as an escape room, TSA Jail, and game room! All profits made from these activities will be donated to American Cancer Society. Also, during the Closing ceremony, you had an awesome guest speaker, a kahoot about your officers, and Minute to Win It Games. Good luck to all of you as you prepare for state conference competitions. I can’t wait to see all of you!
Alongside Regionals, Technosphere is also just around the corner. Not only can you compete at state and regionals, but you can also run for office. A few of your state officers have written an article about why you should run for office and what being an officer means to them. Hopefully someday you too will run for an office of your own!

Several words come to mind when I thinks of the words “state office”: challenging, responsibility, leadership, dedication, tiring, rewarding, but most important, family. Serving as a state officer this year has been one of the most amazing and impactful experiences of my TSA career and my life thus far. This year I was surrounded by some of the most outstanding and outgoing people imaginable. It’s amazing how a group of 14 kids can go from barely knowing each other’s names in June to being best friends in the span of only a few months. I encourage each and every one of you to consider pursuing a state office at some point in the upcoming years. I know the process might seem scary, so don’t ever hesitate to send me an email and I’d be more than happy to talk with you about running, the campaign process, or answer any questions you may have! Don’t hesitate in taking the first steps in becoming part of such an amazing team, part of such an amazing family.
As I was napping on a bright, sunny morning, with no clouds in the sky, my pajamas transformed into TSA official attire, and I became the Virginia TSA Historian. Although I sometimes imagined it happened like this, becoming a part of the Virginia TSA State Council is a much more rigorous process. Upon campaigning, giving a speech, and being elected into office, you will find yourself to be a part of a hard-working, amazing group of students, who wish to make Virginia TSA an amazing organization for all of our members and even people outside our organization.

In all essence, being a state officer is not much different than being a TSA member with a few more responsibilities. Yes, becoming a state officer means writing reports and going to committee meetings, but it also means going to STEM conferences and planning and attending Leadership Academy. Apart from taking part in Virginia TSA activities, being a state officer entails aiding within your region, including fall rally and regional activities. However, arguably the most important part about being a Virginia TSA State Officer is planning Technosphere. Tasked with responsibilities such as planning the mixer, aiding the enterprising booth, handing out awards, speaking on stage, and coordinating ways to fundraise for the American Cancer Society, State Officers likely make many decisions that impact the outlook of Technosphere.

Whether it be deciding amendments to be discussed or creating a pin to be sold at the state conference, the Virginia TSA State Officers are often the ones who work to make decisions that will impact members within and outside of Technosphere. To me, being a state officer is being a member who competes, enjoys state fairs but also takes on the responsibilities that shape VA TSA.

Thank you,
Sruti Kamarajugadda
VA TSA Historian
Running for office... What do I say? I guess what I would have wanted to hear before I ran for office would be what the actual running for office would be like. I will warn you now, you will be nervous... Or at least, I was. The whole process of writing a speech, delivering that speech, and talking to members at my booth was really amazing but I think it is nearly impossible to describe to you how nervous I was. I spent just about my entire Technosphere last year with my heart pounding a little too quickly. As someone who has suffered through that nervous pit in the stomach, please hear me when I say that you’ll be just fine. Also you probably won’t look as nervous as you think you do.

I remember during the second day when we were all at our booths and I had a surprising amount of members, advisors, and even a few parents tell me I seemed very comfortable and confident talking to people who stopped by. Mind you, I said a surprising amount--not a lot-- but I still carry those comments with me. It was so interesting to hear that because in between people stopping at my booth I was wiping my slightly sweaty hands on my pants and paying attention to my breathing to help me relax a bit all because I was so overwhelmed with the nervousness and excitement of running for office.

My point basically boils down to this: you don’t look as scared/nervous/shy as you think you do so please enjoy your time of running and don’t get caught up in your worries about it. If you’re running for a position on a state, regional, or even chapter office that means that you think you have something to offer the team, which means you have no reason to worry. I know running against someone can be beyond scary (luckily I ran against Sruti, who I knew at the time and adore to this day) but keep your head up! Being nervous is part of the fun so don’t let your worries impact your Technosphere or your campaign and do what you can to enjoy the experience. I wish each and every member running or considering running the absolute best of luck! I hope your TSA journey turns out to be a really good one!
Being up on stage now seems so surreal to me. When I was in 6th grade, during my first day at Technosphere, I looked up at the state officers and NEVER thought I would be there one day; I was so scared of standing in front of thousands of people. However, as I got further along in TSA, I became a chapter officer, a regional officer, and eventually ended up where I am now. I thought it was going to be a very hard task to complete, but, ultimately, I made it. If someone were to tell me in sixth grade that I was going to end up as Virginia TSA’s Vice President, I would’ve never believed them.

Running for office seems so challenging when you’re just starting to get the hang of TSA; however, it’s quite easy as long as you put in the hard work and dedication. It’s definitely better to start off low - like being a chapter officer. After, you can easily climb the ladder and end up on the Executive Council once you’ve gained the experience needed for it. It can be difficult, yes, but there’s no reason you shouldn’t try!

Before running for a chapter office, you may want to get to know a lot of people in your chapter and create a healthy relationship with them. Everyone I’ve met in TSA, whether it be people in my chapter, in the state, or the nation (including other countries outside the US,) is super cool - they like problem solving, building, coding, public speaking, Marvel, DC Comics, Pokemon, Dungeons and Dragons, etc. Once you establish the relationship with your chapter, you’re sure to get a place on the chapter officer team.

Once you get on the chapter officer team, you should run for the regional officer team. Meet the people in your region - start friendships, games, and conversations. Make yourself known to your region, even if you’re running unopposed. Go around saying that you wish others good luck on their projects or competitions!

Later, after getting a regional office or just a chapter office, you should DEFINITELY run for a state office; I 100% guarantee that you will not regret it. The experience you get, whether you get the position or not, boosts your confidence and allows you to meet so many fantastic people/leaders.
When running, you should really focus on your speech; you should make yourself known to the association. BE LOUD. BE PROUD. Show off a little bit because you deserve it for having the guts to go onto that stage. You should have an interesting opener - not “Hi, my name is blank” or starting off with a quote. People want to get to know you - maybe a little of your achievements but mostly you. Include what you like to do, wear, play, watch, etc. in your speech. Tell people your goals. Connect with the audience. Not only should you have a good speech, you should have a good campaign. Take a poll of the students in your chapter to see what they want changed at the state level and use some of their ideas for your campaign goals. Lastly, you should have a good campaign booth - this is where you get most of your votes. You don’t need to spend a lot on it, but you should definitely put a lot of effort into it. Make it look professional and fit for your personality, maybe have some candy to pass out too! You’ll want to make yourself as known as possible - known for your good ideas, personality, and leadership qualities.

If you have any questions about running for office, your state officers, state advisor, and chapter advisor would love to help, so don’t be afraid to ask!

As you gathered from all the other officers’ articles, running for state office is an extremely nerve wracking experience; however, in the end you’ll make memories that you’ll never forget! I hope that you all enjoyed the articles that your state officers wrote, and that you’ll be able to write articles similar to these on the Virginia Scene too. If you are thinking about becoming a state officer, you should absolutely check with your chapter advisor and even contact some state officers or our state advisor. I know that we would all be happy to assist each and every one of you on your journey to becoming a state officer!
In this section of the Virginia Scene, we will be featuring Virginia TSA member to submit their own article to the Scene! The member that volunteers or is chosen will have an array of topics to write an article on for that specific scene edition. If you would like to also be featured on the Virginia Scene, please contact me through email! Now, I’d like to introduce you all to Connor Stein from Abingdon High School!

Last year, I competed in Biotechnology and Debating Technological Issues. The theme for Biotech was food, and my group did our project on how to solve the problem with obesity by using Fucoxanthin, a medicine that uses nanotechnology to turn white fat cells into brown fat cells, which helps boost energy and lose weight. In addition, I competed in Debate with my partner, exploring the fascinating topic Information Security in Modern Life. This was my first year participating in both competitions, and while neither of my teams won, we gained valuable experience for future competitions. Whenever I had down time, I enjoyed walking around the conference center and observing other teams’ projects to see what they came up with. It always gives me a new perspective about problems involving that one topic.

When I discovered Technosphere held a mixer annually, I could hardly wait for the mixer to begin. The mixer’s theme for 2018 was Throwback. People’s outfits ranged from prehistoric ages all the way to the 20th century. In fact, all the music they played ranged from the 60s to the 90s. They also had a game of cornhole and board games, such as Go Fish. Many people, however, were especially excited for the photo booth. While many members utilized the photo booth to commemorate their experience, I don’t need a picture to reflect fondly on what I consider one of my happiest memories: TSA’s 2018 mixer. With that being said, I’m even more excited to know what this year’s mixer theme will be!
Did you know that President’s Day was originally made a holiday in 1885 in an attempt to annually celebrate George Washington’s birthday? Now, it’s a day when we can take time to honor those that have served our country in the nation’s highest office, both past and present. While I may not hold the highest office in the land, I feel like I’ve had the opportunity to make my own mark on our world as Virginia TSA President. And to be honest, having served you for the past two years has been the privilege of my entire TSA career!

Serving as your President has given magnitude and direction to my life; it’s allowed me to find purpose driven by my passions. I’ve found that advocacy and pursuance of progression is what I mean to do. As President, I represent you, your interests, and your ideas both inside and outside the scope of TSA. I’ve been able to network with Technology and Engineering Educators, government officials, and business executives all to push for changes which not only benefit our organization but also our world.

By far, my most cherished role as President is the one where I’m not President at all. Don’t get me wrong, I absolutely adore the office, but I love stepping off the stage to connect with you even more. When I step off the stage, I have the opportunity to converse, game, and interact with so many bright faces, warm souls, world leaders, and future change-makers from across the country. It makes my day when I hear about your exciting day, about how you’re enjoying the conference, or even about suggestions you’d love to see implemented in the future. After all, you’re the bright faces, warm souls, world leaders, and future change-makers I interact with on a daily basis.
I so much look forward to interacting with you come the State Conference, and I’m beyond excited for you to see all the exhilarating changes we’ve made to Technosphere 2019. With all new general sessions, crazy theme integration, and a redesigned Mixer, trust me when I say that this one is like never before; **this is the one you won’t want to miss!**

Thank you so much for entrusting me with the responsibility of being your President. Sure, May 3-5, 2019, will mark the end of my second term, and it’ll be quite the emotional loop-de-loop for me; but, for the future of our organization, it will only be a part of the climb. Have a happy President’s Day!

Respectfully Submitted,

Devan Patel
Virginia TSA President

---

**Unscramble**

Oh no! The state officer team jumbled up 10 phrases that are commonly used at Technosphere. Can you unscramble all of the words or phrases in time for Technosphere?

1. sThoneecrhpe  ____________  6. iangriVi  ____________
2. oepmitCsino  ____________  7. aerlnGe soniSse  ____________
3. epihosrT  ____________  8. senisusB engiteM  ____________
4. xreiM  ____________  9. Sanslifemi  ____________
5. SAT  ____________  10. fecirOsf  ____________
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 March edition of the Virginia Scene. Until then, be sure to work hard on your competitions and keep lighting the way for a brighter future for TSA!

Respectfully Submitted,
Lexi Vencill
State Reporter