In this edition, it’s all about the TSA communities. As this is also the final edition of the Virginia Scene this year, we may get emotional.

Compiling, editing, and executing the 2019-2020 has been a pleasure of mine, as well as the Publications Committee (Alice Xu, Lexi Vencill, Rebecca Collins, Reid Bandy, Sahil Jaiswal, Sydney Funk, and Victoria Compton). Without these seven members, the Scene wouldn’t be half of what it actually is. We thank you, the reader, for listening to what we have to say, whether it be our hobbies or important opportunities. See you soon, Virginia TSA.

Respectfully submitted,
Ashley Sooklal

- Regional Presidents present their Spring Fair
- State Officers share their favorite moments of Spring Fair
- Executive Council gets in depth with ups, downs, and in-betweens of this year serving on council
- Important information regarding Technosphere
Hello everyone,

I hope everyone is doing well in these unprecedented times. The Northern Virginia Executive Council had worked hard to strategize for the Regional Fair in Mount Vernon High School on March 14th. We had many meetings and discussions to decide different sessions we wanted to implement - including a session for running for office and to provide overall tips and strategies for TSA participation, a session for scholarships, and a chapter president meeting to make our community more connected, building off of our Fall Rally efforts. On top of that, we had ambitious ideas to raise money for the American Cancer Society including selling raffle tickets for gift card prizes and selling 3D printed/laser-cut TSA merch!

However, due to the coronavirus, we were forced to make the regional fair virtual. Now select events were turned in digitally to Mr. Scott by March 21 and high schools conducted in-house contests to determine which teams move on from schools. It certainly is a different format, but I’m sure we will still have the same level of success!

I wanted to take this time to share some advice on how my school is conducting these in-house contests. Hopefully, this helps chapters who may be a little confused about logistics to gain an idea for how to do this. Basically, our officer team had an online call and selected officers who weren’t participating in events to be an “event head.” These people were the “lead judge” and were responsible for writing prompts for events that required them or finding contest material (like articles for Essays on Technology, etc.). Every officer member who was not participating in that event made up the rest of the judging panel. Following the rubric in the competitive events guide, each judge would assess a numerical score which would be averaged to determine the team/member going forward. In this way, we delegated responsibility across our leadership team.

I hope this helps! I’m sad that I couldn’t meet everyone at our regional fair. But I look forward to meeting everyone in Technosphere and I know that the Northern Region is going to have some very strong competition! Stay safe everyone :)

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheila Iyer

Northern Region President
I am happy to announce that the South Central Regional Fair was a success! As Region President, I’d like to give you a behind the scenes look at how it went.

The regional officers and I began planning your region fair at the beginning of the school year. After deciding on the date (leap day!), we selected Swift Creek Middle School as the location. Along with attracting more participation from new chapters in that area, the location was a change from Deep Run High School, where regionals has been held consecutively for the past few years. The team and I also planned a variety of downtime activities for you between competitions that would also help to raise money for the American Cancer Society. With help from volunteers from Deep Run’s JROTC, we had a game room, escape room, and jail at regionals. As we have for the past few years, we also welcomed ASME to host a free egg drop competition.

A new idea the regional council had was that we wanted to help increase government awareness of TSA by inviting school board, senate, and government representatives to see regionals and observe what TSA is all about. We also worked with local businesses like Pearl’s, who donated cupcakes for us to sell.

Finally, we were all very excited to pilot the new TSA app and digital rubrics! South Central was the first region in Virginia to use this app, which has many amazing features like an interactive map, schedule, voting, and tons of information about the officers, agenda and conference.

While I felt kind of stressed throughout the day, looking back, I’m so proud of everything we were able to accomplish this year at regionals. I’m also very happy to have worked with such an amazing council to make it happen.

Respectfully Submitted,

Naomi Nichols
South Central Region President
This year’s Southwestern Region Spring Fair was held at the Washington County Career and Technical Education Center (WCCTEC) on March 7th, 2020. This conference was one of the most successful conferences we’ve had in recent years. With our region being very small, it is oftentimes hard to be able to hold successful regionals. However, this year our council went above and beyond to ensure that our conference was the absolute best that it could be.

This year at regionals, members were competing in numerous events, including some new events that our region has never competed in before. Members were also able to partake in numerous downtime activities, such as our Halo tournament and board game room that both benefited Relay for Life. There was also a breakfast fundraiser benefiting Abingdon High School’s chapter and a lunch fundraiser benefiting EB Stanley Middle School’s chapter in order to help cover travel expenses for those chapters. Finally, I had to say goodbye to the best regional council I’ve been a part of in my TSA career. But, I had the opportunity to pass the gavel to someone who will lead our region and state in an excellent way: your 2020-21 Southwestern Region President, William Collins.

It has been an excellent year for our region and state, and while it pains me to say that it’s now over, I cannot wait to see what next year holds for our region. Finally, I would like to thank you, Virginia TSA. Thank you for the opportunities you have given me as a leader, student, and member of this organization. I strongly hope that I will see everyone at Technosphere, and if not, I strongly encourage everyone to keep being the amazing students, leaders, and visionaries you are.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ryan Stinson
Southwestern Region President
Hi Virginia TSA,

This year’s Tidewater Region Fair was memorable, to say the least. It was absolutely amazing to work closely again with the rest of the Tidewater Region Board. We all started to prepare for the event at the beginning of September, learning about each other along the way. Everyone participated and brought excellent ideas to every meeting concerning fundraising, logistics, and TSA activities.

Our goal was to make regionals even better than last year. We reached out to many schools for the perfect location and it became clear that St. Clare Walker Middle School was the best choice. We couldn’t have done it without the help of Mr. Short and all the judges who participated. The Tidewater Region board collectively poured hours into making the region fair different and new. As a result, we were able to award raffle baskets personally put together by each council member. We also planned a new downtime activity that many enjoyed: the escape room. It was a little window into what the Executive Council had planned for Technosphere. All proceeds would be donated to the American Cancer Society.

Thanks to everyone who participated in our downtime activities. We were able to raise $102.00. Collaborating with many people and having regionals in my hometown was such a joy. I wouldn’t have had it any other way and I hope that the 2020-2021 Tidewater Region board raises the bar even higher in the coming year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sydney Funk

Tidewater Region President
Our Regional council team wanted to make this a fun year for our region members, so we got to work early and began organizing entertaining downtime activities back in 2019.

Our main events for the year were our new game room, popcorn machine, and games in the cafeteria. We had a table set up where members could borrow different board or card games to play with throughout the day.

Our regional officers were running the popcorn machine to fundraise for American Cancer Society and played Clue together when we weren’t busy. Our Blue Ridge Game Room had League of Legends, Rocket League, and Tetris available to play. As a treat for the advisors and adults, there was also a coffee machine set up.
The day went smoothly, never running more than 15 minutes behind schedule. All of our judges had the materials they needed to keep events running properly. Members last year wanted more feedback on their events so we ensured that judges filled out feedback sheets for every event, even those that only had one entry. Ultimately, it was a very successful Regional Fair with several new schools joining us and very few hiccups throughout the day. Members had a good time with our new downtime activities and we were able to introduce new fundraising opportunities for the region. I am beyond confident that next year’s officer team will do even more amazing work and continue the efforts that we’ve been putting forward.

Respectfully Submitted,

Defne Olgun

Blue Ridge Region President
The Valley Spring fair was held on March 7, at Stuarts Draft High School. Our Officer team was prepped and ready with new and old fundraisers and activities to entertain our membership. We spent days making signs, collecting materials, and getting ready to put on the best Spring Fair the Valley has ever seen. This year, our team decided to create a new game room complete with board games and a Nintendo switch to host a Super Smash tournament. Our regional council was excited to bring back the Hideous Hilarious Hat fundraiser and our traditional breakfast snacks, with the addition of a trail mix bar including peanuts, granola, Chex cereal, raisins, and M&Ms. The National Guard was also at our event again this year, bringing an inflatable obstacle course for use during down time. We brought back our silent auction and raised over one hundred dollars for ACS!

Respectfully Submitted,

Madelynne Ritchie
Valley Region President
Hey Blue Ridge lads! It was a great pleasure to attend my sixth and final Regional Fair with you all. Even after all this time, in between speeches, essays, and CAD drawings, the thrill of competition hasn’t ebbed. I can still happily rush down the halls to the turn-in, two shoeboxes balanced precariously on top of a portfolio. The dragster races are still tense as the timer counts down, the cartridges are popped, and the painstakingly streamlined wooden bodies zip down the track. The structural bridge and tower compression tests, likewise, hold a vibrantly enraptured crowd’s attention, as pressure is applied, and applied, and applied. In the split second before the times are read, the pounds announced, or the awards proclaimed, there will always be that glimmering, edge-of-your-seat thrill for the recognition of your accomplishment, for the hours poured while in the wood shop or into the design software. My dear comrades,

*I lived for that feeling. And I hope you can continue to enjoy it for years to come.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Alice Xu
Virginia TSA President
While our chapter prepared for the 4-5 months of our school year for the Northern Regional Competition, it was suddenly cut short due to the tremendous and disastrous impact of the Covid-19 virus. But we still focus on the positives. We still reflect on our time together as a team, as friends, and as family. For the Regional Competition, I decided to participate in Prepared Presentation, Video Game Design, and Promotional Design. While I was not able to practice the Prepared Presentation at the competition, my state advisor was persistent and determined for my chapter as well as many other chapters to submit in their prepared competitions (such as Video Game Design and Promotional Design) for judging. Getting that text from Mr. Scott was a relief for everyone in my chapter as they continued to furiously type down the information within the team LEAP Report. As we continued to work as a team in Video Game Design, I made sure as both a state officer and a member of TSA that all projects would be submitted on time and in working condition.

In all, the process of submitting in just Video Game Design’s two submissions took around 3 hours of my late night but luckily I was able to turn in on time by the submission date. I was even able to play my chapter’s final product of the two games. Needless to say, I was impressed as well as proud of my team’s work on story, mechanics, and art of the video game. For Prepared Presentation, I would stand in front of a mirror as I have mock shift presentations on topics that interested me as a student such as Physics and Chemistry. The topics can range from current dilemmas to Black Holes. While I may not be able to participate at the regional level, I still was able to use this skill in my school work and I found a better appreciation for public speaking.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tori Torres
Virginia TSA Vice President
My favorite part of the Southwestern regional fair is that I get to be on the same playing field as all of the members. During states, I always feel a separation from my delegation, however at regionals, I have plenty of free time to roam around and converse with new members, old friends, and even some alumni that come back to assist in judging.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lexi Vencill

Virginia TSA Secretary
Regionals is an event that I will always cherish. Although it's small and is just a qualifier competition, many memories I hold dear come from it. Whether that is singing terrible renditions of 80s songs on the back of the bus or rehearsing the closing ceremony with the region council and laughing our butts off at mistakes and jokes. At the end of the day is amazing to compete and lead, but what really makes this entire organization great is the people who are in it.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sierra Funk
Virginia TSA Treasurer

The Southwestern region fair can be described in many ways. Successful, hilarious, and memorable are just a few. Our region is comparably small; however, we are a strong community. Our spring conference went off with an early start with many coffee and waffle breaks in between. Throughout the day, I saw member enjoying themselves with the company of fellow competitors. The awards session was definitely a laugh, which makes it that much more memorable. In conclusion, the Southwestern spring fair was a hit! I can’t wait to see what next year’s conference brings.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ashley Sooklal
Virginia TSA Reporter
My favorite part of the Southwestern Regional Fair was getting to plan my chapter’s breakfast fundraiser. This year I was able to work alongside Rebecca Collins on an onsite breakfast for all the competitors and attendees of our Regional Conference.

Respectfully Submitted,

Victoria Compton

Virginia TSA Parliamentarian
Hello Virginia TSA,

Regionals just wrapped up and I hope everyone did well in their competitions and enjoyed the experience. My favorite part of regionals this year was getting to go behind the scenes and help set everything up. Doing this gave me insight into all the work and effort the regional officers put in to making the event run according to plan. I also enjoyed walking around and talking to members from South Central Region. Getting to know members from my region and local chapters helped me gain feedback and opinions from a wide range of members. I believe that this year’s regional fair was also important to me personally since it would be my last. I made sure to make the most out of it and overall it went great!

Respectfully Submitted,

Vijay Vadi
Virginia TSA Sergeant-At-Arms
To the Executive Council: Hey guys! First off, thank you guys for putting in the extraordinary amount of effort you have as leaders this year. I think there’s something to be said for your self-effacing, unconditional, and comprehensive commitment to helping people. From the second they were inaugurated into their office and stepped out of the New Officer’s Workshop, you all have filmed, scripted, planned delegation meetings, all in preparation for hosting the National Conference. There, you guys worked thirteen state delegation meetings into your competition schedules. Staying past 10 o’clock at night on a daily basis, weeks into your office, was quite commendable.

And you’ve kept it up throughout the year. Leadership Academy? Immensely enjoyable and cleanly planned, if a bit chilly. (Okay, a lot chilly, but we persevered through the bitter cold together, yes? We shall rock climb in the drizzle, we shall hike through the woods, we shall maneuver over sheer wooden walls. We shall never surrender!)

I have a personal philosophy. It’s that anyone, literally anyone, whether they are a star athlete or an academic introvert (lol, me), can be a leader if they love something enough. And my dear friends, you certainly all love TSA enough. Because really, what is unshakable dedication to an organization built on the foundation of bringing technological fascination to more people exemplified by if not by the relentless pushing of your brilliant ideas? As Thomas Edison said, “Genius is 1% inspiration, and 99% perspiration.” What is the idea to comically energize the Scene without consistent implementation in new issues? What is digital enterprising without going through each and every step to log inventory? What is legislative reform without relentless rewriting of the bylaws?

Thanks for being a part of the 2019-2020 council, guys. I couldn’t have asked for a better group to work with. It was my pleasure.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alice Xu

Virginia TSA President
It’s sad to see the school year end in such an abrupt and sad way with Covid-19, but I like to think that this will give us a head start into our future. As we are in this slow time of quarantine, we should reflect and learn from our past year in order to become our better selves.

But even then, I’m still devastated to not spend my last couple of months with my officer team, my chapter, and my friends for my last couple of rounds in TSA. Though, as the year progresses, I will still support the new wave of opportunists and leaders into TSA as I say goodbye to my friends that I’ve made in it.

Thank you to my fellow officers for giving me a year that I will never forget. Honestly, being a part of this team was a dream to me in middle school and the fact that I can say that I was an officer for Virginia TSA makes my heart wrench. I won’t forget everyone I’ve met during this year and the past and the memories from it will live as long as it can (considering I have a terrible memory).

I’ll see you all in 2021!

Respectfully Submitted,
Tori Torres
Virginia TSA Vice President
In honor of this being the last scene article I write for the 2019-2020 officer year, I’d like to not only say goodbye to this amazing team that I got to soon know and love, but I also need to thank you all. Thank you, this year’s executive council for dealing with all of the ups and downs life brings up, and doing so with a smile on your face. Thank you to the advisors and parents for always hearing out our crazy and outrageous ideas, while supporting us throughout this entire year. Most importantly, thank you to all the members of Virginia TSA. This year has taken some unexpected turns, but through it all you have been there for this organization and put your wholehearted trust into TSA. While this year didn’t go exactly as planned, to say the least, as long as we all have each other’s backs throughout this journey, we will make it out of these troubling times. Not only will we survive, we will come out the other side stronger and better prepared to tackle any obstacles the future may hold. Thank you so much, Virginia TSA, for everything you have done for me in these past six years.

Respectfully Submitted for the last time,

Lexi Vencill
Virginia TSA Secretary
Hello Virginia TSA,

This is my last time writing for the scene. This article is kind of hard to write and I’m not sure where I am going to go with it. Almost two years ago I joined the Executive Council, needless to say this experience has changed my life.

I joined TSA in sixth grade and was immediately enamored with it, even before our first regional competition. I was so enthusiastic about TSA that I originally decided to compete in six competitions! (don’t worry, my advisor talked me down to three: Community Service Video, Promotional Design, and Go Green Manufacturing). To me, it was amazing to be able to create something interesting and find friends along the way, something I always had trouble with.

My first encounter doing something “publicly” in TSA was at my first state conference. I presented our chapter’s American Cancer Society check. After that first state conference I knew that I wanted to be on the stage leading as a state officer one day. The same summer after Nationals 2014, I even mapped it out. I didn’t achieve my third goal, but I’m working on the fourth :)

Clip from my first Community Service Video: Yes, I am the one in the middle. I did just off their laps. I don’t know why, but we thought it was a cool intro :)
My next two years in TSA flew by and I even won a few National trophies along the way. In eighth grade I decided to run for region council; I became the reporter and two years after that, I ran for region president. Last year I ran for State Treasurer.

My choice to run for state office has made such a profound impact on my life, contributing much to my character and integrity. On this council I was given the opportunity to meet and lead with thirteen other individuals (twice!!) who would go on to become who I consider my greatest, and most respected, friends. These experiences have shaped me, furthering my public speaking skills and on the spot question answering ability, because let’s be honest three years ago I’m pretty sure I couldn’t form a single sentence without stuttering.

Here are some of my favorite things across these past two years:

1. Staying up way past curfew and playing foosball with the other officers at Leadership Academy
2. Just chatting and getting to know everyone at committee meetings through group facetime
3. Our meme group chat (nothing else to say there XD)
4. Literally sweeping popcorn up with my bare hands after the 2019 mixer because we couldn’t find a broom
5. Filming the really great (you should watch it when it’s posted) Technosphere video, and all of the bloopers that ensued
6. And much, much more
For my last words, I just want to say thank you to anyone who’s been on this journey with me, that includes both councils, Blake, and our State Advisor Mr. BJ Scott (who truly has been amazing in not only life lessons but anything concerning TSA).

2018-2019 Council

2019-2020 Council

Respectfully Submitted and Signing
Off,
Sierra Funk
Virginia TSA Treasurer
Virginia TSA, what a year.

When I joined this club called TSA in my sixth grade year, I could’ve never imagined the person I would be today. Because I had the opportunity to be elected as a leader at such a young age, I have grown tremendously as a person.

But enough about me. From laughing endlessly at who knows what, to being professionals in front thousands, this council always seems to de-li-ver! If I could write a full page about each individual on the 2019-2020 council, I most definitely would. Every person has their own assets that contribute to making us great. Of course there have many been ups and downs, but those are inevitable, and ultimately make for a stronger team.

I have a few favorite memories I’d like to share—the first being from our New Officer Workshop. Veteran officers were rejoicing for another round on council and newer officers were mingling in. This is where we were told Virginia was the host state for Nationals 2019, which meant we were preforming a skit on stage. Quickly, we put our ideas together and came up with a glorious script. On my way home from NOW, I realized how well we worked together.

Fast forwarding to nationals, it was time for our debut. All the officers lined up behind stage. I remember feeling a sensation over me: togetherness. All of us were so nervous, but we supported each other. I knew we were only going uphill from there.
The next is from Leadership Academy. The days were jam-packed full of activities. The nights, however, are something to always remember. There were nights with card games, waiting to use the showers, cutting paper for raffles, and even raiding the hot drink station of whipped cream (shhh)! Leadership Academy was cold, but brought us together even more.

With the numerous council meetings after that, the brightness that seeing this council brings to me is always something I’ve looked forward to. Although this is the end for us, it is the beginning for what comes next. Thank you, Executive Council, and you, Virginia TSA. I love you all 3,000 (;

Respectfully Submitted,
Ashley Sooklal
Virginia TSA Reporter
My senior year has definitely been an interesting time. With ups and downs like a rollercoaster and drama like a movie, there has not been a boring moment. Virginia TSA has been a huge part of my life this year, just like every year before. For seven years, I was able to be an active member of TSA. I was excited for this year to be the best year yet. That’s what everyone always says about senior year, that it’s supposed to be the best, that senior year is when you make all of your amazing high school memories. Sadly, this year we aren’t going to have Technosphere or a national conference, but that doesn’t mean that I won’t have any great TSA memories from this year.

From the beginning of the school year to right now, I’ve been making TSA memories. In August, I got to run club sign-ups with Rebecca Collins, the TSA president of my heart. In September, I reunited with one of my favorite TSA alumnus, Nick Stockner, GO TIGERS! November brought cold weather and Leadership Academy, which included dance lessons, rock walls, and campfires with people from all across the state. All of a sudden, it was time for my last meeting as a state officer alongside my council. I got the pleasure of starting March out with the Southwestern TSA Spring Fair, but after March everything changed. We found out that Technosphere was cancelled in May. TSA Nationals was soon cancelled too. In one week, TSA had ended for the year with no warning.

I’m sad that I won’t attend Technosphere or the National Conference this year, but I’m happy that I got to spend my senior year with everyone that’s been here for it. From my fellow state officers, Madelynne, I’ll miss you. To my friends across the state, yes Hayden I’m talking about you. To my chapter team teammates, I couldn’t have asked for a better group of people to spend my last year with.

Respectfully Submitted,

Victoria Compton

Virginia TSA Parliamentarian
As we move on from regionals, I will be sad since that means my final year in TSA is coming to an end. That means not being a part of the executive council anymore. I am truly grateful for the ability to be a part of this council, especially because of all the other wonderful officers in it. The fact that everyone on the council is also kind and supportive to one another helps create an amazing environment that helps us work together to achieve our common goal of making Virginia TSA better.

Closing this off, I hope to see all of you at soon. Also, as you all know the Coronavirus is going around, so I hope everyone stays safe and healthy.

Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,
Vijay Vadi
Virginia TSA Sergeant-At-Arms
This is the last Scene before Technosphere, so I want to take the time to reflect on my journey through TSA and the rewarding experience of being on the executive council.

I first started in middle school, at the encouragement of my technology education teacher (tech-ed); I competed in Essays on Technology, STEM Animation, and Children’s Stories. As one of the first STEM competitions I participated in, TSA was a great way for me to challenge myself and participate in different events that I had no prior experience in. For example, I learned about Animaker in STEM animation and made videos about robots; I learned about marine life when writing a children’s storybook about marine wildlife and this experience even helped me develop my creative writing and artistic skills! I’m grateful for TSA because it allowed me to learn more in a fun way and because it inspired me to always be curious. I truly think that one of the reasons I like STEM so much (especially biology and computer science) is because of TSA.

TSA has really helped me develop my leadership and communication skills as well. From being part of my school’s leadership to being part of the Executive Council, I truly think I have benefited a lot.

To my fellow executive council members, Mr. Scott, and our advisors and mentors, thank you so much for your dedication, excitement, and passion in everything you’ve done. Every meeting we have, I look forward to your updates, catching up with you guys, and doing more. I remember being a little nervous in our first meeting. But I know that over time, we definitely helped each other grow. I think back to when we shot the Technosphere spirit video - we went totally ham on decorations and we laughed so much while filming different scenes. Over time, we became a much closer and tight-knit group, comfortable around one another, always willing to offer helpful advice and constructive criticism. I know we had some struggles here and there but I know that this year’s Technosphere was planned to be great because of all of your hard work and dedication.

And to my fellow Virginian TSA peers - as a senior, I will soon be graduating out of TSA. I hope all of you continue to persevere and work hard and strive for success.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheila Iyer

Northern Region President
Hello Virginia Scene!

It breaks my heart that this is my last contribution to this publication. I have had such an amazing experience on this council and as a member and leader of TSA. As a senior, I’m hoping time will slow down purely because I’m marching towards my goodbye to TSA. Frankly, the past seven years have been an amazing journey that has meant everything to me. I’m so happy to have had the opportunity to work with this state council and our amazing advisors. My time in TSA and as a member of this council has given me skills, connections, and friendships that are irreplaceable.

To begin, my time on this state council and as a leader in TSA has allowed me to hone and perfect my skills and interests. This experience reaffirmed my passion for leadership and allowed me to get a better idea of how a large organization functions behind the scenes. I also had the experience of working on a committee and speaking at a Public Hearing, two things I never thought I’d be able to do in high school!

I was also able to network with TSA members throughout the world and with industry professionals. I’ve had the opportunity to meet so many people through the years. I’ve met with senators and government officials, TSA members from across the country, and professionals in a wide variety of STEM fields.

Most importantly, however, this council has become some of my closest friends. I love to hang out with these amazing people at all of our late night skype calls, early morning slack messages and productive committee meetings. This team constantly amazes me, and their passion is infectious. I feel lucky to have worked beside them.

Looking back, I realize that TSA made me who I am and I’m so grateful to all of you for giving me this opportunity. Catch me judging next year!

Respectfully Submitted,

Naomi Nichols
Southcentral Region President
Virginia TSA, where do I even begin? It has been a crazy year for us, especially now that we’re cooped up in our homes. I will admit, however, that I do enjoy writing this in the comfort of my room, wrapped under a blanket while watching Netflix, rather than writing this in a classroom. Regardless of how this year ends, I am very happy with the way that this year has gone for myself and our state as a whole. So I’d like to take a stroll down memory lane and look back at the amazing opportunities I’ve had this year.

May 4th, 2019: the final day of Technosphere 2019. I had walked away from that conference with two of my teams, Chapter Team and Webmaster, going to Nationals. I had met people from across the state, and I was able to create stronger bonds with friends in my own chapter and region. Oh yeah, and I was officially introduced as your 2019-2020 Southwestern Region President. This simple ceremony was the beginning of a windy, yet rewarding, path in my life being a part of our state executive council.

June 7-9, 2019: New Officer Workshop. The first chance for our officer team to begin work on the upcoming year. The first chance I had to meet the amazing people I would be working with for the upcoming year. This weekend was filled with work, fun, and amazing memories that I’ve kept and cherished throughout this year. It was most certainly not a weekend to forget.

June 28-July 2, 2019: The National TSA Conference in National Harbor, Maryland. This year, Virginia TSA had the honor of being the host state for Nationals. This led to a lot of work, but it was eventually worth it. This was by far the best nationals in my TSA career thus far. From being on stage at the opening session, competing in my two events, and meeting so many new officers and members from across the nation and world, I still often daydream to go back and experience it all again.

August 17, 2019: The Southwestern Region Fall Rally. The first major event that myself and my officer team coordinated together. It was a fun-filled afternoon with stories of TSA past from some of our region’s alumni, fun icebreakers and activities, and me getting drenched several times by fellow council members. It was yet another amazing part of my position this year.

November 22-24, 2019: Leadership Academy. This past year, I had the honor of leading a session alongside your state president at leadership academy. I also had the honor of meeting so many Virginians who, like myself, had a passion for TSA and leadership. Even if I had to stay in a particleboard walled shed, this leadership academy was absolutely amazing, and I would do it again in a heartbeat.
Final Remarks of Executive Council

February 8th, 2020: our final in-person state council meeting. On February 8th, our officers came to Turner Ashby High School for our final council meeting before Technosphere. While there were some difficult decisions that had to be made, the day as a whole was the most memorable council meeting for me. As we were leaving to make the journey back home, it occurred to me just how amazing this council was. We were able, in one short year, to host Nationals, create a great Leadership Academy experience, and come up with one of the greatest Technosphere themes we’ve had in a while. Only as we were driving away did I realize how much each and every person on that council meant to me. So, I’d like to take a quick moment to thank our 2019-20 Executive Council for everything that has happened for our organization. We did good guys, we did real good.

Finally, March 7th, 2020: the Southwestern Region Spring Fair. The climax of all of the work that the always amazing Southwestern Spring Council put in this past year. It was a day of fun competition, teamwork, and plain ol’ fun. It was a great day, but one that was painful for me. While I am not officially done yet, that day I had to pass the gavel on to a new council and a trusty VP turned President. While I am excited to see what the future holds, I guess I just wasn’t quite ready to let go yet (which probably became obvious when I almost didn’t let the new council lead the creed, whoops).

As I look back today at the past year, and see all of the memories, it pains me to think that it’s almost over. It pains me even more to think it might be cut short. However, even if something happens to Technosphere, I want to state again to all of the officers and members, especially the seniors, of this organization that this year was amazing for us. My final message to everyone is this: despite any possible circumstances, do not ever give up on being a leader. We are the future not only of our country, but of our world. Our lifetimes will be spent fixing the problems of the past and dealing with new problems that are unfathomable to us now. So it’s important that we keep the knowledge we learn about leadership to help us in the future.

Again, thank you to everyone who has given me this great opportunity. My advisors, parents, fellow members and officers, I cannot thank you enough. Thank you, Virginia TSA. Let’s keep this good momentum going into next year, shall we?

Respectfully Submitted,

Ryan Stinson

Southwestern Region President
I’m so thankful to have worked with everyone on the Executive Council, even for a short period of time. I like to think that being on this council was the best “going away gift” that a senior could ask for. I might be repeating myself, but they all taught me something no competition would be able to convey, and that is to value every opportunity, live outside of my comfort zone, and acknowledge every idea. I may never stand on that stage with the council again, wear my blazer to competition, or stay up all night during regionals, but I will remember all that the Executive Council has done for me.

And that elevator speech; I will probably never forget that one.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sydney Funk
Tidewater Region President
It’s officially my final scene submission for my first term on state council. It hasn’t been an easy year in office with our Fall Rally having to get cancelled and our Regional Fair getting postponed due to weather. However, I’m beyond proud of how everything went and the work that our regional council produced. We have such a passionate group working to improve the Blue Ridge and our efforts really showed at this Regional Fair. With Regionals now in the past, I’m looking forward to our Technosphere 2020! I can’t wait to see everyone there again, especially everyone in council.

At that time, I had barely met most of the council members that I’ve been honored to work with this past year. Now I’m confident when I say that having to leave our final council meeting will leave me a crying wreck. Getting to grow and learn with this wonderful group of people has been the experience of a lifetime and I wouldn’t change it for the world. I will forever treasure all of our late night card games at Leadership Academy, virtual meetings, and endless laughter as a group.

It’ll be devastating when Technosphere 2020 is over at last and it’ll be my final goodbye with the several seniors on our council. However, our journey as a group isn’t over yet and we still have so many moments together to cherish. Technosphere 2020 will certainly be one to remember, no matter how it plays out, and I’m beyond excited for when we may get to see each other again.

Respectfully Submitted,

Defne Olgun

Blue Ridge Region President
I was excited and prepared to lead the Valley at our Spring Fair this year, but I was even more excited to see who would be leading after me. The past two years I’ve served as President in the Valley, and nothing has brought me more friendships and growth. I’ve been honored to serve our delegation and I am so thankful for the membership that has made it one of the best experiences of my life. I wish you all the best in TSA and beyond, and I thank you for the joys you all have brought me. Good luck!

Respectfully Submitted,

Madelynne Ritchie
Valley Region President
In accordance with the Executive Order issued by Governor Northam to close all schools, Virginia TSA has made the tough decision to cancel Technosphere 2020 due to the outbreak of COVID-19.

Mr. Scott has been in contact with the five hotels, and they will not be enforcing a cancellation policy. If you reserved a room at Embassy Suites, Hilton Garden Inn, Springhill Suites, or Hyatt Place, it is asked that you call and cancel your own reservations. If you reserved a room at Holiday Inn Express, they have canceled all block reservations. If you need a cancellation number, call the hotel.

State officer elections are still scheduled to take place May 1-3. Applications will be available on the website, and applications will be provided with more information. We will still need two students from each school to serve as delegates. More information is to come later.
In regards to nationals, the conference is still scheduled to take place. If that remains the same, Mr. Scott will determine how many districts will allow students to travel to Nashville in June.

After that is determined, Mr. Scott has already made plans as to how we will handle advisor-approved events so Virginia TSA members can compete at nationals. This is a difficult time for us all, but we are resilient and can come together to still make this a memorable year.

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Thank you, Virginia TSA.