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Hey, y’all! Over the past few weeks, we’ve started to get back in the groove of what feels like a normal TSA year, with the exception of our virtual conferences! Fall competitions are still running, regions are beginning to have Fall Rallies, and we successfully hosted the first ever virtual Leadership Academy! This has been a record-breaking year thus far, and Leadership Academy continued that streak! I am proud to announce that we had record registration, school representation, and attendance! These numbers were the highest since Virginia TSA began holding Leadership Academies over a decade ago, and that is all thanks to you!

Through the weekend, we had six incredible sessions where members learned more about public speaking, looked behind the scenes at the roles and logistics of the state officer team, and got an in-depth look at the regional and state officer candidate program! In addition, members put their critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and critical thinking skills to the test in sessions like the Digiverse Crisis and Virtual Escape Room! Members also had the opportunity to participate in some trivia icebreakers and we even played Among Us! Finally, we heard from National TSA President Sean Kuehn and National TSA Reporter Dhruv Agarwal regarding National TSA’s new leadership program, 21st Century Leadership Skills! In this session, the pair covered numerous traits possessed by strong leaders and members and officers were able to have an open discussion about experiences and situations in their leadership career.

If you attended Leadership Academy, we’d love to hear your feedback to better help us prepare and engage for future virtual Leadership Academies if need be. Be sure to fill out the post-conference poll in our Instagram and Twitter bios! If you were unable to attend but would like some information covered in the sessions, send us a message! You can reach out to me or another officer directly and we’d be happy to provide you with information, tips, and anything else that will help you on your path of developing your leadership skills!

Finally, the state officer team and I unveiled one of our major projects for the year: an online Virginia TSA merchandise store! The store will be active very soon, so be on the lookout for further announcements. From t-shirts and hoodies to polos and masks, there is an incredible selection of products and colors for you to choose from! You’ll be able to select from our custom Virginia TSA logos and designs, as well as the Leadership Academy designs!

As we head into the holiday season, be sure to take time to enjoy the company of your family and friends; these connections are necessary now more than ever. As your TSA family, the Executive Council wishes you good luck and congratulations on completing this semester and we hope you have a happy holiday season! We can’t wait to see you again for Regional Fair season, it’s just around the corner! As always, if you need anything at all, don’t hesitate to reach out! See you soon!

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Collins
Since 2008, Abingdon High School’s TSA chapter has been one of the strongest chapters in Virginia TSA. The chapter is home to six of the officers on the Southwestern Regional Officer Board and five of the officers on the VA TSA State Officer Board. The chapter has won numerous awards over the years and its members consistently place in numerous competitions across multiple levels of competitions. Abingdon High School TSA has flourished in recent years and is considered by many to be a model for chapter leadership. The chapter’s success has required dedicated leadership.
and a superb membership drive. When asked about their program, Abingdon High School TSA member and Southwestern Regional President William Collins had this to say: “Leadership at Abingdon High School TSA has changed our chapter by allowing members to grow and develop throughout their high school careers.”

Abingdon High School is located in Washington County and though the chapter may seem small from an outsider perspective, the power they hold in the state program is undeniable. “We are located in a region that is typically associated with agriculture; however, we thrive in TSA. We finalize and receive trophies at Technosphere and the National Conference each year,” says Collins. Because of the relatively small membership of Abingdon High School, the chapter leadership puts a premium on team connectivity and community. Collins says that this connected attitude is part of what drives the chapter to thrive. “I believe that the members of Abingdon High School TSA make our chapter special.”

The chapter also prides itself on its involvement in regional and state leadership. Abingdon High School TSA is the chapter with the most students on the State Executive Council and has several members on the Southwestern Regional Officer Board. This involvement with leadership puts the chapter in a unique position to achieve their goals and to implement a cohesive vision. “I am most proud of Abingdon High School’s TSA chapter for our involvement in TSA,” reflects Collins. “Many of our members become Chapter, Region, State and National officers throughout their time in TSA.” The chapter is also proud of its chapter officer team, which meets on a regular basis and utilizes Robert’s Rules of Order during these meetings. “We run our meetings according to Robert’s Rules of Order, which tends to spark interest in parliamentary procedure and officer/leadership positions. With this interest, members become different officer positions, committee members, and leaders within TSA.”

The chapter, like most, has had a difficult time adapting to a digital format. “We did not start attending school in person on a hybrid system until mid-October. Because we wanted to allow the opportunity for students to join if they desired to do so, we had a setback pertaining to our registration,” said Collins. Despite this setback, the leadership at the Abingdon High School TSA chapter found new ways to reach out and took the initiative to continue their membership drive. “We are working to hold meetings virtually to accommodate the protocols of our school. Members are selecting their competitions, and are beginning to work on them on a virtual format.”
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2. The term for an adult that leads a chapter.
6. The state-wide November TSA event that was held recently and focused on leadership.
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vertical
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4. The name of the Virginia TSA committee that produces this newsletter.
5. The number of regions there are in Virginia TSA.
7. The first name of the Virginia TSA Vice President.
From November 21-22, Virginia TSA held a virtual Leadership Academy. We were glad to see many chapters attending Leadership Academy who had not attended in years prior, as well as returning members. It was one of the most highly-attended in Virginia TSA history and the one to have the most schools participate! Hopefully, you and your chapter enjoyed the workshops held by our officers.

This year, Virginia TSA held six sessions that covered a variety of topics from speech to running for office. We also held a Jeopardy and Kahoot to kick off the event!

**schedule**

- Session 1: Mock Interview/Speaking
- Session 2: Digiverse Crisis
- Session 3: Officer Day-in-the-Life
- Session 4: Running for Office
- Session 5: Escape Room
- Session 6: Leadership
curious about state office?

The state officers have compiled their experience and advice for those who are interested in running for state or regional office. We hope you feel inspired to run for next year!
Rebecca Collins  
*president*

So, you want to run for state office? Go for it! State office is a phenomenal opportunity that gives you the chance to serve and lead our organization on a new level. The duties of a state officer are expansive, from chairing committees to advocating for CTE and so much more! Not sure where to start the process? Ask your advisor or reach out to me! DM or email me!

@rebecca.collins_  
president.virginiatsa@gmail.com

Allie Quach  
*vice president*

Running for state officer was a little different this year. Right now with TSA events being virtual meetings and planning events is very different, but even so it has been so much fun working with other officers. If you’re not sure if you should run for office I say just do it, it’s an experience you can’t get anywhere else.
Whether it was running for regional or state office, I was nervous either way. After I overcame the nerves, everything eventually started to feel natural. When talking to members, I spoke not what I had rehearsed, but what I truly meant. It turned out better than before! In the end, the experience I gained from running was worth more than anything else and I will cherish it for the rest of my life!

Running for state office, though nerve-wracking, is often far more fun than you might expect. Not only that, but winning is one of the most rewarding experiences I've had. Being a state officer is almost equally as rewarding; you get to make new friendships among a brilliant team while watching your ideas come to fruition at the state level. To say the least, it's great.
In eighth grade, I first ran for state office as Parliamentarian against a senior who was about double my size. I lost the election, but I learned about campaigning and came back to become your current State SAA. My advice for those who want to campaign for office is to be yourself! Be personable and natural to everyone around you and really work to form a connection with the members you will represent!

I once thought that state office was held by only the hardcore TSA kids, but being an officer is a lot more fun than I thought! I’ve learned a lot about campaigning, digital communications, and leadership. I encourage anyone to run for office, even if no one from your chapter ever has before. Develop a meaningful campaign that you and other students get excited about – people can sense your passion!
Simran Kohli
historian

Running for State Office was incredibly nerve-racking. I had watched State candidates give speeches to crowds and converse with members about their goals. I knew that to become an officer, I needed to face my fears and use the public speaking skills I had been developing. No matter the circumstance, it is easy to get lost in fears, but as future leaders, it is important to face those fears head-on.

Cecelia Johnson
parliamentarian

This was my first year running for state office, and it was much different than I ever imagined. I was looking forward to campaigning and seeing everyone in person; however, that was sadly not the case. Being on the officer team is a lot of fun, but it comes with lots of responsibilities and challenges. I have met many new people and formed new friendships that I will cherish forever.
Luke Hendershot  
*blue ridge region president*

I have thoroughly enjoyed my term as President of the Blue Ridge Region. In my time in this office, I have developed better relationships with my chapter members, as well as met new people on the state officer team whom I would not have met were it not for me holding this office. I would encourage any student who wants to have new experiences and improve their skills as a leader to pursue running for regional office.

Neha Kulshreshtha  
*northern region president*

Running for Northern Regional office was different due to COVID; instead of delivering campaign speeches at Regionals, our speech videos and voting were on the Virginia TSA website. As an Executive Committee member, I love being a member of my favorite organization and learning about its intricacies. My advice to prospective state officers is to let your passion for TSA shine through, be confident, and don't hesitate to reach out!
Joshua Alexander
south central region president

Being the South-Central Regional President has brought some of the greatest experiences of my life such as New Officer Workshop, Fall Rally, and Leadership Academy. I really found that holding a leadership position put me more in touch with the organization’s community. I especially enjoy being a region president because it gives me the opportunity to both lead at the regional level and represent my region at the state level.

William Collins
southwestern region president

Hey Virginia TSA! Running for office is a unique experience that I love to participate in! I have run for numerous positions throughout my TSA career, and I have enjoyed all of them! Running for office has allowed me to better my public speaking and leadership skills. Being a part of the state officer team has allowed me to meet many new people and experience a multitude of opportunities.
State officers have a lot of responsibility, more than in any of the regional or chapter leadership positions. My advice for prospective state officers would be to stay organized in order to be able to accomplish all of your duties and your responsibilities outside of TSA.

Being a regional president gives you a unique opportunity to lead in your region and to be a part of the state council. As the Valley Region President, I’ve enjoyed getting to help plan activities for both my regions and the state this year. If you are thinking about applying for an officer position, my advice is to go for it. Being an officer is a fun and rewarding experience.
crossword break!  answers

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6. The state-wide November TSA event that was held recently and focused on leadership. (leadershipacademy)
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9. Virginia TSA announced a partnership this year with _____ to give students more access to Civil and Mechanical Engineers. (vdot)

**Vertical**

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7. The first name of the Virginia TSA Vice President (allie)