

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Dear New Jersey FCCLA Members, Advisers, and Alumni:

Happy New Year! I hope this year is filled with humor, hope, and positivity. Ralph Marston once said, "Being positive in a negative situation is not naïve. It's leadership." During the COVID-19 pandemic, a little bit of positivity is what we all need to get through tough times and emerge even stronger.

I was extremely pleased to see many of you at our Unified Virtual Fall Leadership Connection. Congratulations to all competitive event participants and medalists for showing remarkable initiative as you completed your projects in unusual circumstances! I hope the opportunity to engage on an interactive, virtual platform was enjoyable and showed you the power of our CTSO. Though we may not see each other in person, the State Executive Council and state staff are hard at work planning more initiatives and a state conference that will be engaging and exciting. Leadership Bootcamp also saw tremendous participation as members increased their personal leadership knowledge and skills. Thanks to our leadership trainers for teaching us how to be resilient leaders, even during the toughest of times!

In the meantime, I encourage you all to look for unique ways to get involved in FCCLA, whether it be by increasing your chapter's social media presence or by participating in online initiatives such as the Taking Down Tobacco online training by the Center for Tobacco Free Kids (CTFK) or FreeRice.com. Visit the NJ FCCLA website, specifically the Red Rose Chapter Award application, to see if your chapter qualifies for the prestigious award and gain inspiration for activities in which your members can participate. The competitive event guidelines are on the website to inspire you to get involved for the spring competition. Utilize Power of One in order to set and accomplish your goals in and outside of FCCLA this year and lean on your loved ones to help you reach them.

I look forward to seeing you all in a few months at the 2021 Virtual State Leadership Conference, a truly unique experience revolving around our theme - Mission: A Better Tomorrow. Until then, I wish you the best of luck in 2021 and cannot wait to see all the remarkable things you accomplish!

Best Regards,
Sophia Patel

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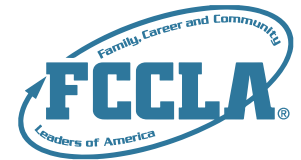
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NEW DIRECTIONS

CONNECTING NEW JERSEY - ONE CHAPTER AT A TIME

2021

VIRTUAL NJ CTSOs UNITED FLC IN REVIEW

By: **Samhitha Mupharaphu**, First Vice President

This year's Fall Leadership Connection was something new, fun, and very exciting! It was held in a virtual setting from November 16th - 19th. This conference was done jointly with six different New Jersey Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs), which included, DECA, FBLA, FCCLA, FFA, HOSA, and SkillsUSA. Over 2000 members and advisers throughout NJ were involved in this unique opportunity. The opportunity to access content from all the involved CTSOs made the experience even more worthwhile!



The Opening General Session was an amazing way to start off the conference, as it introduced all the NJ CTSO State Presidents and our keynote speaker, Mr. David Edward Garcia. Mr. Garcia motivated students to be the best versions of themselves. He talked about using our strengths to the best of our ability and turning weaknesses and into something positive. All his messages contributed to a very inspirational session for the attendees. The main workshop on Tuesday was a live zoom session with speaker Keith Hawkins. Mr. Hawkins talked to students about celebrating our differences and finding the common ground between ourselves! At the Closing General Session, the CTSO State Presidents came together at the beginning to give some more information about the Unified Conference and introduce the keynote speaker. Mr. Hawkins was a motivational close for a powerful meeting.

In addition to the general sessions, there were many other opportunities available to members! The virtual platform simulated an actual conference venue, and there were embedded links throughout the screens to take you to different locations, such as the exhibit hall, main auditorium, and workshop rooms. In the Exhibit Hall, there were a plethora of companies and colleges present to showcase information. Members were able to chat with a representative and ask questions. Exhibitors included American Medical Certification Association, Berkeley College, Johnson and Wales University, Kean University, NJ Department of Education, Rutgers University, Wegmans, and more!

The heart of the conference was each CTSO's individual "room." Here each organization uploaded their own content specific to their association and career pathway. FCCLA had numerous videos for members to watch ranging from Vegan Baking to Community Service during a Pandemic to various STAR Event breakdowns! To finish off the experience, NJ FCCLA had a Recognition Session to spotlight members and chapters who have gone above and beyond during these challenging times. Chapters were recognized for any community service that was done from mask-making to the food drive. In this session, competitive events results were also announced. Congratulations to all competitive events participants for their hard work and wonderful projects!

Despite the constraints caused by COVID-19, FCCLA and all the NJ CTSOs still enjoyed a remarkably successful 2020 FLC that presented great opportunities for its members and advisers!

RED ROSE CHAPTER AWARD

By: **Samhitha Mupharaphu**, First Vice President

One of the goals of FCCLA is to recognize our members, advisers, and chapters who are going above and beyond the basic expectations. The hardworking and dedicated chapters across New Jersey make FCCLA an outstanding organization. These chapters deserve recognition, and the Red Rose Chapter Award is one of the ways that NJ FCCLA can spotlight such amazing efforts! The red rose is the symbol of our organization, and the recipients of this award are reflections of the exceptional youth leaders in our organization.

The Red Rose Chapter Award is the most prestigious award for NJ FCCLA chapters. This is the third year that it will be awarded to the deserving chapters. In order to qualify for the Red Rose Chapter Award, a chapter is required to:

- Maintain or increase your chapter's membership
- Attend Leadership Bootcamp
(at least 4 members and 1 adviser)
- Participate in the Fall Leadership Connection
- Compete in 2 Fall Competitive Events
- At least 5 members compete in competitive events at the State Leadership Conference
- At least 2 members complete Power of One

In addition, a chapter must gather 16 points from a list of exciting and inspiring activities; each activity has an assigned point value. Members and advisers should work together to complete the recognition application. If your chapter has questions or concerns, contact the NJ FCCLA State Director, Mrs. Dworzanski, at njfccla@gmail.com.



ADVICE FOR A NEW MEMBER IN THIS VIRTUAL WORLD

Dear Edna,

My school is in a virtual setting right now due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I just joined our chapter because I am bored at home during quarantine and want something to do with my time. How can I make the most of my membership in FCCLA?

Thank you,
Frank Leeboard

ASK
Edna!

Dear Frank,

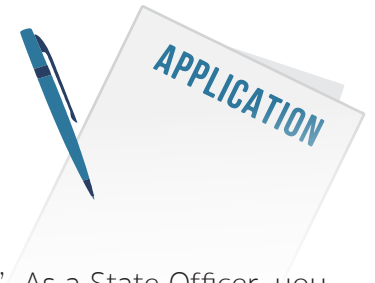
It can certainly be a bit overwhelming if you're new to FCCLA, but lucky for you there is a whole community that can help! The best thing you can do is be active in your chapter and stay connected through social media.

Social media is especially important because most updates can be seen there first. You can find information about FCCLA conferences, competitive events, and fun things to look forward to like FCCLA Week. Your chapter may have an Instagram or Twitter account where they post information; if they don't, think about taking the initiative and presenting the idea to your chapter. NJ FCCLA also has Instagram and Twitter accounts @NJ_FCCLA in which you can see updates.

Staying active in your chapter by making new friends and attending all the meetings can be beneficial, too! This way you and your friends can keep each other accountable and make sure you don't miss out on any activities. Meetings are usually where you'll find the most information, even if it's a virtual meeting.

Sincerely,
Edna D. Amidon
Founder of FCCLA

RUNNING FOR STATE OFFICE



By: **Sophia Patel**, State President

Warren Bennis once said, “Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.” As a State Officer, you can do just that. Serving on the NJ FCCLA State Executive Council is just one of the many opportunities FCCLA provides as part of the Ultimate Leadership Experience. If you can envision yourself in a position to serve your community, reach new horizons, be a role model for your peers, and rock a red blazer, you should consider applying to become a State Officer! I encourage you to consider taking the next step in your FCCLA leadership journey and get started on your application.

WHAT WILL I GAIN FROM BECOMING A STATE OFFICER?

Serving as a State Officer is easily one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had. With loads of training in aspects of leadership, public speaking, teamwork, and communication, the role truly makes you “college and career ready.” The opportunities for leadership training are delivered by alumni, members of NJ Friends of FCCLA, the National Leadership Training Team, Leadership Academy, and our state staff.

WHAT ARE SOME OPPORTUNITIES FOR STATE OFFICERS?

State Officers gain valuable skills by advocating for FCCLA and FCS Education on a state and federal level at State Board of Education meetings or the Capitol Leadership Conference. Most high school students can't say that they have met with legislators, so this is a wonderful experience. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to help plan statewide conferences for hundreds of students, develop membership and public relations plans to assist chapters, and promote FCCLA to teachers across the state at conferences. Fun ways for State Officers to show their creativity are by selecting speakers for conferences and brainstorming new competitive events.

HOW CAN I BECOME A STATE OFFICER?

If you decide becoming a State Officer is the next step for you, visit the NJ FCCLA website to download the application and get started. But before you do, discuss running with your family and Chapter Adviser, and gain their support in this huge endeavor. Once you finish your application, mail it into the state office by the deadline. Your next steps include attending the Candidates' Meeting, participating in an interview with an alumni panel, and taking an FCCLA knowledge test. Though the process may seem like a lot, just be confident and seek the support of friends and family.

For more information, go to <https://www.njfccla.org/run-for-state-office>.

VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE IN REVIEW

By: **Melanie Mendonca**, National Vice President of Competitive Events

This year, National FCCLA offered the first-ever Virtual Leadership Experience (VLE), a virtual enrichment program full of interactive activities. The live “meeting” portion was held from December 8-11, 2020. VLE gave members the chance to connect with career experts and FCCLA leaders, while providing information and resources on FCS Career Pathways and FCCLA National Programs. Members were able to get to know the NEC better through the NEC motivational moments as well as develop their leadership beyond measure!

Chapter Advisers learned how to integrate FCCLA into their FCS classrooms. FCCLA provided numerous lesson plan format presentations to help advisers develop creative lesson plans in a

continued 

virtual setting. These resources included enrichment videos, lesson plans, and resources designed to help enhance your FCS classroom and FCCLA chapter experience.

During the live portion, several competitive events took place. Congratulations to competitors from John P. Stevens High School for their accomplishments! Jityaashri Gurubaskaran earned first place in level 3 Fashion Construction and Design; Jacquelyn Trotmen earned second place in the level 3 Fashion Construction and Design; Ananya Singhal earned second place in the level 2 Fashion Construction and Design; and Benita Kizhakkepuram earned second place in the level 2 Nutrition Challenge! Thank you for your hard work and dedication! Thank you for representing and strengthening New Jersey FCCLA on the National Level!

Missed the opportunity to participate in December? No worries! The VLE is available for members and advisers to access until February 12 th . Throughout the duration of the experience, advisers and students will continue to have the opportunity to hear from motivational speakers, strengthen leadership skills, navigate a College and Industry Resource Fair, meet the 2020-2021 National Executive Council, explore Career Pathways, discover National Program presentations, and more. Register today to take advantage of this awesome leadership experience through the comfort and convenience of your home or classroom!

GETTING INVOLVED WITH THE CAMPAIGN FOR TOBACCO FREE KIDS



By: **Sophia Patel**, State President

ADVOCATE

PASSIONATE

DRIVEN

COLLABORATIVE

If these words describe you, then you should consider joining the fight to curb youth tobacco/vape usage, an epidemic that has affected millions of teenagers across the US who are getting addicted by the harmful, toxic chemicals masked in flavors of bubble gum and mango.

An easy way to start is to educate yourself and learn more about the epidemic by visiting the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids website and signing up for their FREE online courses. The Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (CTFK) is a nonprofit organization and partner of National FCCLA. Their initiative, Taking Down Tobacco, consists of multiple self-paced courses available to you to learn more about the dangers of tobacco and vaping. Visit takingdowntobacco.org, create an account, and start with Taking Down Tobacco 101 or the Rise of Vaping course to open your eyes to Big Tobacco's marketing tactics, an explanation of addiction, and ways that we can all fight it together, even from the comfort of our own home. Once you've taken the two introductory courses, feel free to unlock the rest of the courses as you move up the leaderboard, gain badges, and hone your advocacy skills.

After completing the courses, you can become a Taking Down Tobacco trainer and train other members of your FCCLA chapter using the guided versions of Taking Down Tobacco 101 or the Rise of Vaping courses. If you want to "up your advocacy," consider applying to become a National Youth Ambassador for the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. This enriching experience will help you gain exposure and learn as you advocate to decision makers, attend the Youth Advocacy Symposium, and organize events throughout the year with resources and support from CTFK. Personally, through this journey, I have learned to stand up for what I believe in, be a better leader, and act as a role model for my peers.

A wise individual once said "Our voice is our power." We all have the power to drive change in our communities, work towards our Mission: A Better Tomorrow, and #BeTheFirst tobacco free generation.

STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

2020 REFLECTIONS

There is no doubt that 2020 was an extremely hard year for so many people. With the start of the pandemic, the loss of so many incredible people, and all the changes that we have had to overcome (some for the better, some for the worst), a lot of us are excited to start fresh in 2021. Here are some of the plans for 2021 and takeaways that the 2020-2021 NJ FCCLA State Executive Council has gained from the "Year of Development."

Sophia Patel, State President

I started 2021 with an optimistic outlook for the new year. I planned my goals for this year and everything I want to accomplish. I want to focus on myself and explore what I want to pursue after high school, in college, and beyond. I hope to spend 2021 honing my skills and becoming more confident in myself and my abilities. From 2020, I've learned to be grateful for what I have and always understand that situations could be worse and only I could make it better. I also learned that everything I do should be in hopes to become the best version of myself or to help others become the best versions of themselves. I have a very optimistic attitude and positive mindset towards life. I see it as an opportunity to give back and do good for the people that have done so much for me. Life isn't something that should be taken advantage of and should be experienced to the fullest because it's a blessing. Remember: "Every problem is created with a solution."

Samhitha Mupharaphu, First Vice President

I ended 2020 by reflecting on all the events and feelings that last year brought to my life. Personally, a lot of monumental things happened in my life in 2020. I got my driver's license, applied to colleges, and started looking at what the next four years of my life hold for me. The pandemic added a lot more perspective to my life, my priorities and what I want to do in the future. Going into 2021, I want to have a much more positive outlook on my life and the events happening around me and I want to spend time looking at what I do have and for the silver lining in everything. I have learned that there are always positives to what is going on. I have also learned how important friends and family are and how important it is to stay in touch with the people who support you. 2020 was probably one of the craziest years that we will experience and it has helped us grow in numerous ways, but I am so excited for what 2021 brings. I hope to really make "A Brighter Tomorrow" alongside all of you!

Melanie Mendonca, National Vice President of Competitive Events

I ended 2020 by watching the ball drop and wishing my family a Happy New Year! After that, I got a good night's sleep so that I could plan out my schedule and goals for 2021. Looking at all of the things FCCLA has accomplished last year, I have definitely found out how strong FCCLA is. Nothing can stop us, not even a pandemic! We are incredible, unstoppable, and powerful. In life, I think we're born, continuously get more confused, find a passion, live it out, and then pass away. The only way to really feel alive is by doing something that drives you and something that you are passionate about. Life is made up of the small meaningful moments that shape us. Find these moments and go full steam ahead! You owe it to yourself! I hope that all of you have a Happy New Year!

Ayush Jasnani, Vice President of Membership

I finished 2020 grateful for everything good that has happened to me amongst all this uncertainty. The fact that my family is healthy and I am surrounded by good people is one of the most important things to me. I also ended 2020 as a strong member of my community by donating clothes and shoes to those in need as my family does every year. I plan on starting 2021 motivated and full of hope. I have been introduced to the balance between independence and dependence and I am so happy to bring that into the new year. I will use it with my family, my friends, and all my future relationships. I like to look at life one step at a time. As soon as I plan and conquer the step in front of me, I do the same thing for the next. Each step is a different adventure and I take much pride in moving forward. I would just like to thank this amazing State Executive Council for some of the best memories and friendships of a lifetime. I am so grateful for my officers and of course my advisers.

Maxx Navedo, Vice President of Community Service

To end 2020, I spent time with my family and some friends. As 2021 gets into swing, I want to be as on top of things as possible. I do not want any missing assignments and such and I want to be able to enjoy the new year. Last year, I learned that nothing is permanent and things can change in an instant. I like to think back to the quote "Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you are going to get" from the movie Forest Gump. Last year was undeniably hard and I do not think that any of us were expecting 2020 to turn out the way it did. 2020 is going to go down in history as insane, but impactful. The life lessons we were taught this year are unmatched; we are going to use these experiences for the rest of our lives. I hope that all of you have a happy and safe New Year!

Amrutha Banda, Vice President of Public Relations

I concluded 2020 by spending quality time with my family and friends. I plan on starting 2021 with motivation and a proper mindset. I hope to use this attitude to put forth my best work and ultimately accomplish the goals and ambitions I have created for myself. I look at life as a rewarding journey. At times, I forget to live in the moment and savor the small experiences that happen on a day to day basis. I think it's important for me to live in the present and take each day as it comes.

Jityaashri Gurubaskaran, Vice President of Communication

To close 2020 and start 2021, I watched the ball drop and spent time with loved ones. I definitely want to set myself up for 2021 by setting some goals and plans of action to be the most proactive I can be this year. With the confusion and uncertainty the year 2020 brought, I really learned how important it is to savor every second of life. I like Harry Styles' motto "Treat People with Kindness". The most important thing that we all can do right now is to be kind and compassionate. If you see someone wearing a cool shirt, tell them! If you think someone painted a really nice picture, tell them! In the words of Roy T. Bennett, "one word of encouragement can be enough to spark someone's motivation to continue with a difficult challenge." Be that encouragement whenever you can!

Gianna DeBruyn, Vice President of Leadership

I ended the year with my family and an open mind. With the roller coaster ride of a year we have all just had, I was ready to end the year with the people that I love. I plan on starting 2021 with a positive mindset! I can't wait to see what the new year brings and to leave the past year behind and explore my future with an open mind. I have learned to never give up or slack off. Though this year was rough and I wasn't able to see my friends and distant family, the best thing I did for myself was to not give up. I kept pushing for the best and I will come out of this crazy year stronger than ever.

Saheli Brennan, Committee Chair

To ring out 2020, I sat next to my fireplace and watched the ball drop on TV. As 2021 starts, I hope to be near some close friends and enjoy the beginning of the new year with them. If there is one thing that 2020 taught me, it is that nothing can beat good friends. If you have people that care about you, you will be okay, and you will be able to overcome anything that life throws at you. This was definitely a year filled with growth and change, and it is always important to remember to take care of yourself. Remember to treat yourself with the same kindness and courtesies that you would treat anyone else with. You owe it to yourself to make your health- both physical and mental- a priority for yourself. I hope that all of you have an awesome and safe New Year!

Amanda Chen, Committee Chair

I finished 2020 with those I love and with a lot of holiday spirit! I will strive to channel that joy into the new year. I plan to start 2021 with a stronger and healthier outlook, and also by taking a strong initiative towards new goals. From 2020, I learned that even with everything going on, people are incredibly resilient and strong. and are able to rely each other as well. Taking the time to focus and improve your personal traits and recognizing what is most important to you is also something I feel that a lot of people have learned during this year. The ability to take time to recharge is invaluable to your emotional and mental health. Stay safe! I can't wait to see the amazing things that we can accomplish! Remember, all we can do is take things step by step!

HAVE A HEART FOR VALENTINE'S DAY!



By: **Samhitha Mupharaphu**, First Vice President

Now more than ever, kindness and sharing are imperative if we are going to live the NJ FCCLA State theme, Mission: A Brighter Tomorrow. With so much uncertainty and economic insecurity in our own communities, we must uncover opportunities to bring hope to those in need. This Valentine's Day is around the corner. Valentine's Day is about love and caring and the perfect occasion to make a difference in your community.

Food Drive - This might be something that is starting to get repetitive, but that is because it is something that is so important for our communities right now. Many families across New Jersey are experiencing food insecurity and the numbers are growing. There are children going to bed hungry every night. With virtual school as our norm, many children who rely on school meals are not able to take advantage of this resource. 1.1 million people are food insecure in NJ right now, a third of them being children. Donating nonperishable food items to a local food bank is always appreciated. This is an easy and creative service project in which everyone can participate.

Help Your Neighbors - There are several charitable activities that can help our communities, especially during 2020-21. The winter season can be difficult for senior citizens and disabled neighbors. Many people are home bound. Do they need help getting groceries from the supermarket? You could bring their mail to their front door. One generous activity would be to gather 2 to 3 friends and shovel a walkway and driveway for neighbors in need.

Random Acts of Kindness - Whether it is leaving a kind note in your neighbor's mailbox or paying for the person behind you in a drive-through, random acts of kindness are a great way to make someone's day and maybe even encourage them to "pay it forward." Even if you don't realize it, these small acts of kindness make a lasting impact on the person, and you will really have made a difference in their lives.

Make a difference this Valentine's Day... Love thy neighbor!
Make a commitment to serve those in need with compassion, benevolence, and thoughtfulness.



HOMEMADE GIFT IDEAS

By: Jityaashri Gurubaskaran, Vice President of Communication

What better way to show your appreciation and love for another person than through a homemade gift! It doesn't have to be perfect; just knowing you made it especially for them will warm their hearts.

Snow Globes

There are some fantastic tutorials online to make these and they are super easy! All you need is a see-through jar and things to put inside it. You could seal a picture of you and whoever you're giving this gift to in tape and glue it onto the lid, that way the snow globe is personalized! Or you could glue a small toy or trinket on the lid such as a mini Eiffel tower. Then add some glitter and water!

Tea Tree

Sounds odd, right? But no, this is an amazing gift for all tea lovers out there! Buy the person's favorite tea (make sure it's tea bags) and gather some tape, cardboard, and hot glue. You can be adventurous with the shape of the tree; it can be shaped like a pine tree, a normal tree, or even other shapes. You have to make the base of it with cardboard then use the tape to surround the cardboard so every inch is covered. That way they can display it in their kitchen and pull off tea bags as needed.

Chunky Blanket

For those looking for a proper challenge or are active DIY-ers, this is a great DIY. All you need to buy is some thick, chunky yarn and find some online tutorials. You don't need anything else, except maybe a little bit of time and patience. It might be hard at first, but once you understand the methods the rest will be smooth sailing. Before you know it, you'll have a chunky blanket! It is a super cozy, wonderful gift for anyone.

Sweet Treats

With Valentine's Day coming up soon, sweet treats are always appreciated and fun to make. If you want to take on a small project, you could buy chocolate molds and melting disks to make personalized lollipops or hot cocoa bombs. Supplies can be found at your local craft store or online. If that seems to be complicated, decorate cookies or cupcakes and leave delicious surprises on the doorsteps of your friends.

Bookmarks

More and more people are turning to reading as a means of passing the time during the winter months of the pandemic. Use your scrapbook making skills and leftover paper scrapes to design a personalized bookmark for a friend. If you knit or crochet, there are many tutorials online to make heirloom bookmarks. You can even use pieces of ribbon and inexpensive jewelry to make a one-of-a-kind bookmark.

Homemade gifts bring joy to those around us. They are personal and unique, making your handy work exceptional. These little "labors of love" force us to use our creativity and problem-solving skills while distinguishing these gifts as special.



PROMOTING NATIONAL PROGRAMS

By: **Amanda Chen**, Committee Chair

Calling all FCCLA members! National FCCLA offers eight amazing National Programs, with incredible personal benefits and awards. These include: Power of One, Career Connection, Community Service, Families Acting for Community Traffic Safety (FACTS), Families First, Financial Fitness, Stand Up, and Student Body. Each program is designed to help students grow in a different area and connects to Family and Consumer Sciences education. Chapter Advisers can integrate National Programs into the classroom as an excellent tool for project-based learning! For example, members can learn more about saving money through Financial Fitness or help make roads safer through FACTS. Each program is broken down into units, and students can select a personally meaningful unit and create their own project. This is one way students can set out to enact change in themselves and the world.

All programs, except for Power of One, have an opportunity for a cash prize! Members are also recognized at the National Leadership Conference and the Teen Times magazine, and cash prizes are up to \$1,000. In addition, members gain experiences while developing valuable skills. To apply for recognition, go to the FCCLA portal and submit your application by March 1, 2021.

For more information, go to <https://www.njfccla.org/programs>.





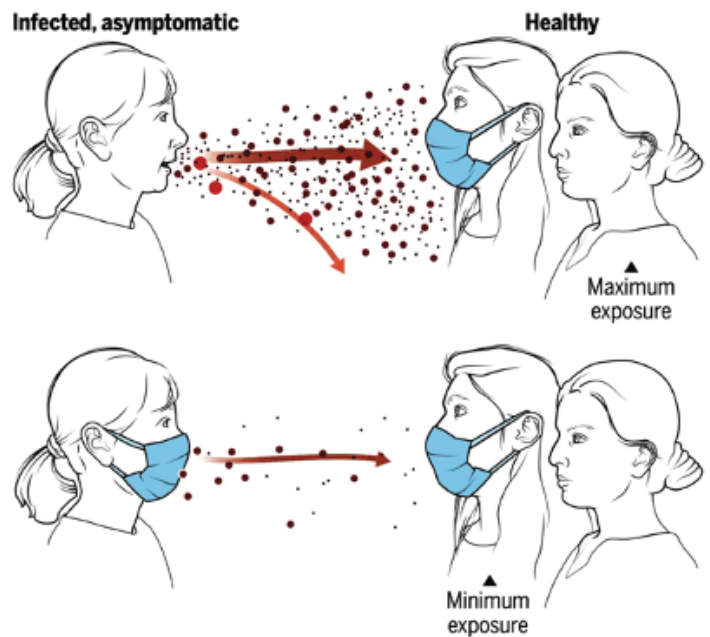
WEAR A MASK, SAVE A LIFE!

By: **Amrutha Banda**,
Vice President of Public Relations

With the growing number of Coronavirus cases, it is important for us as an FCCLA community to join forces and combat these unprecedented times together. Would you believe me if I said YOU have the power to help stop the spread of this deadly virus? Yes, YOUR actions can make a world of difference, and it all starts by wearing a mask! You might be wondering how a simple covering over your mouth and nose would help.

WHY WEAR A MASK?

Since COVID-19 is a respiratory virus, this sickness is transmitted and spread through aerosol droplets from coughing, sneezing, and talking. A covering over the mouth and nose would prohibit these droplets from falling on surfaces and other humans. Researchers at the U.S. National Institutes of Health reveal that, “a damp homemade mask can reduce the number of droplets each of us emit while we speak.” Additionally, many people might be asymptomatic, which means they carry the virus without showing any symptoms. Wearing a mask in public can act as a precautionary measure for those who are unsure if they are COVID-positive. It’s always safe to be cautious and try your best to protect yourself and others around you. If you aren’t feeling well, be sure to stay home and get tested!



TYPES OF MASKS THAT WORK!

- Silk Masks (breathable and repel the most amount of water droplets)
- Tightly Woven 100% Cotton Masks
- Surgical or Procedural Masks
- Filtering Facepiece Respirators
- Face Shields with a Mask

*DO NOT wear N95 masks with exhalation valves because droplets come out through the valve.

GRATITUDE AND GIVING BACK

By: **Maxx Navedo**, Vice President of Community Service

The New Year is a great time to really reflect and start to practice gratitude. There is an abundance of reasons to look forward to the New Year and many more reasons to be grateful. People often ask, “What is gratitude?” and “Why gratitude is important?” The actual definition of gratitude is “the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.” However, gratitude is much more than that.

Gratitude is a thankful appreciation for what you have received and currently possess. When you practice gratitude, you are essentially cherishing the people, moments, experiences, and tangible items you have in your life. People often do not know how to express gratitude, but thankfully, (no pun intended) there are many ways you can express your appreciation:

- Being kind to someone
- Asking a person if they need help
- Listening and showing interest in what someone is saying
- Keeping a gratitude journal by writing down 2-3 things you are grateful for each day
- Checking in with someone by text, email, or phone

Something that often surprises people is that showing gratitude has both mental and physical benefits! People who express gratitude live an overall happier life, leading to lower levels of stress. Regularly expressing gratitude is reported to improve physical health! Grateful people experience less ache and pain and are more likely to exercise more often. You gain so much for doing something that does not require much.

Overall, gratitude is a crucial element in our day-to-day lives. According to Harvard University, “Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.” People feel and express gratitude in multiple ways. Expressing gratitude is free, does not take much time, and it poses a countless number of benefits. Try implementing gratitude more often in your life and you will surely see the positives outcomes!

KEEP CALM AND STAY STRESS FREE

By: **Amrutha Banda**, Vice President of Public Relations



Do you ever feel stressed out or anxious? Maybe this stress has been building up for many years. Maybe you have loads of schoolwork that you haven't started yet. Or maybe you're stressing about your friendships and social life. Everyone feels pressure and anxiety when they are put in an uncomfortable or uneasy situation. Dealing with this stress and learning how to stay calm and composed is important. Here are 6 ways YOU can manage your stress and clear yourself of any emotional worry.

EXERCISE Letting your emotions out in a physical way is a great way to relieve your body of stress hormones. Try going for a run or dancing to your favorite music.

REDUCE CAFFEINE INTAKE Caffeine makes you more anxious and increases your anxiety levels. Staying away from coffee and energy drinks is a great way to reduce stress. Try herbal teas or hydrate with water.

JOURNALING Writing down your thoughts and feelings is a great alternative to building up emotions inside your head. Try keeping a journal, diary, or blog.

LAUGH Getting a good laugh in can seriously help strengthen your immune system and relieves stress by relaxing your muscles. Try watching a funny show or spending time with funny friends.

STOP PROCRASTINATING Starting your work last-minute can create a stressful and rushed mentality. This is also not a good way for you to put forth your best work and sabotages success. Try to maintain a schedule, keep a "to do" list, start your work when your first receive it.

MEDITATE Meditating allows you to keep your mind, body, and breath in check. Take a few minutes out of your day to take some deep breaths or delve into yoga.

deep breaths!

By: **Ariana Sapoznik**,
President of the Manalapan High School FCCLA Chapter

Goodbye 2020 and hello 2021! There are so many things to look forward to in the New Year. 2020 was a year full of ups and downs as the entire planet was faced with a situation different than any of us have experienced. However, we did not give up, and instead, we persevered and adapted to the change. Although it may have been difficult, we got through it! We can start the new year fresh!

We should all be rewarding ourselves for all we accomplished in 2020. Whether that was winning a competition, scoring well on a test, or helping someone in need, we should all be proud of ourselves. For the New Year, we need to try and be a better person. Although it may be hard to stay motivated in school, this year we need to try and be better versions of ourselves to make this year the best one yet!

That is why as President of the Manalapan High School FCCLA Chapter, one of my goals is to have each member be a better individual than they were when the school year began. Therefore, in every meeting, I incorporate entertaining and educational activities that revolve around each member attaining a new skill or leadership quality. Even though I did have some difficulty at the beginning of the year thinking of activities that would get each member engaged in their at-home classroom setting, I got creative, thought outside of the box, and collaborated with other members to have the most impeccable meetings.

Additionally, now more than ever we need to help our community. In the United States alone, there are over 12.6 million unemployed people. This means that so many families can not financially support one another let alone shower their children and loved ones with gifts for the holidays. As the leaders we are, my chapter immediately rose to the occasion and is in the process of holding a toy drive for Toys for Tots. This is just one example of how one person can have such a huge influence even through these unprecedented times. Now is not a time to step down, it is a time to be active, as acts of kindness are needed to fill the world with a little bit of hope for the new year.

Being faced with the pandemic and all the changes in the world, I learned that determination and hard work lead to the most outstanding outcomes! Good luck everyone as you make this year an unforgettable one!

SAFE VIRTUAL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES FOR CHAPTERS

By: **Ayush Jasnani**, Vice President of Membership

During these unusual times, it might be a little bit harder than usual to plan events with our chapters. But fear not, New Jersey FCCLA has many ideas to help your chapter be safe and have lots of fun! As schools are required to take increasing safety measures to preserve the health of students, NJ FCCLA holds its chapters to the same standard. We do not want to put the lives of our members at risk for events or other social gatherings. While keeping this in mind, we do want our members to have fun and enjoy their year with FCCLA as much as they can.

Hosting workshops and leadership development events have actually been a blessing in disguise for some chapters this year! Now chapters can easily host career and leadership development workshops through Zoom or any other online video conference application. Zoom works great for these types of events because chapters can invite career professionals and other experts in the fields to give talks or demonstrations to your chapter members. These types of events are exciting because our members are always looking to gain new information. These are also excellent ways to help members develop networking skills! Chapters can also host a variety of live baking and cooking demonstrations, such as the ones at the Virtual Fall Leadership Conference. These demonstrations had some of the greatest turnouts and views, so we highly recommend hosting events like these!

Community service can be difficult during these challenging times, but FCCLA has many ideas for you. Many schools and other organizations have been successful in hosting a drive-through canned food drive. Members drive to school with their donations in their cars and volunteers can help unload the donations, all while being safe and socially distanced. There are also many online and virtual community service efforts that you can find on the NJ FCCLA website. Encourage your chapter members to participate with incentives such as a prize or a raffle within your own chapter.

Right now, members are missing their FCCLA friends and family, which is what we are all about! Social events can be a great way to boost morale within your chapters. For example, Zoom Movie Nights have been a great way to connect members. There have also been Zoom Pizza Parties and Game Nights! Try to get your chapter's feedback on some ideas to make sure their voices are being heard.

The list does not stop here though. New Jersey FCCLA wants to see what works for each and every one of our chapters. Be sure to come up with your own socially distanced, safe, and exciting events! Make sure to take pictures of your zoom meetings and events so that you have a chance to be featured on the New Jersey FCCLA Instagram and Twitter so that other chapters can see the great work your chapter is doing to connect members.





FAMILY FUN, WITHOUT THE SUN! BONDING WITH YOUR FAMILY IN THE WINTER

By: **Gianna DeBruyn**, Vice President of Leadership Development

BRRRR! Imagine this: it's wintertime with snow on the ground. You and your family are stuck inside hiding from the frigid weather. You are bored with nothing to do. Well fear not! There are plenty of activities you and your family can do to make the cold weather exciting! Between indoor and outdoor activities, you will be able to bond with your family while staying warm!

To start, here are a few indoor activities you and your family can enjoy:

Board games: Board games are a great way to have a fun time with your family while being competitive! Some board game ideas are Monopoly, The Game of Life, Scrabble, and many more. Visit your local Target or Walmart to purchase some inexpensive board games!

Family Dinner Night: Hosting a family dinner night is a great way for your family to contribute something to the table. Have each family member make one dish for the entire group to share. To spice things up a bit, you can rate each person's dish and the person with the highest rating gets a prize! No matter how you decide to do your family dinner night, everyone will be happy with a full belly!

Art Night: Grab some paint, crayons, and/or colored pencils, and create a piece of art! Sit with your family and make your masterpiece. Once everyone is done, reveal your artwork to each other and admire your artistic abilities. Display everyone's piece in your home to show off your talent! Take it a step further and take a picture of your art and tag [@NJ_FCCLA](#) on Instagram and Twitter to show us your masterpiece!

On another note, here are a few outdoor activities to do in the cold!

Sledding: Find the nearest hill to your home and pack up the car with sleds. Take turns sliding down the hill. Sledding is such a great way to have a few laughs with your family. Bring some hot cocoa to stay warm, and remember to wear a mask if there are other families at your hill!

Build a Snowman: If it has snowed recently, bundle up in some warm winter clothes, put on some snow gloves and a hat, and start building your snowy friend! Don't forget to bring a carrot and some black rocks for the eyes, mouth, and nose. Once your snowman is built, add a scarf to him to keep him warm!

As you can see, there are plenty of fun family bonding activities to do in the winter!

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

MAKING AND KEEPING THEM

By: **Melanie Mendonca**,
National Vice President of Competitive Events

The cliché, “New Year, New Me!” is especially relevant this year. With the influx of COVID-19, we have all been waiting for the new year. We all have been hoping that once the vaccine is disseminated, 2021 will be the year to return to normalcy. What better way to envision a better future self than by making our New Year's resolutions? However, 80% of people fail at their resolution before the end of February. The goals are ignored and forgotten about until next January. This year, you don't have to be a part of the 80%. Let's make it a point to not push aside our goals this year; let us demonstrate our strength and leadership by following through with them!

A lot of New Year's resolutions fail because the resolutions are not right for you. Sometimes, resolutions fail because they are too vague, lack a realistic plan, or are based off of someone else's desire rather than your own. Make sure to make your resolutions SMART goals - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Having a well-defined and realistic resolution that can be measured throughout the year is the first step towards achieving your resolution. In addition, let someone in your family or a friend know about your resolution; having an accountability partner can greatly increase the success of your resolution!

Start by setting a plan of action with mini goals that focus on a larger objective. By challenging ourselves to make smaller resolutions, the impact is much larger and turns into a habit! Following through with our resolutions will definitely take determination, time management, and responsibility, but as leaders, we have the skills to do it. Remember to keep a positive mindset! Good luck with your resolutions!

PRO-TIP: A wonderful way to keep track of your New Year's resolutions is to use the FCCLA National Program, Power of One. By writing down a couple of your resolutions as goals, the outcome not only allows you to develop into a more responsible person, but also get recognized for your efforts!



By: **Saheli Brennan**, Committee Chair

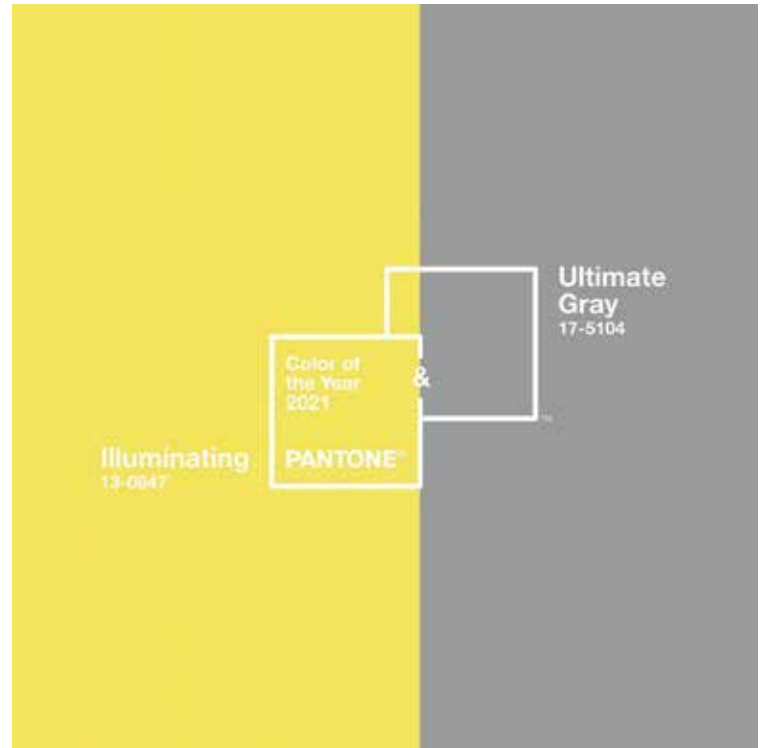
When people first hear the word “bootcamp,” they probably assume that the day will be intense. However, New Jersey FCCLA State Officers created a day full of fun and excitement for our members, giving the term “bootcamp” a new meaning.

NJ FCCLA held the 12th annual Leadership Bootcamp virtually starting on Saturday, January 9th and lasting one week. At the Leadership Bootcamp, the only “lectures” were ones about the importance of self-care and improvement, the only “drills” were exciting interactive activities, and the only “intense studying” we did was communicating with each other on how to be a better leader. Our attendees considered our Leadership Bootcamp to be a day of “incredibly fun activities with other people” and “a great way to learn about being a leader.” Attending Leadership Bootcamp was so meaningful for everyone who attended as we learned to be resilient and how to improve our personal effectiveness! This year's Leadership Bootcamp included live sessions and fun challenges throughout the week using a platform called “Goose Chase” (a mobile app and website accessible on another device). Attendees also received a t-shirt and mask, shipped directly to your house. Thanks to our leadership trainers, Catherine DiGioia-Weinfeld and Bill Plastine, for providing this life-changing opportunity for student-leaders from across the state!

NEWS FLASH... PANTONE'S COLOR(S) OF THE YEAR FOR 2020

By: Maxx Navedo,
Vice President of Community Service

Every year, Pantone picks a color of the year. This year, however, is very special. 2021 is the second time Pantone has ever selected two colors of the year. Why is this important? Well, this year's colors have a deeper meaning due to the pandemic and its effects. Pantone's 2021 Colors of the Year are Ultimate Gray (Pantone 17-5104) and Illuminating (Pantone 13-0647). A statement from Pantone, elaborating on the choice of two shades said, "two independent colors that come together to create an aspirational color pairing, conjoining deeper feelings of thoughtfulness with the optimistic promise of a sunshine-filled day." Both colors have independent meanings but together represent the human spirit. To me, these colors represent the light at the end of the tunnel. When you are going through a dark or negative time, remember that there is always something positive and bright that will come along at the end.



Pantone's 13-0647,
Illuminating

This is the second time yellow has been picked for the color of the year.

PANTONE 13-0647 Illuminating is a bright and cheerful yellow relating to solar power. Pantone describes the meaning of the color by saying "As people look for ways to fortify themselves with energy, clarity, and hope to overcome the continuing uncertainty, spirited and emboldening shades satisfy our quest for vitality."



Pantone's 17-5104,
Ultimate Grey

This year is the first time Gray has been selected. According to Pantone "Ultimate Gray is emblematic of solid and dependable elements which are everlasting and provide a firm foundation." Color is always associated with nature and because of that Pantone's statement said "The colors of pebbles on the beach and natural elements whose weathered appearance highlights an ability to stand the test of time, Ultimate Gray quietly assures, encouraging feelings of composure, steadiness, and resilience.

COMPETITIVE EVENTS: WHY PARTICIPATION IS IMPORTANT

By: **Amrutha Banda**, Vice President of Public Relations and
Melanie Mendonca, National Vice President of Competitive Events

Interested in gaining employability skills and industry insight needed to thrive in the 21st Century? Look no further and plan to compete in one of FCCLA's numerous competitive events! With 100+ national and state competitive events available, there is something for everyone. By participating in competitive events, you can set yourself up for career success as you explore Career Pathways and address important personal, work, and societal issues. Each event is designed to help members develop specific lifetime skills in character development, creative and critical thinking, interpersonal communication, practical knowledge, and career preparation.

At the State Leadership Conference, you have the opportunity to compete in either a State Competitive Event or a STAR Event. State events allow members to compete with other talented students throughout the state. These events are a great way for members to develop and refine skills for career and leadership success as well as earn scholarships! This year the State Leadership Conference will be virtual, so make sure to follow the new rubric and guidelines to ensure success!

STAR (Students Taking Action with Recognition) Events are competitive events where members are recognized for achievement in team or individual projects focusing on leadership skills and career preparation. First and second place winning projects will have the chance to represent New Jersey in the National STAR Events at the National Leadership Conference. The events focus on fashion, culinary arts, child growth and development, FCCLA knowledge, business, and leadership. Check out the Spring Competitive Events tab on the New Jersey FCCLA website (njfccla.org) to find out more information on these exciting events!

Another interesting event and 100% virtual competitive opportunity for FCCLA members is the FCCLA/-Knowledge Matters Simulation with two different challenge simulations - one in personal finance and one in fashion. The Personal Finance event encourages you to test your financial literacy skills through the simulated life of a person! You'll be opening bank accounts, paying bills, filing taxes, applying for credit, and more! The Fashion track will test your team's abilities to manage a simulated fashion business. You will have to discover the new trends, how to promote via social media, design garments, and run your own fashion business! Additionally, this free event has cash award prizes and is a team event with one, two or three team members. The spring round begins on February 1 and ends on February 26, 2021.

With the multitude of opportunities, there is an event for everyone! Consider participating in competitive events today!





STATE EVENTS

Bread Basics
Cake Decorating
Fashion Runway
Civic Engagement
Food Truck Feud
Food Fascination
Hospitality 101
International Food
Lessons Learned
Luncheon Menu
 Showcase
Info Graphic
Manners Matter
Peer to Peer
Personal Patchwork
Reinventing Spaces
Storybook Ethics
Successories
Toys That Teach
Windows of Fashion
Yarn Art

ONLINE EVENTS

Digital Stories for Change
FCCLA Chapter Website
Instructional Video Design

STAR EVENTS

Baking and Pastry
Career Investigation
Chapter in Review Display/Portfolio
Chapter Service Project Display/Portfolio
Culinary Arts
Culinary Math Management
Early Childhood Education
Entrepreneurship
Fashion Construction
Fashion Design
Focus on Children
Food Innovations
Hospitality, Tourism & Recreation
Interior Design
Interpersonal Communications
Job Interview
Leadership
National Programs in Action
Nutrition and Wellness
Parliamentary Procedure
Professional Presentation
Promote and Publicize FCCLA!
Public Policy Advocate
Repurpose and Redesign
Say Yes to FCS Education
Sports Nutrition
Sustainability Challenge
Teach and Train

BUDGETING WITH THE 3 S'S: SAVE, SHARE, & SPEND

By: **Agush Jasnani**,
Vice President of Membership

Handling your finances is a part of growing up for everyone, and sometimes it is difficult. Whether or not you are handling your own finances or handling funds for FCCLA, money management is something that comes with a great deal of responsibility. One of the basic rules of handling money in a responsible manner is the 3 S's: Save, Share, and Spend. By using these three rules, many people learn the value of money, the importance of saving for the future, and being a responsible member of society. A combination of the 3 S's can lead to a balanced and healthy lifestyle in the future.

SAVE

Accidents happen...a lot. This is one of the harsh realities of the world. In order to be prepared for accidents, it is of the utmost importance to have money saved at all times. You never know when you are going to need it, and having money saved up will never hurt you. The hard part about saving is avoiding impulse purchases. Once you set a spending limit, you need to hold yourself accountable so that your savings do not drain from your account. There will always be bigger things to save up for in the future and one way to help yourself save is weighing the pros and cons of a purchase. Defining your needs and wants is one of the key factors of saving and teaches people about the satisfaction of delayed gratification.

SHARE

Sharing is caring. A great way to teach people about the importance of money is to teach them about generosity. Kindness and giving back to society is something everyone should respect. Helping others is not only a direct source of giving back but it also teaches compassion to young adults and displays their fairness and willingness to compromise. Sharing your money is only one way of giving; sharing time and talent is also important. Giving to others in need demonstrates kindness, caring, and good citizenship.

SPEND

There are two types of purchases that we all make. Those of necessity and those of luxury. Spending on necessities are unavoidable and should not be put off, as these items should always be on hand. Some necessities are food, clothing, and medication. Purchases of luxury include items that we don't necessarily need, but we want in our lives because we think it makes our life better or easier. These types of purchases should be used as rewards for good behavior or simply when you need to enjoy yourself. The thing with luxury purchases is that it is very easy to go overboard with your spending, so make sure to be responsible. Knowing the difference between "needs" and "wants" is an especially important part of money management.



WINTER FASHION TRENDS

By: **Maxx Navedo**,
Vice President of Community Service

Fashion is one of the easiest ways to express yourself! Even though we are in a pandemic, fashion still remains relevant and hasn't gone anywhere. The trends for this winter are quite unique and surprising. Some of the newest trends are white outfits, puffer pieces, body con dresses, and neutral tones.

WHITE

The days of wearing white after Labor Day being considered taboo are long gone. Many people associate winter times with neutral colors, but not this year. Everything from white suits, white purses, and white shoes are all the rave.

NEUTRAL

Neutral tones are once again a very popular trend for the winter month especially anything that is cream colored from shoes, tote bags, and anything you can think of. Neutral tones are in full force! Neutral tones are often some of the easiest color styles.



PUFFER JACKETS

As always puffer jackets are a popular trend, especially among the youth. Not only are puffer jackets popular but so are puffer pants, vest, and even bags. This year tackle those freezing temperatures in style with a puffer garment of any color.

"Anyone can get dressed up and glamorous, but it is how people dress in their days off that are the most intriguing."

— *Alexander Wang*



THROUGH A PANDEMIC

By: **Ms. Ashley Gerber**,
Shawnee High School FCCLA Adviser

Just like many historical events, I think that everyone can recall exactly where they were on March 13th, when the world shut down. I remember leaving school on March 12th and saying to my students, "I'll see you on Monday!" Little did I know that would be the last time some of them were ever in my classroom. From then on, we all adapted to a new way of teaching and learning. I know for me I learned new ways to teach fashion and clothing with very few students having sewing machines at home. It's hard to believe that almost 10 months later, this is still our reality. In the spring when our in person FCCLA conference was cancelled, the questions started pouring in. "What about our projects?" "What about Nationals?" I for sure didn't have any answers to these questions for my members, but I put my best effort forward to keep them motivated. I encouraged them to continue working on their projects because I knew in the end there would be a solution. I made sure to continue meeting with my members and helping them with their projects so that they could be successful at the State level and hopefully the national level. I know my students along with so many other FCCLA members were so excited that they were finally able to showcase their projects. Over the summer, our executive council met several times to discuss what FCCLA was going to look like during this new school year. We decided that we would hold both in-person and virtual meetings, which eventually turned into all virtual meetings. One of the best things to come out of all of this is the new way to use technology. In years past if a member couldn't make a meeting because of a sport or another club, they would just have to get the rundown from myself or another member. This year, we are able to record all of our meetings and it keeps all the information in one place. I have noticed by doing this our member engagement is so much better and our meetings are much more productive. As for the rest of the year, we are continuing with the virtual meetings so that everyone can be included, whether they are hybrid or fully remote. I know for all of us it has been a struggle to motivate our students and members this year, but with a little adjustment and finding new ways to reach our members, we can still have a successful FCCLA year. In the words of Tim Gunn we have to "make it work".

CELEBRATING SAFELY DURING A PANDEMIC

By: **Amanda Chen**,
NJ FCCLA Committee Chair

With the New Year, MLK Day, Valentine's Day, and other events like birthdays or anniversaries, there is much to celebrate! However, during a pandemic, it is essential to make sure you are protecting yourself and others. If gathering in person, be sure to maintain social distancing by staying at least six feet away from others while wearing a mask. Try to keep your gathering numbers as small as possible and stay outdoors if you can. Lastly, wash your hands and use hand sanitizer often, wipe areas that are commonly touched, and limit the amount of people preparing and handling food.

These alternatives can also help with celebrating safely:

Go Virtual: In this virtual world, creating a Google Meet or Zoom meeting is an easy and safe way to spend time together! This way, you can still see everyone while staying in the comfort of your own home.

Celebrate with Your Own Household: Celebrate with the people in your quarantine bubble! Playing games, holding contests, watching a movie, doing karaoke, baking together—there are an abundant quantity of activities you can do to bond with family and celebrate your event.

Remember, the safest way to celebrate is to keep your interactions virtual or with the people you are already living with. Be sure to follow the above tips for a safe celebration!

FCCLA: NAVIGATING 'HYBRID'

**Q & A with Rutherford High School's
Keira Yablonsky, Class '22 & Emma Wong, Class '21**
Fall Conference Medal Winners
Mrs. Howard & Mr. Bergen, Advisors

Q: What was the most challenging aspect of preparing for the Fall Conference, with regard to hybrid engagement with fellow students, staff, school building & community?
How did you overcome this challenge?

Keira: The most challenging aspect of preparing for the Fall Conference was knowing that this year's conference was going to be so different, however, the project still had to be done well! We didn't know what to expect but were able to overcome the uncertainty that came with the virtual conference by working together and motivating each other.

Emma: For my group, the most challenging aspect of preparing for the Fall Conference was being unable to meet in person to collaborate on our event, Virtual International Food Experience. It was difficult because our project had many different components that needed to be delegated and discussed, including a PowerPoint slide show and a video presentation. We overcame this challenge by communicating with each other at every step of the project through video chats and text messaging to ensure everyone understood their role and to prevent any confusion. Although it was a different experience than previous years, each group member worked diligently to complete their part of the project and we were able to combine all the pieces successfully.

Q: What structure and support did you receive as you were preparing for the conference?

Keira: While preparing for the conference, our advisors and my fellow officers motivated each other to work hard and help one another even though there were so many strenuous circumstances. We reminded each other of what FCCLA was truly about and the growth that was going to take place from the experience we were being given.

Emma: As we prepared for the conference, a large amount of support came from our advisors and the other members of our chapter as we navigated the entirely new requirements of our events. Whenever we had a question or were unsure how to approach a certain aspect of our project, our advisors were helpful in figuring out exactly what to do. Across the entire chapter, all members were also very supportive of each other. Everyone was willing to offer advice and encouragement to another group if they had competed in the same event in past years.

Q: With respect to the foundational values FCCLA embraces, what has the 2020 year taught you?

Keira: 2020 taught me the value of family and community. As a community, we had to critically think of ways to safely help one another in order to push through this year. Using the skills that I have gathered throughout my time with FCCLA, I was able to offer more to my community. Also, this year has taught me that personal growth is essential- whether it be mentally or physically. It's hard to help your community without being able to help yourself.

Emma: In the same way FCCLA values the growth and personal development of its members, 2020 has given me the opportunity to grow in preparation for my adult life. Throughout life, there will always be uncontrollable changes that you are required to overcome, and overcoming the obstacles of 2020 has helped aid that development. 2020 has taught me the importance of being able to adapt to any situation I may face now or in the future, and this past Fall Conference was an excellent experience in adjusting to change as everything was moved online.

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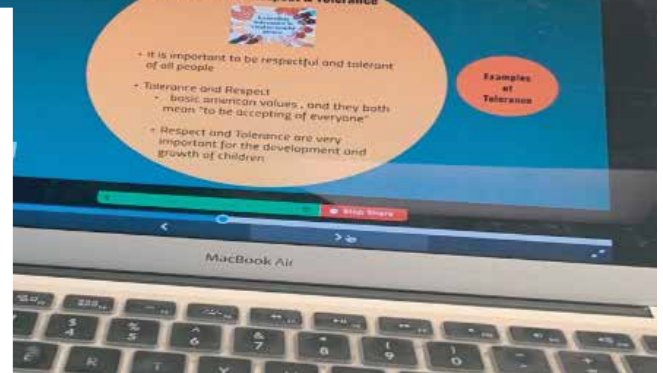
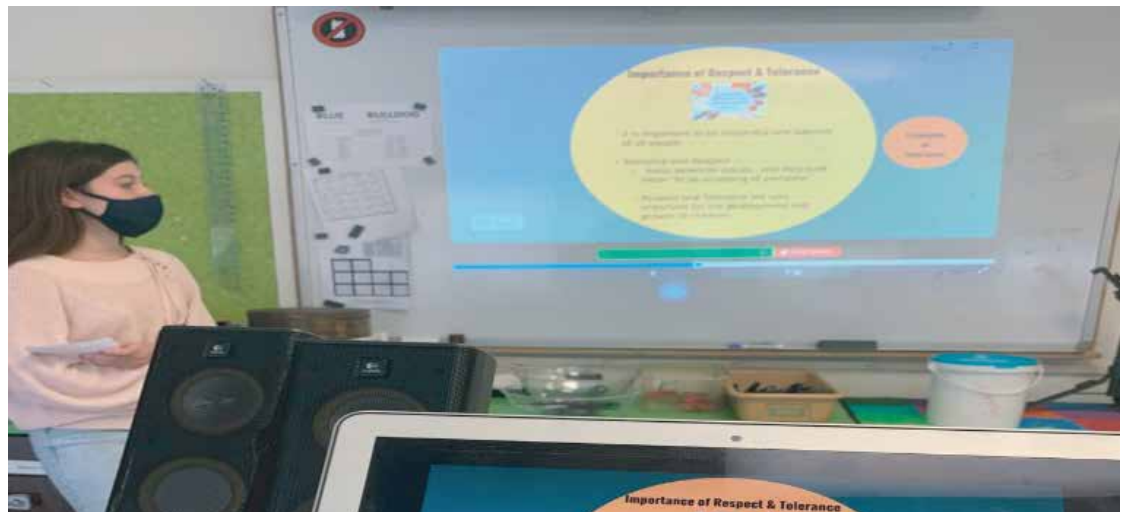


FCCLA: NAVIGATING ‘HYBRID’ (CONTINUED)

Q: What is one FCCLA memory that will stand out for you as you reflect on the 2020 year?

Keira: Besides seeing the excitement of my fellow classmates receive their awards, the laughter that came with creating my projects with my partners, and the conversations we had at our meetings. The thing that stood out to me the most from FCCLA was the variety of different workshops available. This demonstrated the different ways different organizations and fellow high schoolers from around the state live their lives and approach situations differently.

Emma: One FCCLA memory that I will never forget from 2020 was the first meeting of the year in September. This was the first time we had a hybrid meeting where half of the members were in-person and half joined through Zoom. It was an interesting experience because our advisor had to speak to both groups at the same time and various members spoke in school and from home. I also knew FCCLA would be a unique experience compared to previous years, but I was still looking forward to the virtual conferences and workshops. I will always remember 2020 as the year we were challenged both as students and future leaders of America.



INCREASING PLANT-BASED FOODS

By: **Joshua Lipman**, John P. Stevens High School FCCLA Member

With McDonald's announcing the "McPlant," it seems like the consumption of plant-based food is on the rise. Almost every fast-food restaurant has a plant-based meal on their menu, from the Impossible Whopper at Burger King to the Beyond Sausage sandwich at Dunkin Donuts. But you can't eat fast food every day, so how can you increase plant-based foods in your diet at home?

What are plant-based foods?

To increase plant-based foods, you first need to know what they are. Plant-based foods are simply foods that are not made from animal products. There are endless ways to increase the number of plant-based foods in your diet. One thing to know is you don't have to be vegetarian or vegan to increase your plant-based foods consumption. One prominent diet that is high in plant-based foods is the Mediterranean diet. This diet is proven to reduce the risk of heart disease, cancers and depression, and it increases mental and physical functions. Mediterranean diets are based heavily on fruits, vegetables, herbs, nuts, and whole grains. It has moderate amounts of poultry and seafood, and very little amounts of red meats and dairy.

What are some ways to increase plant-based foods in your diet?

One important way to increase plant-based food is to eat different types of vegetables. Many vegetables, such as chickpeas and beans, are good sources of protein. Leafy greens are high in iron and other important nutrients and vitamins. Also, think about meat as more of a side, rather than the centerpiece of your meal. Aim to have one meal a week be completely vegetarian. Instead of using salt, try using spices and herbs. In addition, increase good fats in your diet, like avocados, nuts, and olive oils. Remember, it's OK to occasionally eat meat and dairy products.

Why go plant-based?

As mentioned before, plant-based diets have immense health benefits. Mediterranean and vegetarian diets can curb cancer and heart disease (the top two causes of death in the United States). In addition, having a plant-based diet significantly curbs greenhouse gas emissions. If everyone had a majority plant-based diet, greenhouse gas emissions by the food industry would be halved.



delish!



AVOCADO AND WHITE BEAN WRAP

INGREDIENTS

1½ cups cooked great northern beans or
1 (15-ounce) can, rinsed and drained
1 tablespoon liquid aminos (or tamari or soy sauce)
1 tablespoon white balsamic vinegar
1 large or 2 small avocados, halved
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
2 tablespoons fresh parsley or cilantro, if preferred
1 tablespoon diced canned green chiles
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
½ teaspoon onion powder
Sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 lavash wraps or large wheat tortillas
1 to 2 Roma tomatoes, thinly sliced
2 large handfuls of baby spinach

DIRECTIONS

1. Sauté the beans in a large frying pan over medium heat for 1 to 2 minutes or until warm. Add the liquid aminos and cook, stirring occasionally, until the liquid has cooked away. Add the vinegar and cook, stirring once or twice, until the liquid has cooked away.
2. Remove from the heat and mash the beans with a fork.
3. Scoop the avocado flesh into a large bowl and mash until there are no chunks. Add the mashed beans, lime juice, parsley, green chiles, garlic powder, paprika, and onion powder. Mix until combined. Add the salt and pepper to taste.
4. Spread half of the avocado mixture onto one wrap or tortilla. Add a row of tomato slices across the shorter dimension of the wrap, an inch or so from one edge, a row of spinach next to it, another row of tomatoes, and another row of spinach. Roll the wrap over the first row of tomatoes, and continue until it is completely rolled up. Chop into 3 to 4 sections.

Repeat with the second wrap and remaining ingredients and serve. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Note: You can substitute chickpeas for the white beans. Try serving the filling as a dip for chips!
<https://www.forksoverknives.com/recipes/vegan-burgers-wraps/avocado-white-bean-salad-wraps/>

VEGAN LENTIL SOUP

Enjoy the perfect cup of soup to warm you up on a cold day!

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Yields: 4 servings

INGREDIENTS

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 medium yellow or white onion, chopped
2 carrots, peeled and chopped
4 garlic cloves, minced
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon curry powder
½ teaspoon dried thyme
1 large can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes, lightly drained
1 cup brown or green lentils, picked over and rinsed
4 cups vegetable broth
2 cups water
1 teaspoon salt, more to taste
Pinch of red pepper flakes
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1 cup chopped fresh collard greens or kale, tough ribs removed
1 to 2 tablespoons lemon juice, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Warm the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Once the oil is simmering, add the chopped onions and carrots. Cook until the onions are translucent, which should take around 5 minutes.
 2. Add the garlic, cumin, curry powder, and thyme. Stir constantly and cook for 30 seconds, or until fragrant. Then, pour in the diced tomatoes. Cook for another couple minutes, stirring frequently for an enhanced flavor.
 3. Pour in the lentils, broth, water, salt, pepper flakes, and black pepper. Raise the heat and bring the mixture to a boil. Partially cover the pot, then reduce the heat and let the mixture gently simmer for 25-30 minutes, or until the lentils are tender but still hold their shape.
 4. Use an immersion blender to puree the soup until smooth. Add the chopped greens and cook until they are softened to your liking. Remove the pot from the heat and add the lemon juice. Add any more flavorings and spices to taste.
- Serve and enjoy while hot! The soup will remain best stored in a refrigerator up to 4 days, or freeze and store for months.



SKILLET BROWNIES

Dig into this decadent brownie this winter!

Prep Time: 25 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yields: 6-8 servings

INGREDIENTS

10 tablespoons unsalted butter

8 ounces coarsely chopped semi-sweet chocolate

1 cup granulated sugar

3 large eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

½ cup + 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

2 tablespoons cocoa powder

¼ teaspoon salt

1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

DIRECTIONS

Melt the butter and chopped chocolate in a medium saucepan, stirring constantly, for about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow it to slightly cool for around 10 minutes. During this time, adjust the oven rack to the lower-third position and preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease your oven-safe skillet.

Whisk sifted sugar into the cooled chocolate mixture. Whisk the eggs and vanilla into the mixture until smooth, then fold in the flour, cocoa powder, salt, and chocolate chips.

Pour the batter into the skillet and bake for 30 minutes, or until you insert a toothpick into the center and it comes out mostly clean, with a few moist crumbs.

Let cool for 10 minutes before serving. For some optional embellishments, you can add chocolate syrup, maraschino cherries, whipped cream, or your favorite ice cream!

Mmm!



STATE OFFICER'S NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

*new year,
new me!*

Sophia Patel

My New Year's resolution is to help members of my community through service as we collectively come out of this pandemic and find our "new normal."

Samhitha Mupharaphu

My New Year's resolution this year is to spend more time looking for the light in everything! As a senior, having a lot of big moments in my life turned virtual and just not being able to spend my last year in high school alongside my friends has been a challenge. Instead of focusing only on what I lost, I want to consciously work towards a more positive outlook on what is going on in my life!

Gianna DeBruyn

My New Year's resolution is to get in shape! I want to start working out more and building muscle to get ready for the upcoming track season. My hope is that I will have a sophomore track season as long as it is safe to practice and compete. Since March, I have been slacking off in keeping up with my workouts. I will start doing at-home workouts by following online videos and the workouts that my coach sends me. I can't wait to feel better about my abilities as a runner!

Ayush Jasnani

My New Year's resolution is to be more physically active. With quarantine, I definitely stopped moving around as much and spent less time outdoors. I want to make sure I am exercising and going outdoors when I have the chance in the new year.

Melanie Mendonca

My New Year's resolution is to do my laundry on time!

Amrutha Banda

My New Year's resolution is to read more novels in 2021! Because we spend so much of our time on technology, I would really like to take up reading again so that I can use my free time doing something productive.

Saheli Brennan

In 2021, every day I will read for at least 30 minutes and I will spend an additional 30 minutes playing my instruments or working on a music piece.

Maxx Navedo

My resolution this year is to finish working on my Mini Cooper and making it ready for the road.

Amanda Chen

One of my New Year's resolutions is to keep in touch better with my friends and family! With all the change and busy times happening, it has been harder to keep contact and check in with everyone, so I would like to connect better in 2021!

Jityaashri Gurubaskaran

My New Year's resolution is to learn French. My friend inspired me to learn French after making me a playlist of some good French songs that make you feel like you're running through the streets of Paris. And since I am heading off to college this year, I could do a study abroad program in France. It's a huge task to take on but I'm willing to put in the time and effort. Bonne année et bonne chance!

GET PUMPED FOR THE 2021 STATE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE!

By: **Gianna DeBruyn**, Vice President of Leadership Development

Whether or not you have been to the New Jersey State Leadership Conference (SLC) in the past, you will soon discover what an amazing experience it is! Members can demonstrate skills and display projects while enjoying the inspirational messages of motivational speakers. Between competitive events, keynote speakers, workshops, and much more, there is something for everyone. The SLC is a great way to expand your leadership skill set through the opportunities available to you.

Members are able to compete in State or STAR Events. Be sure to read the article about SLC Competitive Events to learn more! Along with competitive events, SLC offers inspirational keynote speakers and workshops! There are two keynote speakers at the conference; one at the opening general session, and one at the closing general session. NJ FCCLA offers our members some of the best speakers in the country. These speakers are truly amazing and you should be very excited to learn from them! The workshops at the SLC are very versatile. Some workshop include cooking, fashion, career preparation, and National Programs. This conference offers you these workshops and speakers to further your FCCLA journey and leadership skills.

The pandemic has kept most of us somewhat isolated. The State Leadership Conference is the antidote to seclusion. One of the most important aspects of the SLC is the ability to network with other members from around our state! During some workshops, you can engage in activities with other members. Through this, you can collect ideas on community service events, fundraisers, and activities you can bring back to your chapter. Another benefit of networking is simply to make a new friend! Having connections around the state can benefit you in many ways. Networking is very important and the SLC is the place to do it!

The 2021 State Leadership Conference is your place to shine! The SLC is your time to engage. On behalf of the State Officers, I hope to see you there! <https://www.njfccla.org/state-leadership-conference>

