A New Beginning

Hayley Lee
State President

Our 2015-2016 SkillsUSA Michigan State Officer Team is excited for a successful year that will create skilled workers, professional leaders and champions in the workforce. Back in April, six SkillsUSA champions made a commitment at our State Conference to be a state officer. It is now their responsibility to make your state better and stronger.

We have a very diverse officer team with representation from all over the world and our state. We have representation from the inner, outer and lakeside cities. Our officers are also diverse in nationality: Central Asian, African, American and Latin American. It is important to have diversity in a team because it brings different perspectives from different cultures.

Each of your officers was put to the test by: filling out an application, interviewing with SkillsUSA advisors, taking a written test on SkillsUSA, campaigning for their votes to be on the team, and delivering a speech on why they should be elected as state officer. Six positions were filled and a new era for SkillsUSA Michigan arose. The elected six officers after the State Conference had a meeting in May in Dearborn. At this meeting each officer had these assignments: to create a thirty second personal introduction, to prepare a five minute speech, to list personal goals for the year as a state officer, to recite the SkillsUSA pledge and to know three officers parts in Opening and Closing Ceremony.

During the three day meeting, the state officers also attended leadership training in which they were given a list of assignments to memorize and recite before the departure time. Also at this meeting officer positions were elected. I will now introduce you to our team.

Your State Historian, Oybek Kamalov from Kentwood, MI, attends Kent Career Technical Center (KCTC) where he studied information technology, and is now studying CADD (Computer Aided Drafting and Design) Engineering. He dreams to have his own organization to improve future technology. Oybek is a hard worker and a great addition to our team.

Your State Parliamentarian, Tenin Jabathere from Wyoming, MI, is a Criminal Justice student at KCTC. She is a very problem solver and plans on going to law school to further her education after college. Hayley’s duties on the team is to be the leader and make sure everything is in order throughout our term of office. She is honored to have this position and loves being a part of the state officer team.

Dominic Modderman, your State Reporter, is from Mano, MI. He is also a student at KCTC where he studied Graphic Communications and is now studying 3D Animation. He is unsure of what he will like to do after college but whatever decision he chooses he will do great things. Dominic is full of ideas and always fills us in on the latest news. Dominic brings the laughter in our team but he always knows when to take care of business.

Your State Secretary, Laura Buendia, is from Saginaw, MI. She is a student in the Culinary program at Saginaw Career Complex. She dreams of someday owning her own bakery called, “Laura’s Gourment.” She is very organized, takes instruction and then her performances amaze us all. Laura always has a positive attitude and that’s a great trait to have on our team.

Now let’s meet your State Vice President, Ashlyn Gillard from Bay City, MI. She is a dedicated student at the Bay Arenac ISD Career Center where she studies Building Trades. Ashlyn is a motivated student who dreams of owning her own business in renovating houses. She does a marvelous job of fulfilling her duties or whatever we may ask of her. Ashlyn has a big heart and we are glad to have her apart of the team.

Finally, let’s meet your State President, Hayley Lee from Coopersville, MI. She is a student at KCTC in the Criminal Justice program. She is so dedicated to her tech center that she never leaves! She always looks for opportunities to better herself and participates in as many activities as possible. She is a problem solver and plans on going to law school to further her education after college. Hayley’s duties on the team is to be the leader and make sure everything is in order throughout our term of office. She is honored to have this position and loves being a part of the state officer team.

These six skilled, professional leaders make up your marvelous State Officer Team!
The skills gap is a common concept in the world of work. Put simply, it is the disparity between the skills workers have and the skills that industry requires. The Manufacturing Institute’s 2011 report put the size of this gap at around 600,000, and their latest and more alarming 2015 report estimates that over the next ten years 2 million manufacturing jobs, that require skilled workers, will go unfilled. Yet, as of August 7, 2015, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that 8.3 million Americans are out of work. What could cause this counter-intuitive divergence? And what does it mean for America’s youth?

One of the main reasons that the labor force is falling behind is innovation. In the words of the Manufacturing Institute, “Many manufacturers have redesigned and streamlined production lines while relying on the same skills and training program. While some remaining job roles will require less technically skilled workers, ironically, these trends and innovations actually demand more skilled workers.” These trends are not just true for manufacturing. They also apply to career fields such as design. According to the Harvard Business Review, graphic design has gone from print to web to mobile in a matter of years; education can’t keep up, and job experience isn’t always transferable. Situations like these create a deficit of qualified workers.

On top of that, many jobs go unfilled because of their respective stigma. The idea of the stereotypical plumber, electrician, or construction worker deters many candidates. Very few people go to high school or college with these careers in mind. In fact, they are under employed. According to The Guardian, 40,000 people were trained for 72,000 jobs in building and engineering trades and 127,000 people were trained for 275,000 jobs in the construction sector. Despite this the vast majority of these jobs have a quality paycheck. According to Career Bear, a junior plumber can make $37,000 to $52,000 a year and an experienced plumber can rake in between $54,000 and $72,000 a year. According to Chron, the average salary for an electrician falls at around $52,910 with the bell curve ranging from $30,390 to $82,680, and the typical construction worker can bring in $20,000 to $58,900 with the average salary falling around $35,020. All this while the “typical individual American earns $27,519 per year” according to My Budget 360.

Here is an opportunity, because the things that manufacturers are missing in workers aren’t that hard to develop. According to the Manufacturing Institute, the four major things that manufacturers can’t find in job applicants are technical and computer skills, problem-solving skills, basic technical training, and math skills. These problems can be solved by turning away the cultural perception of work as either delightful or drudgery.

The idea that students have to pursue their passion or end up miserable is not reality. Mike Rowe of Dirty Jobs supports this assertion: “Never follow your passion but always bring it with you.” Telling young people that their future careers must be delightful is leading them away from the philosophy of pursuing everything that they do with the same propensity they bring to the things that they enjoy. If an individual has the opportunity to pursue his or her passion, great, but many don’t have that privilege. In addition, the things that employers can’t seem to find in workers can be solved simply through active engagement. This includes passionately and actively pursuing school, college, and an internship. These should give an individual the skills as well as accreditation he or she need to engage in a career.

Career and Technical Education, and Career and Technical Student Organizations, such as SkillsUSA, can improve one’s employability. Students will need to take the good with the bad and put their best foot forward in both. But above all, as Mike Rowe has said, “Stop worrying about your happiness. Happiness does not come from a job. It comes from knowing what you truly value, and behaving in a way that’s consistent with those beliefs.” If America’s youth is going to bridge the skills gap, more often than not, they are going to have to go where the work is, not where they want it to be.

Let’s Talk Technical

What comes to your mind when someone says “technical training?” I asked students this very question to see. I got answers like “machinery,” “technology,” and “labor.” All these answers reflect the hard skills to be learned and appreciated in technical training. Career and technical education can be defined as an opportunity for students to learn how to perform skilled trades, career preparation, applied sciences, and modern technologies. The main goal of the training is to push students toward their vocational goals.

Technical training is very important in today’s society because it prepares the next generation for the workforce. Have you ever wondered how a chef knows how to cut chicken so that it stays tender when it cooks? Or how a mason knows which side of the brick needs to be laid down to create a perfectly level wall? Or even how hairstylist cuts the perfect layered bob? It isn’t because they read about it online, or attended the fanciest university rather it is because they received hands-on technical training from industry leaders who have had experience with that field of work. Students are taught the skills needed to perform these jobs for their favorable career. Whether it be getting into the carpenters union or opening a “5-star” restaurant in Times Square in New York, Career and Technical education creates competitive student and skilled future employees.

SkillsUSA holds an important role in the world of Career and Technical Education. SkillsUSA provides that outlet to connect these newly trained students with businesses seeking their employment. It also provides a means of friendship and relationship building through competitions. Students are able to meet other students from around the nation in their field when they attend competitions at the national level. Career and Technical Education is all about the students and their success. SkillsUSA enhances the experience so that the students get the best out of their education and training.

My experience with technical training is beyond rewarding. I’m enrolled in Building Trades at the Bay Arenac ISD Career Center. Although there is some classwork, it is very minimal. I’ve always been a “hands on” learner and technical training is just that. It has provided me with the opportunity to do very well for myself with a trade. I’ve gone through masonry where I laid walls with brick and block in multiple designs. I used tools like brick chisels and brick hammers alongside a huge mortar mixer. I gained experience with carpentry. I could finish a basement right now with the skills I’ve learned. We even learned residential wiring where we practiced wiring simple circuits. We learned the art of conduit bending. All of these skills can’t be learned from a book. These are hard skills that need to be taught by trained professionals and that is exactly where technical training has found its place.
"As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands, one for helping yourself and the other for helping others." - Sam Levenson

What does it mean to help another person? Does it mean you run into the line of fire to save them? Or does it mean that you prescribe medicine for them, to cure an illness? It could be any of those things, but what if you aren’t trained to do those things? Is there any other way to help others? Have you ever thought about giving your time and effort to help another person? The greatest thing about giving is there is no special training needed.

Sometimes we seem to forget about those who are less fortunate than us. We also don’t think about how big of an impact we can have on their lives by giving our time and effort. Volunteering and giving to charity is a way of enlightening our minds to a world that is completely different than our own, which helps us connect with others and understand them better. When you see a kid in the winter who doesn’t have a mitten and you have an extra one, just simply giving them that extra mitten could save them from feeling the pain of frostbite and their hearts will be warm with their fingers. That is a great example of how simply giving something to someone or helping them can make such a huge impact on their life.

At our National Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, a group of students and advisors were given the opportunity to give back to the community that welcomed SkillsUSA with open arms, as host of our conference. Also, on July 22, 2015, the State Officers were in Lansing and helped pull weeds as a Community Service Project at The Giving Tree Farm. Those are just some examples of your state officers doing their part in giving.

We encourage you to give to others in the same way, with a whole heart. Simply going downtown to a homeless shelter and helping give out food is a great way to give back to the community. Another great way to give back to the community is by giving a couple old books to a book drive. By doing this, you are giving some kids the opportunity to learn the beauty of reading. Giving requires no training, but the joy that you feel when you see a less fortunate person smile, just because you took the time out of your day, is the best feeling in the world. If you don’t know about any charities or how you can give back to your community, then ask your advisors and your schools about some charities around you.

“There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up” - John Holmes
SkillsUSA Questions and Answers

What is SkillsUSA? There can be many ways to explain what SkillsUSA is. Of course, the most common one is that SkillsUSA is a Career and Technical Student Organization serving more than 330,000 high school and college students and professional members enrolled in training programs in technical, skilled, and service occupations, such as welding, auto mechanics, and culinary. More precisely, SkillsUSA is built upon a framework. There are three parts to the framework which are personal skills, technical skills and workplace skills. When learning about personal skills, SkillsUSA members (champions) cover values such as integrity and work ethics. In workplace skills, they learn about good communication and teamwork. Job-specific skills, computer and technological literacy are included under technical skills.

What are the goals of SkillsUSA? The goal of SkillsUSA is to mainly strengthen the future workforce by training students in their desired fields. SkillsUSA has seven major goals that relate to all of the programs in some way: professional development, community service, employment, ways and means, SkillsUSA championships, public relations and social activities. In professional development, SkillsUSA prepares students in the workforce. By participating in Community Service Projects, SkillsUSA promotes goodwill and understanding among all segments of the community. Through employment, student awareness of quality job practices and attitudes is increased. The purpose of the championships is to offer students opportunities to demonstrate their skills and to be recognized. The goal of public relations is to make the general public aware of the good work that students in career and technical education are doing. And finally, social activities increase communication and cooperation among students and schools.

How has SkillsUSA made an impact? Because of SkillsUSA thousands of lives have been changed. Take, for instance, SkillsUSA member Alanna Ojibway. Alanna started a human services project in her junior year called “Walk the Walk” in order to help children in Uganda to have a sustainable education. There are also people from SkillsUSA that looked like they had no chance in succeeding in life, like Robert Figueroa, who grew up surrounded by gangs. He was shot in the eye, and other places, and had to have 4 surgeries. During those harsh times he also lost his brother and best friend because of a drive-by-shooting. His brother was shot 17 times and his best friend 5 times. Right at that moment he lost hope in everything, but thankfully his mom told him he should go back to school. He attended MTI where he participated in SkillsUSA and competed with MTI’s Opening and Closing Ceremonies team. He says whenever he recites the pledge, just the first sentence alone makes so much sense in his life. He says SkillsUSA and education healed him from all his sorrow and misery. Because of SkillsUSA many lives have been changed for the best.

Fall 2015 Envision Tomorrow Today

The Great Achievement

Laura Buendia
State Secretary

“In first place, Laura Buendia!” Those are the words I wanted to hear in my state competition. Now, at National Competition in Louisville, Kentucky, I was a competitor for Job Demonstration Open. There are four emotions that I felt: excitement, nervousness, eagerness, and exhaustion. Besides all that, in my opinion I think everyone should compete for something they love to do.

Excitement, a feeling of great enthusiasm and impatience. Heading to Kentucky was the main thing to make me excited. Knowing that I made it to Nationals overwhelmed me. The day was a big one for the thousands of people attending the SkillsUSA National Competition. Each day for each person was exciting and a new experience. I was the only junior in my culinary class to go to Nationals, it was a great opportunity for me.

Nervousness, being anxious and highly strung. Going to my contest orientation and competition was nerve racking. That’s when things have to be taken seriously. Business happens when you start competing. When I went to my contest orientation, my nerves were getting tense and I got nervous with all the rules being discussed. When it was the day of my competition, I was really scared because I was the first person to go. Even though I was nervous, I was still happy to have that experience of being in a competition for the first time. It can be a once in a lifetime chance for a few people.

Eagerness, having enthusiasm to do something. I was eager for a lot of things but I was mostly eager for the competition. On the bus on the way to Louisville, I was pumped just to get to Kentucky. Of course the downside was that it was at least ten hours away from Michigan. I was ready to get to the hotel and check into my room, everyone was excited when they were checking into the hotel. I was pumped to go to the actual hall where I would compete. Being eager was one of the benefits when you have to go to your competition. Thousands of people there were eager just to participate at Nationals.

Exhaustion, having lack of sleep. Even though I had a lack of sleep, I was pumped with energy for the next day. During my time in Kentucky, I had to wake up every day between six o’clock a.m. and 10 o’clock a.m. But at night, I still had a lot of energy. I had excitement each day just for the next day. For competition, everyone had to wake up early just like me. Sleep is important, so don’t stay up like I did because you will need every second of sleep. Even with some lack of sleep, it was still worth it for the competitors.

Although I felt all those mixed emotions, in my head it was worth it. Competition can be scary and everything but it’s really fun. I want to encourage every person to participate in a competition that they love to do. This was a great accomplishment for me. That was the best experience that I had and I want to compete again. It doesn’t matter if you win or lose, all that matters is that you had an amazing time.

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Do You Have What It Takes to Become an Entrepreneur?

There are many businesses that were started by young people with no business training or experience. Elementary, middle and high school students as well as college students have a vision. You can turn your vision into reality.

SkillsUSA can assist you in making your dreams your reality because you have the opportunity to use your skills in your occupational area at your CTE classes i.e. cosmetology, machining, building trades, graphic arts, culinary, etc., to become an entrepreneur.

As teachers we have the ability to challenge students to be the best they can be. We understand the power of connection. Remember that excuses will always be there for you, but the opportunities will not always be there for you. The students who have the desire are not motivated by a desire for wealth, but motivated by a vision that they felt compelled to make a reality. So if you have the opportunity to become an entrepreneur and you have that passion to own your own business, be like Nike “Just Do It!!”

The desire for money alone, would not have been sufficient motivation for them to have overcome the obstacles they faced. Their motivation was to create businesses that they believed would improve people’s lives.

The following are examples of entrepreneurs who made their mark in history:

Jeff Bezos the founder of Amazon.com is considered one of the wealthiest people in the world. He always considered himself a “super nerd”. At age 3 he did not want to sleep in his crib any longer, but his mom was not having that at all. So he tried to use a screwdriver to turn his crib into a bed. Later his grandfather motivated him to get into science and engineering. Jeff moved to Miami and at his high school became class president and valedictorian. There Jeff created the Dream Institute which was a program to encourage creative thinkers like himself. Being a creative child, he evidently went to Wall Street and saw how the internet was growing at a rate of 2300% a year. Later he created a business plan and rented a house with his wife and had a shop in the garage in his home. After a year developing database programs and building his Website, in 1995 Amazon.com was born. Jeff Bezos says “Work hard, Have fun and Make history”.

Madame C.J. Walker was born in Louisiana in 1867 and lived on a plantation with her parents and later stayed with her sister who was married. She was a cleaning lady until she was 43 years of age and later she became the first black self-made woman millionaire in America by creating hair and skin care products for women of color. Ms. Walker started with door to door sales for instructing hairdressers in her methods and her manufacturing of her hair and skin products. As a successful marketing strategy she organized her agents into the “Walker Clubs” that promoted her business as well as social and charitable events. When she passed away in 1919 she was the sole owner and president of the Madame C.J. Walker Manufacturing Company. She left a rich legacy of black female entrepreneurial leadership that has benefited and inspired women all over the world.

Who loves Mrs. Fields Cookies? Debbie Fields opened her first cookie store when she was 19 years of age. She loved baking ever since she was 13 years of age, but did not know how to open a store. Finally at 30 years of age she owned more than five hundred Mrs. Fields Cookies stores over 25 states and 5 foreign countries. She grosses over 300 million annually from 1000 outlets in 9 countries. Once you find something you love to do, be the best at doing it!

Thomas J. Burrell founder of the first black owned advertising agency in 1971. After six months in business he was penniless, but by 1972 he landed a huge client, McDonald’s. His campaign for McDonalds was one of the first to target a specific ethnic or racial demographic being very successful. Upon having successful advertising for McDonalds that opened the door for him to create campaigns for them. “The important thing is to enjoy yourself and continue to work. I know life is a journey, not a destination, that’s also true in business- your objectives keep moving”.

What would we do without computers and software? Bill Gates was always fascinated by computers and at age 13 he was programing them. In 1973 he went to Harvard University and he developed the programing language BASIC for the first microcomputer, the MITS Altair. In 1975 he started Microsoft with his friend Paul Allen. Gates dropped out of Harvard his junior year to devote his full attention to developing user friendly software for personal use. “The bottom line is that business is going to change more in the next 10 years than it has in the last fifty years.” What a very true statement!

The desire for money alone, would not have been sufficient motivation for the entrepreneurs mentioned for them to have overcome the obstacles they faced. Their motivation was to create businesses that they believed would improve people’s lives. Therefore, what is on your mind? Are you ready to get motivated and become an entrepreneur?
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SkillsUSA Michigan had great showing at the 2015 National Leadership and Skills Conference held on June 22-27, 2015 in Louisville, KY. SkillsUSA Michigan was represented by 238 students, advisors, and guests from 39 High School and College/Postsecondary chapters.

SkillsUSA Michigan received a total of 21 medals, including 7 national champions. SkillsUSA Michigan also had 70 of the 142 contestants place in the top 10 in their contest in the country.

Over 6,000 students from every state and three territories competed in 100 contests in technical, skilled, health and service occupations at the SkillsUSA Championships. The SkillsUSA Championships are considered the largest single day of corporate volunteerism in America and valued at $30 million in industry support of donated time, equipment, cash and material. All contests are run and judged by industry using industry standards for employment.

The national medalists from Michigan are below. Photos of all the medalists are available at http://miskillsusa.org/.

### Gold
- **Aviation Maintenance Technology**
  - College/Postsecondary
  - Jordan Lumnis, Western Michigan University
- **CNC Technician**
  - High School
  - Ryan Rodzos, Saint Clair TEC
- **Diesel Equipment Technology**
  - High School
  - Anthony Langeland, Careerline Tech Center
- **Restaurant Service**
  - High School
  - Sarah Bobier, TBA Career Tech Center
- **Robotics and Automation Technology**
  - High School
  - Mitchell LeVasseur and Patrick Westerberg, Pinckney High School
- **Advertising Design**
  - College/Postsecondary
  - Bethanie Fuhrman, Macomb Community College
- **Early Childhood Education**
  - High School
  - Tori Cunningham, Bay Arenac ISD Career Center
- **Photography**
  - College/Postsecondary
  - Jacob Turskey, Macomb Community College

### Silver
- **Diesel Equipment Technology**
  - College/Postsecondary
  - Robert Beier
  - Ferris State University
- **Entrepreneurship**
  - High School
  - Blohm, Marissa Chacon, Savannah Hodges and Hope Tafel
  - Bay Arenac ISD Career Center
- **Prepared Speech**
  - High School
  - Chyesa Wade
  - Saginaw Career Complex
- **Technical Drafting**
  - College/Postsecondary
  - Tyler Cook, Ferris State University
- **Television (Video) Production**
  - College/Postsecondary
  - Katie Baker and Maxwell Rodriquez
  - Macomb Community College
- **Promotional Bulletin Board**
  - High School
  - Adam Pelletier and Mackenzie Pickell
  - Bay Arenac ISD Career Center

### Bronze
- **Advertising Design**
  - College/Postsecondary
  - Bethanie Fuhrman, Macomb Community College
- **Early Childhood Education**
  - High School
  - Tori Cunningham, Bay Arenac ISD Career Center
- **Photography**
  - College/Postsecondary
  - Jacob Turskey, Macomb Community College

### Advisor of the Year
**Mr. David Hollinger**

Each year, SkillsUSA Michigan selects an outstanding advisor who goes above and beyond the call of duty. At the 2015 State Leadership and Skills Conference, David Hollinger from Oakland Schools Technical Campus SW was honored as the SkillsUSA Michigan Advisor of the Year for his dedication to his students, his chapter and to SkillsUSA.

Mr. Hollinger has provided his students with academic and technical workplace skills and helped to enhance their students’ confidence. His devotion to assist all learners mold their career path is unending. He has had at least one state qualifier for the past 22 years, with 12 of his students going on to compete in the national championships. As the Collision Repair advisor at Oakland Schools Technical Campus SW, Mr. Hollinger has spent countless hours, before, during and after school, to help his students compete at the highest levels.

Congratulations to Mr. Hollinger and thank you for your tireless dedication to SkillsUSA Michigan!
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