Would You be APosed to a Dual?

Successful students often aspire to improve their high school experience by taking challenging classes. There are several reasons that you may aspire to do this as well. You may want to increase your transcript’s appeal to colleges, expand your knowledge, or you may simply enjoy pushing yourself. While there are plenty of reasons to challenge yourself academically, there are two primary ways of doing it in high school, AP classes or dual enrollment.

AP, or Advanced Placement, classes are designed to be comparable to the rigor and workload of college courses. Depending on the class and the school, AP classes can be a little harder or a litter easier than college courses. While the purpose of AP classes is to prepare you for the AP exam, you are not required to take an AP class in order to take the exam. The exam grade is what colleges care about. You must score a three or higher to receive college credit for the course. However, some colleges require that you score a four or above, while others do not accept the exam at all. You should always check to see if the college that you would like to attend accepts AP exams before taking them.

Advanced Placement classes and exams can provide some significant advantages. Earning college credit in high school allows you to enhance your college experience. You may be able to graduate earlier, study abroad, or even have a double major or a minor. Even if you do not score a three or above on the exam, taking an AP class may give you a preview of what you will cover in the college equivalent and help prepare you for the difficulty of college classes.

Dual enrollment classes are taken at your local or community college. They count toward both high school and college credits. Unlike AP classes, which last the entire year, they only last one semester, allowing you to take more classes before you graduate. Because dual enrollment classes are at actual colleges, there is a wider variety of field-specific topics available to you than what may be offered at your high school. Your SkillsUSA program might be a dual enrollment class. This allows you to better pursue the field that interests you. Taking courses specific to your intended major affords you additional freedom in college, helps you decide if your intended major is right for you, and can save you time and money. Dual enrollment is also an excellent idea for those who do not plan to attend college. It allows you to expand your knowledge and improve your resume without costing you as much as attending college full time. Your school may even pay for some, if not all, of your dual enrollment classes.

Dual enrollment classes offer many of the same benefits as Advanced Placement and more, but there are a few reasons why you may not wish to take part. They are college level courses, and they go on your high school transcript. That means if you are unable to meet the demands of the course and you receive a subpar grade, it will lower your high school GPA. You should also take your schedule into account. College classes are not made to accommodate high school students. You must consider not only the time of the class, but also how much homework you will receive and how long it will take you to complete it. Finally, just as with AP classes and exams, you must ensure that the credits you would earn through dual enrollment would transfer to the college you plan to attend after high school.

Advanced Placement and dual enrollment classes each offer their share of advantages and disadvantages. It is up to you to decide which path is best suited to you. However, it is important to keep your limits in mind. Taking on too much will only slow you down and create a less gratifying learning experience. While these classes may help you achieve your goals, it is your hard work and determination that will secure them. You may decide to take these courses in conjunction or not at all. Whatever you do, do it to the best of your ability and you will go far.
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Shanette Gonahves
State Treasurer

Giving Tree Farm is certified organic meaning, an intricate process took place to receive their certification. This process involved submitting an application and having a third party come verify the farm. No pesticides are used and they rotate the crops as a means of fertilization and help maintain good soil. They follow strict sanitary guidelines regarding how they handle and wash their produce.

Much like SkillsUSA, Giving Tree Farm strives to help better the community. They provide vocational training and therapy programs for individuals with brain injuries. People from 18 all the way up to their 50s and 60s come to Giving Tree Farm where they learn and participate in painting, carpentry, weeding and harvesting.

Every year, the SkillsUSA Michigan State Officers volunteer in a community service project to help give back to their communities. SkillsUSA helps to instill good values and leadership qualities in students. It also helps students become productive members of society and encourages them to give back to their communities. Going to Giving Tree Farm is a good intro experience for officers, like me, to put these newfound skills into practice.

What Is SkillsUSA?

Abby Beyer, State Reporter

SkillsUSA is an organization for technical skills students in high school and college. There are many different opportunities. The motto is “Preparing for Leadership in the World of Work”. This means that skills you learn while in SkillsUSA can be used in your job, career, and life. One of the purposes of SkillsUSA is to create enthusiasm while you are learning a skill. Two experiences that students can be involved in are the Fall Leadership Conference in November and the State Leadership and Skills Conference in April that the state officer team plans and assists in the coordination. Community Service Projects are also an important part of SkillsUSA as well as a focus on education.

SkillsUSA has been around since 1965. It has had many changes over the years. In the beginning, it was called VICA - Vocational Industrial Clubs of America. Later it was called SkillsUSA - VICA and now it is just SkillsUSA. The executive director is Timothy W. Lawrence and he has been there since 2001. He was at the 2016 Michigan State Leadership and Skills Conference in April. I got to meet him in the interview room for the state officers when I went through the process of becoming one.

As a SkillsUSA member, you belong to a large organization in the United States for students who want to showcase their career training. This happens at competitions that can be local, regional, state, national and even the world. An example would be if you were a student in a Law Enforcement class, you could participate in the Crime Scene Investigation or Criminal Justice competition. Most career programs have competition where the student can “compete” against other students within their field of study. Any SkillsUSA member can compete in a Leadership competition such as Prepared Speech, Job Interview, and Job Skill Demonstration. There are many others. Students can even become a President, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer within a chapter that happens at your school.

What got me into SkillsUSA? It was my advisor from my career technical center. She told me about all the benefits of being a state officer. Some of the experiences I have had are: working with people from all walks of life, meeting people from all over the state of Michigan (like my local state senator and state representative which I did this summer) and gaining leadership qualities that I will use in the long run. This will help me go further in my career and my life. I have already used my leadership skills. As an example, I was a squad leader in my band in high school and I used the skills that SkillsUSA has taught to teach the kids how to play their instrument. It has given me confidence do anything I put my mind to. Employers look for SkillsUSA on your resume. Colleges even look at it. It means that you have leadership qualities that not everyone has. Because of SkillsUSA I have had more confidence to speak in front of people.

To summarize, I think you should get involved with SkillsUSA. It is a great organization and it has changed my life. It is a lot of fun and I have really enjoyed meeting people and working with others who have different opinions but coming together for the same goal. Check it out with your teacher at your career center and join. It’s totally worth it getting this experience - you won’t get it anywhere else!

Our job when we went to Giving Tree Farm was to help weed. We were assigned to a large area and split up into pairs to tackle different sections. It was only 10:00 in the morning and the temperature was so hot I was receiving extreme heat warnings on my phone. Aside from pulling weeds, we were frequently taking 30 second breaks to run through the sprinklers and cool down. I took a break to pet the farm cat and ended up having a photoshoot with fellow officer Jackson.

Despite the heat, I actually had a lot of fun pulling weeds. I felt a sense of accomplishment when we finished. I also learned a lot about how organic farming works and the kind of skills involved to run a farm. It was a great bonding experience and helped me get to know my fellow officers better. It was rewarding to know that even though my job was small I helped make a difference in someone’s life. I encourage you, to do the same.

In SkillsUSA, our training falls under personal training and team training. Personal training involves more of an assessment that must be done at home and helps to improve your work ethic, while SkillsUSA team training works to improve a person’s ability to work together with others and to improve their social skills. This is a huge boost to one’s confidence and you learn the difference between when it’s okay to joke and when to be serious.

The personal training involves the focus on the Professional Development Program (PDP). This program helps to show a person their learning style, their self-motivation, short-term goals, and what they think the future holds for them. It shows different lifestyles to teach us more about others’ lives. The PDP also helps us to learn about basic work ethics.

During our training, it helped me improve my self-confidence, which enabled me to go from giving a presentation in front of a small classroom to presenting to a large group of people. I know this to be true because after our first SkillsUSA training session, I had to give a presentation about my Career Tech Center in front of 200 9th and 10th graders along with a few teachers. Aside from giving my presentation, I was told by a lot of other classmates that I did “awesome,” “great,” and my personal favorite, “You must have practiced non-stop.” To be truthful, I barely practiced at all. The training during National Conference helped my self-confidence grown even more.

One of my hardest problems I have is learning the difference from when to joke around and when to stop and be serious. Before attending the National SkillsUSA Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, I never gave a thought about when to be serious or working with the team. This might seem like the easy thing to learn, but for me, this was the hardest thing to learn. It is something I still have a hard time dealing with. It would mainly cause me to get a hot head with my team or I would act like a child.

SkillsUSA helps improve one’s social skills by teaching others to get out of their comfort zone or at least making it easier for them to let people in. I have always been an introvert throughout my life. While being in SkillsUSA, I have noticed that my introvert personality has slowly been going away, evolving more into an extrovert type. The training at Nationals allowed me to work with different people with unique personalities and to even befriend National Officers.
On April 10, 2016 at Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, eight bright and talented SkillsUSA Michigan members were elected to serve on the 2016-2017 Executive Council. Your new council comes from across the state of Michigan, and in fact, all but two of the council members come from a completely different city! On May 14, 2016, the 2016-2017 Executive Council traveled to Dearborn, Michigan for Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) State Officer Training. The council gained an extensive knowledge of SkillsUSA, as we built stronger leadership skills and business relationships with the state officers from BPA (Business Professionals of America), DECA and FCCLA (Family, Career & Community Leaders of America). While at CTSO State Officer training, we also determined our titles on the council let’s meet the new council!

Jackson Rohn of Kent Career Technical Center is the westernmost officer of the council. Jackson will be serving the council as the State Sergeant-At-Arms while studying 3D Visualization & Animation at Kent Career Technical Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan. His vibrant personality will always keep the council lively this term!

Ka’Tonya Jenkins will be serving the council as the State Historian! She comes from Saginaw Career Complex in Saginaw, MI where she studies Culinary Arts! Saginaw is the closest city to being beachfront of all the of council! Her witty humor and warm personality are a pleasure to have on the council!

Dearius Keller hails from Detroit as our southernmost officer in SkillsUSA Michigan. He’ll be serving as the State Parliamentarian for the year. He comes from Randolph Career Center where he studies Masonry. His humor and dancing skills keep the entire council entertained!

Your State Reporter is Abby Beyer, she is our most central officer on the council! She comes from Eaton RESA Career Center where she studies Law Enforcement. Her kindness and intelligence are very strong assets to the success of the council!

Shanttel Gonsalves will be serving as the State Treasurer. She also comes from Saginaw Career Complex in Saginaw, Michigan where she studies Culinary Arts (just like her partner in crime, Ka’Tonya Jenkins). Her upbeat personality and caring spirit is a blessing to have on the council!

Christina Hiotaky is the State Secretary. She comes from Oakland Schools Technical Center-Southeast (shortened to O-Tech or OSTC) in Royal Oak, Michigan where she studies Engineering & Emerging Technologies. Christina is our most suburban officer of the council!

Last but not least, your State President is our easternmost officer on the council. She studies Engineering & Culinary Arts at Genesee Career Institute in Flint, Michigan. Without further ado, your 2016-2017 SkillsUSA Michigan State President is Tyler Richardson!

With the council’s differences in their hometowns, we see the differences in each other’s lifestyles, and this diversity will provide a unique insight for the council in making decisions for this upcoming year!
What is your dream, your aspirations, your goals? Have you thought about your personal or educational goals?

One of Oprah’s life’s lesson is “When you do the work you are meant to do it feels right and every day is a bonus regardless of what you are getting paid.”

When you think about your goals and aspirations, keep that statement in mind. Sometimes in life we have setbacks, something always seems to get you off track when you feel you have it all together. Occasionally you have to reassess your life and the direction you want to go. Knowledge is power. What is great about knowledge is no one can take it away from you.

In life there are many obstacles that will stand in your way. Failure is not an option. However, the way through the obstacles and challenges is to be still and move forward. We are still be among the stars. We all have stumbled in our lifetime young or old. Setbacks will come and go. If there are no setbacks, how can we have comebacks. The question is how are you going to handle them? Earl Nightingale says “We become what we think about. All of us are self-made but only the successful will admit it.”

“What an interesting thought!

If you want something out of life, maybe a goal you want to reach, or just simply change your life in a dramatic way, it is not going to be easy. You have to overcome the negative habits and thoughts that are going to surround you on a daily basis. We face roadblocks and adversity every day. You can either live your dreams or live your fears. Fear stands for the ‘false evidence or expectation appearing real’. What can you be afraid of, sometimes we have to walk by faith not by sight. Some people run through life scared. What are some of the things that you would like to do, a bucket list if you will? Life is about growth. When we change ourselves, our lives will follow suit and change as well. You can stay in your comfort zone or you can face your fears.

What are you wild about? Each of us has a passion, enthusiastic, wild side. Starting a new job or maybe you want to start your own business. Are you a risk taker? We all seek adventure in our professions, vacations and even relationships. We grow and learn through motivation for risking and accepting a challenge. Think about what you really want to do, take that risk and do not allow anyone to put a damper on your dreams or goals. We are living in an incredibly challenging world. Sometimes you take negative risks which can cause a ton of problems. However, risks is not a negative attribute. We do not seem to pay attention to risking until it is a crisis. Take that leap of faith! Create innovative ideas. Your ideas will be determined by the quality of how you think and the challenges you create. You make choices every day, make the correct one. Set the bar high and go for it! So how do you know when you are doing something right? When your goals and aspirations are met, it just feels good. When in doubt, don’t do it!

Ask yourself what is holding you back and preventing you from reaching your goals, the only answer is “yourself”. There are two words “I am” which give you the power to change your life? When you are positive you can help discover your unique abilities and advantages to lead a more productive life. Being positive will determine the kind of life you will live. This will bring success or it will bring failure. Whatever follows the words “I am” is going to come looking for you.

If you have defined your goals, a vision board will give you the opportunity to illustrate them visually. Therefore, they can be placed on the mantle, refrigerator, night stand or anywhere that it can be seen on a daily basis. Inspiration will come to you when you take the time to look at your vision board often.

Creating a vision board is one of the most valuable visual tools to bring your written goals and aspirations to life. There are no rules, you cannot mess it up. A vision board is a tool used to help clarify, concentrate and maintain focus on a specific life goal. Literally, a vision is any sort of board you can display images that represent whatever you want to be, do or have in your life.

As Les Brown stated, the only limits to the possibilities in your life tomorrow are the “buts” you use today. So make the commitment to move forward. We are living in trying and challenging times. There is pressure at work, school and even stressed at home but with the right tools and a positive attitude you can make your goals and dreams come true.
Compete to Eat

Have you ever been in a skills competition that involves others with the same mindset as you? Some people say that competing against others boosts your ego and makes you more humble to be better than that person. In my perspective, I do agree that it boosts your ego, because it made me want to go beyond my goal of finishing and having the most perfect, beautiful, gorgeous, majestic, neatest project. Another reason why I agree is because as a little kid, I would always give up really easily and like not even put the effort into what I was doing. Therefore, you should always want to go big because you never know where it might lead you in life.

The fun part about actually competing is you get to see how far you can go and make sure you do your best. Also, to see other students from different schools that might have the same mindset as you. You meet new people, you learn new things, and experience things you might haven’t experienced in life before. The other students had more history looking into this than me so they knew more about my field, because they’ve been there longer. So I learned from them which was really fun and interesting because now I’ve learned something new.

I don’t want to over exaggerate but in SkillsUSA there’s like billions of competitions that you can enter! Ok, maybe around 80, but that is still a lot and any varieties that you can choose from. It’s just like when you want to go to Golden Corral all you can eat buffet, that’s what these competitions are. For example, there are competitions like Fire Fighting, Criminal Justice, Culinary Arts, Carpentry and Welding. Nevertheless you can’t forget about my skill trade, which is Masonry. This is generally a highly durable form of construction.

Any and everywhere there’s always going to be competition but the place to go is SkillsUSA! It gets you ready for the easiest to the hardest competitions. Just basically getting you ready for whatever competition you might come across. With that being said the way to go is my trade and compete to eat.

Advisor of the Year
Ms. Julie Ivan

Each year, SkillsUSA Michigan selects an outstanding advisor who goes above and beyond the call of duty. At the 2016 State Leadership and Skills Conference, Julie Ivan from Saginaw Career Complex was honored as the SkillsUSA Michigan Advisor of the Year for his dedication to his students, his chapter and to SkillsUSA.

Ms. Ivan, in the words of her administration, is a focused and driven individual with high expectations for everyone she works with. She has been the advisor for thousands of students over the past 30 years, with medalists at the regional, state and national level. Because of these accomplishments as the Culinary advisor at the Saginaw Career Complex, she is now an international judge and industry expert at the WorldSkills competition for Bakery Pastry Arts. She has served SkillsUSA Michigan on the Advisor Council as the Region 3 Junior Representative and is currently serving as President.

Congratulations to Ms. Ivan and thank you for your tireless dedication to SkillsUSA Michigan!
SkillsUSA Michigan at the 2016 National Conference

SkillsUSA Michigan had great showing at the 2016 National Leadership and Skills Conference held on June 20-25, 2016 in Louisville, KY. SkillsUSA Michigan was represented by 214 students, advisors, and guests from 39 High School and College/PostSecondary chapters.

SkillsUSA Michigan received a total of 33 medals, including 12 national champions. SkillsUSA Michigan also had 63% of our contestants place in the top 10 in their contest in the country.

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

Gold

3-D Visualization and Animation
High School
Steven Szalanski, Melanie Mrozek, The Utica Center for Science & Industry

3-D Visualization and Animation
College/Postsecondary
Dana Kedzior, Rob Rudaitis, Macomb Community College

Automotive Refinishing Technology
College/Postsecondary
Wyatt Knick, Washtenaw Community College

CNC Milling Specialist
High School
Jacob Hisscock, Saint Clair TEC

CNC Technician
High School
Matthew Pringle, Saint Clair TEC

CNC Turning Specialist
High School
Kyle Mueller, Saint Clair TEC

Early Childhood Education
High School
Kennedy Clyde, Bay Arenac ISD Career Center

HVACR
College/Postsecondary
Ryan Gallagher, Ferris State University

Job Interview
High School
Landry Shorkey, Bay Arenac ISD Career Center

Job Skill Demonstration Open
College/Postsecondary
Bryce Sinclair, Macomb Community College

Silver

American Spirit
High School
Grant Fry, Bay Arenac ISD Career Center

Automated Manufacturing Technology
College/Postsecondary
Tyler Cook, Andrew Ketchum, Elijah Buist, Ferris State University

Collision Repair Technology
High School
Tyler Stroup, Saginaw Career Complex

Digital Cinema Production
High School
Dominic Krupp, Reid Riley, Kent Career/Tech Center

Screen Printing Technology
High School
Lauren Lahie, S & W Washtenaw Consortium

TeamWorks
High School
Gavin Vanoosterhout, Kyle Schmitzer, Jack Gilmour, Chandler Robbins Bay Arenac ISD Career Center

Bronze

Automated Manufacturing Technology
High School
Phillip Burtell, Nicholas Kurgin, Matt Hargrove, S & W Washtenaw Consortium

Diesel Equipment Technology
High School
Ryan Meppelink, Careerline Tech Center

Esthetics
College/Postsecondary
Patricia Kachaterian Mecosta Osceola Career Center

Internetworking
High School
Matthew Schuster Lapeer County Ed Tech Center

Plumbing
High School
Tristan VanDyken Careerline Tech Center

Restaurant Service
College/Postsecondary
Rebecca Deslippe Oakland Community College - Orchard Ridge Campus

Welding
College/Postsecondary
Jeffrey Cejmer Washtenaw Community College
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