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**Articles & Letters Welcome for Publication**

**“Class of” Roll Call**

Keyontae Johnson
State President

Warning: what you read may cause excitement, fear, and motivation. Do not read before operating heavy machinery.

On September 5, 2017, I will wake up for the first day of high school for the last time. The look of nostalgia on my parent’s face has settled in my own heart and I’m reminded of the memories, trials and tribulations high school has brought me. I want to share a few pointers that helped me in high school.

To the Class of 2021:
The transition from middle school to high school will be rough. However, if you take my advice, the transition will be a lot smoother. Tip #1: You may grow apart from your best friends from middle school. It’s just a part of growing up! You and your friends will cling to each other in class for comfort, but as you make new friends, you will feel more comfortable mingling with other students. Take this chance to meet new people, your friends will always be your friend. Tip #2: ALL REPORT CARDS MATTER! Do not let upperclassmen trick you into thinking non-transcript grades are irrelevant. Those grades will average out your next report card. For example, receiving all F’s will require straight A’s just to receive a “C” passing average. Tip #3: Try something new, even if you only do it once! I went from a quiet bookworm to an outgoing athlete within 4 years. It strengthened my character, health, and I made new friends! Go to a football game, sign up for yearbook, color your hair. Live your life in high school, those 4 years will fly by quickly. I expect great things from you!

To the Class of 2020:
Congrats on making it to your sophomore year. You’re no longer the underdog, but you’re far from finished with high school. Soon, you’ll be taking the PSAT, a practice test for the SAT. To prepare yourself start doing online practice on Khan Academy and College Board. Do not panic, you will be fine, just breathe and practice, I heard it “makes perfect.” Tip #1: You are almost 16, build a resume. A resume is a compilation of all your volunteer work, activities, and accomplishments. Add babysitting, the clothing/can good drives at school, and helping your teacher grade papers and you have a start to your resume. Tip#2: Attend college field trips as early as possible. Exposure to college life can help you determine what you want to do. Tip#3: Start looking for scholarships. It is never too early to find free money.

To the Class of 2019:
Welcome to “junioritis.” Previous juniors have described “junioritis” as the burning desire to escape high school because you have one year left. You have to wait your turn like the rest of us had to do.”Junioritis” sucks, but I have tips to make it better. Tip #1: Prepare yourself for the ACT and SAT. The more prepared=better score=more scholarship money. Practice with the question of the day option on Khan Academy, you will not regret it. Tip#2: Make a vision board. Vision boards will help you stay focused and reduce the stress of making last minute future decisions. Log onto Pinterest and start one for free! Tip#3: Get a job. If you are 16, you are eligible for employment. Look for “open interviews” nearby or ask a counselor. I went to open interviews for Kroger and got the job that same day! When you go for interviews, be you!

To the class of 2018:
Stand up and take a bow! You are almost at the finish line. Tip#1: Stay focused! Don’t slip now because you’re ready for high school to be over. Don’t skip, do your homework and fill out your FASFA. Tip#2: Start preparing yourself for the future. Go after scholarships, think about what you want for yourself in 5 years, and if you’re going look for good colleges or trade schools. Tip#3: Go to as many events as possible. This is your last chance for whatever dance, game, or party you missed 4 years ago. I’ll see you on the other side of the graduation stage later!

**State Fall Leadership & Professional Development Conference**

The State Fall Leadership and Professional Development Conference on November 15, 2017 in Lansing is a great way to kick off your year and to motivate your school to have a great year with SkillsUSA Michigan. The conference is a combination of team building activities and breakout sessions presented by the State Officers on SkillsUSA with special professional development sessions specifically for advisors. The early registration fee is $30.00 per participant (students and advisors) and includes registration materials, and lunch.

Be sure to register today at [http://miskillsusa.org/](http://miskillsusa.org/)
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

- With 31 diverse degree programs, it is the 2nd largest College of Engineering Technology in the U.S.
- Faculty have distinctive industrial experience.
- Hands-on learning in premier laboratory spaces that feature the latest technological advancements.
- Participate in an assortment of professionally affiliated organizations, societies and student competitions, such as SkillsUSA at the college level.
- Variety of summer academic camps offered.
- Students highly sought out by business and industry prior to graduation with starting salaries well above average.
- Visit www.ferris.edu/admissions to learn more.
99,000, … That’s a very large number and could be the population of the 5th or 6th largest city in the State of Michigan. … It could represent the cost of a degree at a 4-year University in Michigan or the cost of a fully loaded Cadillac Escalade…… or could this 99,000 represent another important number?

What do you think that the 99,000 number represents?

According to the official State of Michigan job site, 99,000 represents the number of jobs we currently have unfilled in Michigan and most of these are the higher paying skilled jobs. That’s amazing given the fact that Michigan has its lowest unemployment rate since August 2000 and this coming year is showing continued growth as well.

Thanks to Henry Ford and others, modern manufacturing was born in Michigan. Given this legacy, people often talk about Michigan and tout that the great state of Michigan has the best talent of any state in the nation. In a recent report, Lou Glazer, the president of Ann Arbor-based nonpartisan think tank Michigan Future Inc. “We DON’T have the best talent, that’s the simple answer.”

I’m going to be a Senior this coming fall and during a recent college visit, I had the chance to speak with a highly tenured engineering professor with 35+ years of industry experience about the future of Engineering. His take, “American Engineers of the future will be different and will be the leaders. They will communicate and collaborate better than ever before. The new reality of American manufacturing is that we can no longer afford to pay high dollars for the basic engineering tasks. Those basics will be outsourced to other countries.”

Given today’s new world of work, Michigan is not filling many of these jobs due to a chronic shortage of skilled workers in many industries. High paying jobs like engineering, accounting and computer programming go unfilled. The cornerstone to these higher paying careers is education and or career training. The current cost of a 4-year education at a state university is out of reach for many Michiganers and our education infrastructure needs to re-dedicate significantly more resources to delivering quality CTE (Career and Technical Education) opportunities for our young people to be able to compete for these jobs. While our workforce is skilled in legacy manufacturing, we simply do not have enough talent to fill these open positions.

As the Michigan Vice President for SkillsUSA, one of the things that I’m most proud of is being able to witness all the students that do use SkillsUSA as a guideline for their success. These students get an opportunity to focus in on the trades and professions that they love to do and train to become experts at it. SkillsUSA is an organization that helps fill those open empty positions with skilled workers. These students can walk into their jobs confidently, knowing that they have what it takes to be successful. I’m glad to be able to help make a difference.

Looking for a bright future? Join SkillsUSA and get the competence and confidence you need to get one these higher paying skilled jobs. Michigan needs you!

There’s so many opportunities to get involved, you just have to find the one right for you! In Michigan, there is a community service program called the Michigan Community Service Commission (MCSC). With this program being one of the biggest in Michigan, they have opportunities all over the state! MCSC’s mission statement is “Supporting programs and activities to help get individuals get involved in their local community.” Some of the projects they’ve done are create a foundation to help underprivileged kids with college tuition, mentor young children, and plant trees in local forests. None of these beneficial actions would be possible without the strength of being backed by caring volunteers. Although it feels good to give back, MCSC recognizes these actions with awards such as the Governor’s Service Award. It’s possible for anyone to volunteer because there are always projects going on that can suit different people’s interests.

Getting involved is easy. Volunteermichigan.org is a great way to look up activities near you! Even going up to your local Boys & Girls club and asking to help out is just one way you’re making your community and yourself better. Any action no matter how big or small, truly leads to a better society. Community service is all about making a change for the better and how to change for the better.

I know from personal experience. I decided to volunteer to help out with Leader Dogs for the Blind. Leader Dogs for the Blind is an organization where volunteers like you and me can train puppies to be an aid to disabled people. I went there and helped make dog treats and toys for the dogs. While being there I even meet some dogs and had the opportunity to play with them. This was an amazing opportunity and I would do it again. It’s the little things you do that can make a difference in an organization or even someone’s day.

Volunteering is putting your time and effort to good use. Just like dominos, a little push can go a long way. Helping out in your community can make it’s a stronger, safer, and happier place. Community service is not only making a change, but also a way to create a better future.
They say, “Leadership is absolutely about inspiring action, but it is also about guarding against mis-action.” While participating in the skills competition, you are accomplishing both of those standards. You get the opportunity to prove why you are great at what you do, as well as display what new flavor you bring to the table. We offer a variety of competitions to compete in, ranging from interviewing to cooking or baking. Skills offers these competitions at different levels; there is the local, state, national, and sometimes international level.

Each of these levels have a Gold, Silver, and Bronze winner. Most students who are rewarded with a medal start to “feel” his/her self. Competing has a tendency to make you push yourself past your limits, and that by far is an amazing thing to do. It is you assuring yourself that no matter what is given to you; you are going to give it your all. People say that when you do win any competition that it boost your ego. I personally agree with the statement, to me it is not a bad thing. From experience when you’re called to go up to receive your medal, you are getting the feeling of relief. To know that you have shown your skill to people who are successful in that field and to have them genuinely appreciate your work is a wonderful feeling.

People who have the experience in the career field you have chosen are judging these competitions. That way, everyone who competes is given the same chance at winning. These judges are volunteering their time to come, watch, and listen to the student’s presentations. They score as well as ask questions and critique as needed. It is nice of them to take the time out of their busy schedules to be there and support your dreams. They want nothing but the best for everyone, and they show that in multiple ways. Most of the judges will look very intimidating when you walk in at first, but afterwards, when they are helping you out by giving you little tips and suggestions, you see that they are not so bad after all. They also take the time to make sure that everyone feels like a winner and realize all the accomplishment they have. They are sure to let the students know that even if you are only competing at a local level, the fact that you had the courage to present yourself to an audience is an amazing step for greater success.

When you have worked so hard for something and you turn around and go onto the next level, you feel like you cannot be touched. So yes, winning does boost up your ego and make you feel more confident but there is nothing wrong with that. Most students need that feeling occasionally, and as long as you’re not trying to use it as a way to make anyone feel bad about the work they have done, then it shouldn’t be a problem when you start to feel greater about yourself. Use competition to your advantage; use it as a tool to push yourself to greater lengths in your career. Do not forget that having your ego boosted isn’t a bad thing, just use it the appropriate way, make others feel as though they a champ even though they didn’t get a medal to go along with the title.
SkillsUSA is by far one of the most magnificent organizations known to the USA! Having supporters like Mike Rowe, Harley Davidson, and Mercedes-Benz and many more supporters, SkillsUSA has become an amazing association to become a part of. The organization has 18,000 chapters, yes I said, “18,000” across the country and 53 state and territorial associations having a total of almost 400,000 yearly members. SkillsUSA inspires millions of students across the nation with its Ivy League approach to cultivating young leaders today for industry tomorrow. SkillsUSA was founded in 1965, created by students and teachers who put grave importance on their professions and really wanted to produce more leaders in their chosen trade through training.

SkillsUSA creates opportunities to professionally prepare students with industry standard techniques, trainings, leadership opportunity, and competitions that prove to be platforms for growth. The benefits of our organization are limitless and range from students acquiring full ride scholarships to some of the most sought after colleges in our country and to empowering students with employability skills that will help them get the job they desire and a great start on a path to a very successful Future. Our organization has impacted many students in a major way, it has helped boost their confidence levels in their acquired skill and is molding them into a great leader. Not only does SkillsUSA create opportunities but is active communities, some members that are a part of SkillsUSA take out time to serve their community. It may be helping local veterans or even volunteering at local farms as well.

I believe that SkillsUSA offers great opportunities and insight for any student willing to learn and to accept the challenge. Which is why I strongly encourage you to join SkillsUSA. Every student should be prepared for the work force and I believe that SkillsUSA does an amazing job at preparing students for the future. By joining your chapter, you are making the first step to paving a finer future. With the help of SkillsUSA, the opportunities are endless and range from students acquiring full ride scholarships to some of the most sought after colleges in our country and to empowering students with employability skills that will help them get the job they desire and a great start on a path to a very successful Future. Our organization has impacted many students in a major way, it has helped boost their confidence levels in their acquired skill and is molding them into a great leader. Not only does SkillsUSA create opportunities but is active communities, some members that are a part of SkillsUSA take out time to serve their community. It may be helping local veterans or even volunteering at local farms as well.

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It’s SkillsUSA Time! Are you ready for the challenge? It is the commitment and a lot of hard work after you become a SkillsUSA member that counts. As a SkillsUSA paid member, you will become a champion just by signing up for membership and paying your SkillsUSA dues but you want to go a step further, competition! You will begin to practice getting ready for your first local competition, you will feel the excitement of your first competitive event and have butterflies in your stomach because you are so nervous. After competition, you find out that you did not place in the top five. Do you quit? (as we know, quitters never win.) You do not have a choice, because you have, the drive and the commitment to carry on even though you have conceded to the other winners, knowing that you are all winners. Les Brown always says “when you get knocked down, land on your back, cause if you look up, you can get up.”

Assess your goals and dreams and work on yourself and surround yourself with positive people. However, there are some people that do not want you to succeed or want to see you happy with yourself. Les Brown states “Only Quality People” (OQP), which talked about making sure you will be surrounded around positive people that will build you up instead of tearing you down. You have what it takes and everything you need to accomplish your goals just keep your eyes on the prize. Sometimes we someone to show us how to find our way, but you must believe in yourself. No matter how you look at it, there will be ups and downs, and twists and turns in life. Whatever it may be, you can always bounce back no matter how tough it becomes.

You must accept yourself (flaws and all; and we all have them) for who you are and who you want to be in life. You must be confident in yourself, determined to do your best and have that passion to want to succeed. You are the engine that powers your train. This is about you and you alone. Friends come and go and are great to have, however, it is you and yours alone that will make the decision to succeed, to join SkillsUSA.

One of my favorite Michael Jackson’s songs is “The Man in the Mirror.” I’m starting with the man in the mirror. I’m asking him to change his ways. And no message could have been any clearer. If you want to make the world better place. Take a look at yourself and then make that change.” What do you see in your mirror? Is there something in your life you would like to change? Hopefully you see passion, confidence, excitement, determination and commitment to complete your aspirations. These are the characteristics needed to become a member of SkillsUSA. Are you ready to join?

If one of your goals is to join SkillsUSA, don’t wait on someone who says they want to join SkillsUSA and you are sitting around waiting on your friend to join SkillsUSA to later find out they have changed their mind. How upsetting!

I urge you not to allow anyone to stop you from living your dream. Find out how you can become a SkillsUSA member. Once you hear the words to the SkillsUSA Theme song you, will be hooked. The song utters these words: SkillsUSA Champions at Work: Respected, Connected, Educated, Motivated, Dedicated, and Prepared. Do you have these traits? If so, then SkillsUSA wants you! So be independent enough to say “Yes” and join SkillsUSA.

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Mr. Stasser is a person who is described as passionate about SkillsUSA. He personally prepare countless students for the state and national competitions in both skill and leadership contests. As the Technical Drafting advisor at Bay Arenac ISD Career Center, he is a mechanical engineer by trade and passes along his knowledge and expertise to his students.

Congratulations to Mr. Stasser and thank you for your tireless dedication to SkillsUSA Michigan!
SkillsUSA Michigan had a great showing at the 2017 National Leadership and Skills Conference held on June 19-24, 2017 in Louisville, KY. SkillsUSA Michigan was represented by 232 students, advisors, and guests from 34 High School and College/PostSecondary chapters.

SkillsUSA Michigan received a total of 30 medals, including 7 national champions. SkillsUSA Michigan also had 73 of our contestants place in the top 10 in their contest in the country.

The national medalists from Michigan are below.

### Gold
- **Advertising Design**
  - High School
  - Anthony Moore, Lenawee ISD Tech Center
- **CNC Milling Specialist**
  - High School
  - Scott May, Saint Clair TEC
- **CNC Technician**
  - High School
  - Alexander Cope, Saint Clair TEC
- **Digital Cinema Production**
  - College
  - Jeremy Howell & Robert Marrocco, Macomb Community College
- **Plumbing**
  - High School
  - Andrew Funckes, Careerline Tech Center
- **Technical Drafting**
  - High School
  - Chase Rytlewski, Bay Arenac ISD Career Center

### Silver
- **3-D Visualization and Animation**
  - College
  - Tyler Allen & Keith Takens, Kent Career/Tech Center
- **Advertising Design**
  - College
  - Jennifer Clotfelter, Macomb Community College
- **Automated Manufacturing Technology**
  - High School
  - Logan Bruneau, Tobias Schmidt, & Jake Stein, S & W Washtenaw Consortium
- **CNC Turning Specialist**
  - High School
  - Brandon Lee, Saint Clair TEC
- **Early Childhood Education**
  - Tyler Ranger, Bay Arenac ISD Career Center
- **Marine Service Technology**
  - High School
  - Caleb LaFond, Wexford-Missaukee Area CTC
- **Mechatronics**
  - High School
  - Zachary Van Hooser & Dalton Lansky, Lapeer County Ed Tech Center

### Bronze
- **3-D Visualization and Animation**
  - College
  - Kevin Roddy & Robert Riparip, Macomb Community College
- **Automated Manufacturing Technology**
  - College
  - Trevor Purdy, Elijah Buist & Andrew Ketchum, Ferris State University
- **Culinary Arts**
  - High School
  - Kelly Zielinski, S & W Washtenaw Consortium
- **Diesel Equipment Technology**
  - College
  - William Cebelak, Ferris State University
- **Nail Care**
  - College
  - Kim P. Wilson, Mecosta Osceola Career Center
- **Photography**
  - College
  - Robert Kilgore, Macomb Community College
- **Pin Design**
  - High School
  - Allison Brooks, TBA Career Tech Center
- **Sheet Metal**
  - High School
  - Kyle McMurray, Lapeer County Ed Tech Center
- **Job Skill Demonstration A**
  - College
  - Hanna McBride, Macomb Community College
Undergraduate Programs

Apparel, Textiles and Merchandising
Applied Technology
Aviation
Business, Management, Marketing, and Technology
Communication Technology
Computer Engineering Technology
Construction Management
Electronic Engineering Technology
Hotel & Restaurant Management
Information Assurance
Interior Design
Mechanical Engineering
Mechanical Engineering Technology
Military Science and Leadership
Paralegal Studies
Product Design and Development
Simulation, Animation, and Gaming Technology Management

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