

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Amanda Nguyen

As you get ready to relax for the holiday break, don't forget about the exciting conferences that are yet to happen.

Already, California members have shown their enthusiasm by participating in FBLA's Leadership Development Institute held in Irvine and in Santa Clara. There, members were able to laugh, be inspired, and learn tips on how to become successful business leaders. Workshops run by section and state officers ranged from how to deal with stress to how to speak in public. To gear up schools for upcoming events, each section hosted their own Officers' and Advisers' Training (OAT) Day. All of the OAT days received positive feedback from participants and were a success. In the excitement packed month of November, members participated in the March of Dimes Prematurity Awareness Month; attended the National Fall Leadership Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, and celebrated American Free Enterprise Day. FBLA, time flies—in a few short months a great deal has been achieved.

As we head into another calendar year, more exciting events are in store for you. Show some spirit for FBLA during February 11-17 as you and other FBLA members participate in FBLA Week. Make sure to do something nice for your adviser on February 14, Adviser Appreciation Day. Advisers are the core of this organization; without their guidance, you would not be able to experience the great opportunities that FBLA provides for you. Don't forget the deadlines for Section Leadership Conferences coming up in January! The excitement for competitions is just around the corner.

With conferences, come campaigns. FBLA section and state officer applications will soon be posted on www.cafbla.org. If you look forward to networking with amazing students from all over the nation, are passionate about FBLA, or want to build your leadership skills, consider applying for office. Do you think FBLA has assisted you to become a better business leader? Give back to the organization by taking a hands-on approach to participating on a higher level for the organization. The experience of running is a worthwhile feat.

Whether you're working hard to complete exciting state projects, preparing for competitions, or planning to challenge yourself by running for a state or section office, don't hesitate to contact me or the state officers if you have any questions. Remember, membership deadlines are not until February, so keep your chapter's door wide open and welcome potential members who can still participate in what FBLA has to offer.

INTERVIEWING SKILLS

By Deshani Senewirantne

Sell yourself during the most critical part of getting that job, so here are some tips on how to do just that.

Tip 1: Plan Ahead - Do a little homework! Research the company and the position, if possible, as well the people you will meet with at the interview.

Tip 2: Role Play - Once you have finished studying, begin role playing (rehearsing).

Tip 3: Eye Contact - Maintain eye contact with your interviewer. Show that you want the job with your interest.

Tip 4: Be Positive - In particular, avoid negative comments about past employers.

Tip 5: Adapt - Listen and adapt. Be sensitive to the style of the interviewer. Pay attention to those details of dress, office furniture, and general decor which will afford helpful clues to assist you in tailoring your presentation.

Tip 6: Relate - Try to relate your answers to the interviewer and his/her company.

Tip 7: Encourage - Encourage the interviewer to share information about his/her company. Demonstrate your interest.

Tip 8: Facts - Bring your "Fact Sheet" with telephone numbers and addresses of your references and former employers just in case you are asked to complete an application.

Questions about the Californian?
Email Aria Srinivasan at pr@cafbla.org



FBLA WEEK IDEAS

By Vivian Chen

FBLA Week is February 8-14, the second week of National Career and Technical Education Month. Celebrate each day of FBLA Week and inform your school and community about the importance of school-to-work programs. To start the celebration, get a proclamation from a local body of government declaring the second week of February FBLA Week. Find the necessary contact information and make a request for a proclamation and ask if an official is available to present the proclamation to your chapter. Sample text for a proclamation can be found on the national website, www.fbla.org.

After the official proclamation of FBLA Week, your chapter can plan to celebrate each day with a theme or specific message. Some examples and activities include Dress for Success Day when students dress up in professional business attire, Community Service Day which would be a day to have a service event for your members, Faculty Appreciation Day the perfect opportunity to give gifts, cards, or hold a luncheon to appreciate your school faculty, or Networking Day plan a pizza party social at the park with other local FBLA chapters and help members meet new people through ice breakers and activities. To publicize each day of FBLA Week, be sure to put up flyers and make a poster for each theme and day. Also, please contact your local newspaper and send them a press release describing FBLA Week.

Also don't forget that the Wednesday of FBLA week is Adviser Appreciation Day. Advisers work hard in order to make it all happen, so show your advisers some love and appreciation by getting them something they can use while on the job! A great idea is to get them a camera so they can document and remember all the successful FBLA activities throughout the year. If not a gift, surprise your adviser with a reception or banquet in their honor. But, don't forget to give them a thank you card for their hard work!

GETTING STARTED WITH COMMUNITY SERVICE

By Luna Dai

Community service might be an overlooked type of activity with new chapters. After all, it's not exactly the first image that "Future Business Leaders of America" may evoke. However, community service is a staple for most successful chapters. It helps to serve as a great activity between conferences to keep members interested in FBLA, and is also a great way for members to bond with each other and with officers. Furthermore, community service is actually one of the cornerstones of the FBLA motto – "Service, Education, and Progress". Here are a few tips for getting started in community service!

1. VolunteerMatch

One of the best places to find community service activities is through the website www.volunteermatch.org. VolunteerMatch is an amazing database consisting of thousands of volunteer opportunities. Look for those that are "great for teens" and looking for a large number of people – for example, marathons, festivals, and other large-scale activities tend to work well.

2. Other Nonprofit Organizations

Do you have a particular nonprofit organization that you feel that your chapter should help? Even if they haven't listed an event on a community service database, they may still have other opportunities for your FBLA chapter to help! Contact a representative of the organization and see what you can do for them. For example, a public television station could be looking for volunteers to help taking pledges. You never know unless you ask!

3. Create Your Own Event

If none of the available opportunities really appeal to your chapter, you can also create your own event! If a local park is looking grungy, you could create a park cleanup event, or if you're interested in working with kids, you could tutor underachieving elementary school children. Be creative!



Students from Homestead High School work McClellan Ranch Park in Cupertino, CA.



Community Service is good for the community and fun!

PREPARE FOR TAKEOFF INTO THE 2009 – 2010 FBLA YEAR

By Kavya Shankar

Whether you'd like to change something about a conference, implement a new section or state project, or merely receive the chance to hone your leadership skills, if you have the vision for California FBLA's future, then you should take the opportunity to run for section or state office.

Holding a state or section office will give you a priceless and rewarding opportunity to truly make a difference on a larger scale and implement the ideas you hold for this organization. From presenting workshops at Officers' and Advisers' Training Day and the Leadership Development Institute to speaking in front of thousands at the California State Leadership Conference, you will strengthen your public speaking skills and confidence. Through your position, you will garner countless networking opportunities with FBLA members and business professionals. Further, you will learn valuable business skills from proper etiquette to introducing a guest speaker. And finally, for those who love the limelight, you will receive countless chances to stand on stage and serve as a role model for others.

However, don't allow the prestige and fame to take away from the meaning of the position. By choosing to run for section or state office, you are committing to a year of running workshops, writing articles, meeting deadlines, and attending meetings. However, with this increased responsibility comes greater power. Suddenly, your opinion and ideas will have more meaning, and it will be easier to change faults you see at the section and state levels.

If you have the passion, the drive, the leadership, and the vision for California FBLA, visit www.cafbla.org for an application in order to become a 2009 – 2010 section or state officer.

DUE DATES

By James Li

It's a horrible feeling—the sinking, depressing feeling one gets when one toils months and months over a computer, studying or finishing that report, only to find that the deadline was three days ago. Trust me. I've been there.

We all love to hate them, but deadlines are a necessary evil in the competitive business world, and it's the same for FBLA. So here are some key dates to keep in mind as we approach the new year:

January 16

Section officer applications received for Bay, Central, and Inland

Skill events school-site testing forms received for Bay, Central, Gold Coast, Inland and Southern

January 23

Section officer applications received for Gold Coast, Northern, and Southern

Skill events school-site testing forms received for Northern

February 3

The deadline for money received for membership in order for those members to be eligible to compete at the section conference.

Section conference registrations must be received by February 6 for Bay, Central, and Inland, and February 10 for Gold Coast, Northern, and Southern.

Finally, mail-in materials for the following events must be postmarked by February 13: Business Ethics, Business Financial Plan, Business Plan, Business Presentation, E-Business, Emerging Business Issues, Electronic Career Portfolio, Digital Video Presentation, Desktop Application Programming, Internet Application Programming, and Website Development.

NOTICE: Please pay careful attention to whether the above dates are “received” dates or “postmarked dates.” Allow at least a week for mail-in items to arrive before the “received” dates.

By Nikole Burg

On October 24-26, FBLA members from all over Northern California met to Prepare for Takeoff by attending the Leadership Development Institute—North at the Marriott Santa Clara. The weekend was packed full of invigorating leadership, career development, and officer and adviser training workshops. The incredibly busy weekend began Friday night with Playfair—the Ultimate Icebreaker. Members seized this opportunity to interact with others from the Bay, Central, and Northern Sections.

Saturday morning's opening session began with keynote speaker, William Smith. Mr. Smith discussed his past involvement in FBLA as he served as chapter president, state vice-president, two-time state president, and national president. He later graduated from Stanford University and is currently the senior manufacturing engineer at Nektar Therapeutics in San Carlos, California.

Following the Opening Session, more than 50 leadership sessions and exhibits concentrated on personal development, inspiration, leadership, FBLA, and college and career preparation were presented. In order to "Graduate with Honors", members were required to attend the Opening Session followed by six Leadership Breakout Sessions.

Members continued socializing and networking at the annual Blue Jeans for Babies dance on Saturday night. The fundraising dance gave members a chance to change out of their usual professional business attire and into a comfy pair of blue jeans for just \$1. The proceeds from the entry fee were sent to the March of Dimes, an official service partner of FBLA.



FBLA Members from the Laguna Creek High School FBLA Chapter on their way to their next leadership session.

On Sunday morning, members attended the closing breakfast session where they were filled with not only a delicious breakfast but the inspirational words of former National Vice President from the Western Region and California State Treasurer, Hae Carberry. Ms. Carberry currently works as a sales analyst at Kraft Foods. The conference was called to a close after recognizing those who "Graduated with Honors" and a conference flashback. Attendees surely had a blast experiencing new workshops, meeting new people, and Preparing for Takeoff.

LDI SOUTH RECAP

By James Li

Leadership Development Institute (LDI)—South this year was held at the Hyatt Regency Irvine, October 24-26, 2008. The critiques are in: this LDI was the best ever.

With hundreds of future leaders hailing from over twenty schools, the conference proved to be a great opportunity to network and develop business skills. The event was kicked off by a highly-entertaining keynote speaker, Disney's Chris Blackmore. Mr. Blackmore used his quick wit and entrancing magic to convey his message about understanding others, living a smart life, and teamwork.

Members were then able to attend up to eight workshops, ranging in college advice by professionals to section officer-led presentations in first impressions, study skills, stress reduction, new chapters, and much more. Many of these workshops included exciting networking opportunities and memorable icebreakers.

But that was only the beginning. Members of the local PBL chapters planned a very unique networking event, Terminal Tango, for all attending members; after a group tunnel and activities, students split into small groups to engage in activities that not only helped them get to know each other but learn valuable leadership lessons. A March of Dimes walk around the hotel was then followed by our annual March of Dimes dance.

Action-packed. Hilarious. Useful. In the eyes of many who attended LDI—presenters, members, and advisers alike—this year's conference definitely deserved two thumbs up.

AN FBLA INSPIRATION—WILLIAM SMITH

By Alice Lee

As members of FBLA, each of us enters the school year with a range of goals and aspirations in mind. Perhaps you want to simply learn more about business, or maybe your dream is to be elected to a state officer position. No matter our goals, FBLA alumnus and businessman Mr. William Smith is a former FBLA leader, competitor, and member to whom we can all look up.

The keynote speaker at the 2008 LDI-North Conference Mr. Smith inspired the crowd with his story about his experiences in the Future Business Leader competition, one in which he received first place at the national level.

He first became interested in FBLA through his mother's role as an adviser of the Virgin Island FBLA chapter. When he was in high school, he decided to take on various leadership roles, finally ascending to the highest officer position in the nation in his senior year. Mr. Smith spoke to the crowd of Bay, Northern, and Central Section members about his experiences as a chapter president, state vice-president of the Virgin Islands FBLA chapter, and finally, as national president in his senior year of high school. He held the crowd's rapture as he explained how when the announcer got down to announcing the winner of the presidential election, the power in the conference went out, adding a humorous spin on a serious situation.

After his extensive experiences in FBLA, Smith went on to attend Stanford University, majoring in the school's Mechanical Engineering Program. There, he found that many of the skills he had gained in FBLA truly served him as he became a better leader and student at the school. Currently, he is a senior manufacturing engineer at Nektar Therapeutics where his responsibilities include managing the development, installation, and operational implementation of medical equipment assembly. Yet, he firmly believes that his FBLA experiences, both as a competitor, member, and leader, have helped to shape him into the leader he is today. After all, as he likes to say: "Leaders are not born; they are made."

ATTENTION FBLA MEMBERS: FLEX YOUR WALLETS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

By Aria Srinivasan

The recession that has caused so much turmoil in America is said to be the worst economic situation we have been in since the Great Depression. Sounds a little scary, right? However, one of the things we can do to help the economy is spend frugally this holiday season.

Among the plethora of reasons why we are in a recession is the claim that people were spending, and are continuing to spend, without thinking and reasoning whether they can afford items. Although this mostly applies to home mortgage loans, it also relates to the way teenagers spend their money and thus their family's financial situation.

As FBLA members, we should be financially savvy and thus flex our wallets this holiday season! Think about whether you truly need a particular item before buying it and make sure you approve all expenses with your parents.

A good tip is to list all of the people you want to buy gifts for and about how much you plan to spend. Go to the mall with a budget so that you control unnecessary spending. Remember that the ramifications of this recession are countless, and we can do our part to assuage these conditions by spending wisely!

PROFESSIONAL DIVISION

By Allyssa Wright

FBLA is an organization made for high school students, but what do you do after you graduate? You or any adult may join the Professional Division which supports FBLA!

Professional Members can:

- Support FBLA-PBL programs and serve as the liaison between the work place and the classroom.
- Mentor FBLA-PBL members to strengthen leadership and provide career counseling.
- Keep members informed on current business trends.

Established business professionals can help, teach, and encourage the next generation of business leaders. Professional members give students the opportunity to work one-on-one with experienced leaders. Anyone who has an interest in FBLA can become a Professional Division member.

FBLA has partnered with companies to provide benefits such as: product discounts, hotel discounts, and shopping discounts. Another benefit of joining is that members receive The Professional Edge and other national publications.

To join the Professional Division and support FBLA and its cause, it costs \$25 for a one-year membership. Of each membership, \$10 comes back to California for the FBLA L. Byram Bates Scholarship which is given to outstanding California FBLA members who will be furthering their education upon graduating from high school. Your membership expires after one year, but you can become a life member for \$350.