

Spotlight on **DECA**

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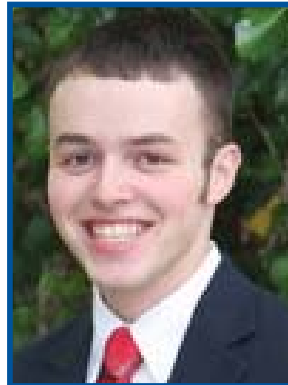
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Expand Your Network

Brandon George, State President

Michigan DECA members, are you ready for another year? Your State Executive Council and Michigan DECA are waiting to make sure you have another unforgettable DECA year!

First I would like to introduce this year's theme, "Expand your Network." Throughout this year ahead of us, you will have the opportunity to expand your network by communicating with other members in your area, in the state, and across the globe. Communicating with members is fun and will develop lifelong friendships. Attending conferences with business professionals gives you the chance to test your networking skills by talking with people from the business world about their careers.

As we move into this new decade, many changes are occurring throughout DECA, one major change that everyone should know, the new diamond and mission statement: "DECA prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management in high schools and colleges around the globe."

Staying involved this year will make your year a success. Every member is vital to our great state association. Start by getting involved at the chapter level, increase chapter membership, team building, run for a chapter office, or fund-raise for an upcoming conference. One way to promote your chapter is by participating in DECA week, which is a chance to promote all of the talent that each chapter holds.

Attending conferences truly goes along with this year's theme "Expand your Network." This may be your first year in DECA, or for you seniors one of your last. At the end of the year you will look back and feel you accomplished all you possibly could in a short amount of time.

- State Leadership Conference, Detroit with the Detroit Red Wings
- New York Marketing Conference, *New York City*
- Central Region Leadership Conference, *Chicago*
- Your District Conferences
- State Career Development Conference, for the first time ever, *Grand Rapids*
- International Career Development Conference, *Orlando, FL*

Serving last year on the state executive council, and as your new State President, I know how far DECA can push you to do what you set your mind to. This year's State Executive Council is here to serve you. We would not be known as one of the best states without our members. Be sure to stay in touch, and I look forward to meeting all of you very soon! Have a great year!



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Articles and letters welcome for publication

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School Store Success

Stephanie Cardaris,
State Secretary

As fellow marketing students, most of us are learning how to run a successful school store. In order for a school store to be an absolute success then there are few things every store should have: great customer service, eye-catching advertising, and fun promotions.

Customer service is vital to making any type of store successful. It plays a key role in the store's ability to produce profit and revenue. By definition, customer service is the condition of service to customers before, during and after a sale. When students walk into your school store, they should be greeted with a simple hello and a smile. There should always be a store employee on the sales floor ready to answer any questions a customer may have on the store apparel. If the customer needs a different size or color in an item, it is the employee's job to provide it for them. Once they are ready to be checked out, good customer service entails a speedy check-out. Thank the customer for shopping at your store. Customers will remember you and your store based on the service you provide whether you remember them or not.

Most school stores sell the basics: snacks and school apparel with a few random things in between. Most students know where the school store is located and the items that it sells, but some do not. This is where eye-catching advertising comes into play. Advertising is everything! If people do not know where the store is,

what your store has, or what sales and promotions the store has going on at a certain time, then how do you expect to get any business? With advertisements, you can get information out to the faculty and student body. Invite them in with the hope they will become paying customers. Advertisements should be fun and upbeat with only the necessary information on them. People do not want to read a lot of words, so use as few as possible. Ads can range from posters, banners, school announcements, commercials, school newspaper ads, and most important, word of mouth. The more eye-catching they are, the better they will be received by the public.

If you want your school store to be successful then it should put on fun promotions once a month, or based on an upcoming holiday or school event. Promotions are a way of bringing customers in the store for one thing with the hope they buy more once in the store. Promotions can include MDA fund-raisers, flower or candy gram sales, contests, raffles, or give-a-ways. This is one way your marketing class can get creative by coming up with ideas that will work to increase profit in the school store. The crazier the promotion, the more fun and successful it will be. However, if you and your school store are not going to actively participate, you cannot expect customers to do so either.

There are many more things we could list that are ways to make a school store successful; however, these three things are some of the most important. Without great customer service, attention grabbing advertisements, and exciting promotions, your school store will not stand out, and be something special. You want people to hear about your school store, and know that is the place to be before or after school, or during lunch periods. If you stay excited and motivated, and remember these three things this year, then your school store will be more than successful!



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I Want Scholarships, And I want 'em NOW.

Leontae Caldwell,
Vice President of Career Development

Everyone knows that college is the best place to learn who you are and explore your abilities, but getting there isn't easy. As seniors, we may see college as far-off with the time-consuming testing and the prep classes. The journey doesn't stop once you take the ACT and SAT, it is only the beginning. Finding the right college and applying is the least of your worries. The biggest question is: How I am going to pay for my education? The key to this question leads us to scholarships. Scholarships were created to help you receive a higher education at a lower cost and they are available from many sources.

The first step in getting a scholarship is to search for them. Scholarships do not come to you and they will not appear on the side of the highway in plain sight like a billboard. Did you know that participation in DECA competitive events can offer many scholarships? You cannot better yourself unless you have the motivation to do so and DECA is definitely an association of motivated people. There are numerous scholarships available, but you have to be willing to work hard to receive them. By demonstrating your maximum potential through DECA competitive events, you could have the chance to be awarded a scholarship anywhere from \$500 up to \$100,000. Each event has different a sponsor and it is easy to find an event in which you excel. Scholarships come from organizations and companies such as Claire's, Finish Line, Hilton, Kmart, Sears Holdings Corporation, NAPA, Safeway, Walgreens, Marriott, Stein Mart, The Kauffman Foundation, and the National Federation of Independent Businesses just to name a few. The National Advisory Board for DECA offers dozens more scholarships to DECA members who meet the requirements and complete DECA's Scholarship Application. The great thing about qualifying for these scholarships is that they reward hard work.

Are you still overwhelmed with questions? Do you think the price of college has you in over your head? Keep DECA involvement number one and the benefits of membership and participation will be in your favor. We all know that money is tight and a scholarship will ease the multiple stresses of going to college. They say a mind is a terrible thing to waste, and a scholarship opportunity is too. Ease your way out of high school and into college by working hard and taking the time to find scholarships that fit you. Don't give up on college because you are afraid of the expense. Millions of dollars are up for grabs and I know I want my fair share. Don't lose heart even if you don't receive the highest scholarship amount because every dollar is worth working for. Look for scholarships that match your skills and interests by going to www.deca.org and begin your scholarship search. All scholarship applications are due by January 21, 2011! The more time you waste the less money you have for college so I encourage you to start right now. 1, 2, 3, GO!



Chapter Highlight: Lakeview High School

Alexander DeYoung,
State Vice President

Highlights are not just for superstar athletes but also for the outstanding work that Michigan DECA chapters do every year within their schools and communities. This edition, we will be highlighting the DECA chapter from Lakeview High School for their exceptional fund-raising efforts and community work.

Last year, Lakeview raised over \$10,245 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), which was third most in the nation, and was recognized for it on stage at the International Career Development Conference in Louisville, Kentucky. Members from Lakeview held several fund-raisers throughout the year that involved both students and volunteers from the community.

The first big fund-raiser for Lakeview was their "Tailgate and Miracle Minute" was held on the night of the biggest football game of the year, which really got the student body involved. Before the game, they hosted a tailgate party where non-DECA members were charged a small entrance fee to enjoy the food and beverages served. At halftime DECA members and volunteers gathered with their vibrant colored buckets for the Miracle Minute. By the end of the night, Lakeview DECA had raised well over \$ 400.00. The pre-game tailgate party and miracle minute not only helped rile the home crowd but also helped a great cause, MDA.

The real knock out fund-raiser of the year for Lakeview happened when they teamed up with MDA to host a "Lock Up". The Lock Up consisted of a person being placed in jail, given a phone and phone book and asked to raise as much money as he/she can in an hour's time. The goal for the event began at \$5,000, but Lakeview students went above and beyond; and by the end of the event, the students had raised over \$10,000. The school's faculty members participated, including Lakeview's principal. He stayed in the jail for a few hours because he agreed to stay locked up as long as students kept donating. The "Lock Up" was so successful that it was featured in the local newspaper. Just goes to show that a few phone calls can make a world of difference.

By working with their community, Lakeview DECA showed how important it is to have a strong bond between your chapter and your community. Creating and maintaining a good relationship between your chapter and community is key to having successful fund-raisers and also helps to spread the word about DECA and MDA. When you plan your MDA fund-raisers this year, remember to include not just students from your school but also people from the community.

The work that Lakeview High School's DECA Chapter did last year is not only outstanding but inspirational to many. If you think your chapter is an all-star, then contact me at adeyoung@mideca.org and maybe YOUR chapter will be in the highlights.



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Throwing the Gauntlet for Membership

**Brooke Tomcsik, Vice President
of Chapter Development**

As students in an ever-changing world, we are faced with many challenges. Some obstacles are easily overcome, and some take more work. With an unstable economy, membership may become one of your obstacles for the year. Membership retention and growth may not even be on your radar, but consider this: If there is a gradual decline in your chapter, how likely is your school board to grant you the funds to travel for conferences or competitions when that decline hits a new low? Schools that have large membership also have more voting delegates when it is time to choose your next executive council. The more members you have, the more power you have in Michigan DECA.

If you notice a decline in membership, don't panic. Think of this as a chance to prove how influential your DECA chapter can be. When it comes to retaining members in your own chapter, personal conversations go a long way. A good way to gauge membership is to give a survey to all current marketing students and even to students who have decided DECA is not their "cup of tea". Students who do not plan to return have possibly the best insight into what works for the chapter, and what does not. Gain as much feedback as possible from these students. If attempting to fix an issue does not work, take it as a valuable learning experience, and be prepared for the

problem before it reoccurs.

Gaining members is all about introducing prospective members to the DECA world. As a suggestion, develop a PowerPoint of the serious and the fun parts of DECA that can deliver a wealth of knowledge to possible members. Set up a table at lunch, or hang fliers around the school. Either can be effective recruitment activities. One of the more effective ways of recruiting members is called 'One + One'. If every returning member from your chapter joins and encourages at least one additional person to join DECA, membership has a chance to skyrocket. If 'One + One' seems too ambitious, and you are from a large chapter, Gimmie 5 is a great way to be recognized for your school's achievements in membership recruitment. Chapters must increase their membership by five more than the previous year. Those who win the Gimmie 5 award are recognized on stage at the State Career Development Conference, and get a plaque for classroom display and recognition on Michigan DECA's website, www.mideca.org.



Chapters can also obtain the Diamond award from DECA. Chapters must recruit 10 or more student members than last year, or achieve 100% membership. The recruits can be alumni and/or professional members. Implement five Public Relations/Promotion activities between the start of school and November 12. Designate one day of DECA Week as "DECA Serve Day" where all activities are focused on one or more community service projects. Rewards for obtaining the Diamond Award are: Recognition on stage at both the State Career Development Conference and the International Career Development Conference, a special Diamond level plaque and certificate for classroom display, and a letter of

commendation to your school principal.

I challenge you, Michigan DECA! I challenge you to issue a 'One + One' challenge in your school. The gauntlet has been thrown down. Will you, and your chapter, accept the challenge?

Casey Schaaf '09
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Expanding Your Network with Facebook

Michelle Menthen, Vice President of Public Relations

Besides cell phones, what is the main way to network with our friends and peers? One network comes to mind is via the Internet. Its name is Facebook and many use it all day, every day. Countless hours are spent hovering over computer screens connecting with others. So why not use Facebook and connect with other members of Michigan DECA?

DECA's theme this year is Expand Your Network. By connecting to Michigan DECA's fan page, you can connect with other DECA members and State Officers before the conferences even begin! Making new friends and meeting people is always fun, and one of the easiest ways to connect with other people is over Facebook, why not get more friend requests by chatting with other DECA members?

What better way to connect to Michigan DECA beyond the conferences than with Facebook? Most of us use it! Connect yourself to Michigan DECA and "Like" our fan page. It is purely positive. You can receive updates, and find out information all about upcoming DECA events. You will also know when the conference winners are posted and see conference photos! You can answer and comment on the Michigan DECA questions written on our status and show us and other members your personality.

Our Facebook Page has grown exponentially over the past year. As of this month, we have several thousand fans and we are still growing! That's a lot of people to connect with! Connect yourself with other members and meet them in person at conferences! You can even connect with members via E-mail, Skype, and Twitter after connecting with them on Facebook!

Being Facebook friendly with Michigan DECA means that you, the member, can comment and make suggestions directly to your State Executive Council. We want to get to know the members and alumni, so tell us what you want from Michigan DECA on our page! Tell us what you like, love and want to improve about Michigan DECA!

We also want you, the Michigan DECA members to upload videos of DECA related activities and share them with all of Michigan DECA! Or share pictures of yourself in DECA swag! We want to see our members sport their DECA pride! So if you like Facebook and like DECA, then "Like" Michigan DECA! There will be information for future conferences, updates, and the list of conference winners will be posted on the Facebook page. Don't forget to check out conference photos (you could be in some of them!), and also don't forget to comment and write on our wall. Connect with new people, be Facebook friendly and Expand Your Network. Check out Michigan DECA's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/mideca.



Ticket to Success

Jered Smart, State Historian

The time has come for DECA members to prepare for their journey in achieving a higher success. Whether you have set a personal goal or a chapter goal, I have confidence great things will be accomplished this year, and your State Executive Council is here to help you along the way.

The 2010-2011 DECA year will hold many opportunities for all members and chapters. Attending the upcoming State Leadership Conference is just one of many enriching and exciting experiences we have to look forward to. Once again, Michigan DECA will host the State Leadership Conference (SLC), in Detroit. There will be close to 1,000 DECA members and numerous business representatives in attendance this year. Not only is this going to be an event you don't want to miss, but it is also a great way to sharpen your leadership skills and network with other DECA members and businesses.

Do you want to be the top in your event this year? If yes, then this conference is for you. Dr. Seuss once said, "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you know the more places you'll go." This is true for all members striving to make it beyond the District and State level. At the SLC, members will attend a workshop presented by Focus Training that will cover teamwork, communication, and other attributes that DECA members learn on



their path to success. State Officers will also present workshops on Running for State Office, MDA Events, Expand Your Network, Business Professionalism and Building an Active Chapter. Members will attend the focus training workshop and three additional workshops to sharpen DECA skills. With so many options to learn more, oh the places you can go!

Having the SLC in Detroit allows us to participate in many additional events. Your chapter may decide to tour the Fox Theater or Ford Field, offering an equal balance between fun and education. Touring the sites and meeting new faces from all around Michigan will make this a conference to remember. One of the most exciting moments will be going to the Red Wings hockey game; whether it is your first hockey game or not, you're sure to have a great time. Hockey is a great sport that brings out the fun in everything. With DECA members all around, it is sure to be one amazing night.

This year will certainly be an incredible year for DECA members. Attending the State Leadership Conference is a great way to kick off what is sure to be a year full of memories that will last forever. This year's SLC gives you the chance to Expand Your Network as well as learn ways to succeed. This is a chance to be a cut above the rest and acquire skills to place you at the top of the top. You don't want to miss this year's State Leadership Conference, as it is sure to be one of the most memorable events of the year.



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The Challenge is on for the MDA

Ariana Wellings, Vice President of Civic Consciousness

It is the time of year again, when school is back in session and we are getting back into the swing of things.

As you begin another year of DECA, which is exciting all on its own, fund-raising for the Muscular Dystrophy Association starts as well. DECA has been partnered with the MDA for more than 25 years. MDA is a nonprofit health agency that is dedicated to helping to find a cure for muscular dystrophy. More than one million Americans are affected by this muscle deteriorating disease. DECA challenges each of its chapters to help raise money for Jerry's Kids which is an organization that researches a cure for the disease, and helps those in need. The donations may cover the cost to send an affected child to summer camp.



MDA camp is a great opportunity for children affected by this disease to be with other kids with similar disabilities. The camp also creates great memories. While at summer camp they experience an unforgettable week of swimming, horseback riding, fishing, karaoke and other fun activities that they typically are unable to do. This camp means so much more than just a week away from home; it also means building lifelong friendships and self confidence.

Last year, Michigan DECA raised over \$52,000. As DECA members, it is our civic duty to help our community. Michigan DECA members, will you step up to this challenge? Get creative as a chapter and formulate activities that will raise money for this amazing group of people. I encourage you to get as many people involved as possible; including staff, other students, parents and community members. Remember, every little bit counts. Fund-raising does not always have to include a large event. Chapters have held can drives, bake sales and involved local businesses to ask for donations.

Last year, Lakeview High School donated the most money out of all Michigan DECA chapters with a total of \$10,245; which was tied for third most in all of DECA! Which chapter

is going to raise the most this year? Challenge your chapter starting today! For additional information or assistance in planning an event, contact an MDA office near you, by visiting www.mdausa.org. A representative will help your chapter become more informed about the organization and will help plan an event.

Also, Michigan DECA's website offers many resources, www.mideca.org. All donations are due by February 28, 2011. I know you can do it! Make a difference and have fun!



The Opportunity of a Lifetime

Jacob Balog, Vice President of Leadership Development

DECA is what defines many of us. For those who want to take their experience to the next level, running for state office would be strongly recommended. Being a state officer requires dedication, leadership, knowledge and passion for DECA. It is one of the most beneficial things you can do for yourself, school, and community. Being a state officer isn't all work and no play. You will travel to so many places in the U.S., meet new and interesting people, and develop leadership skills that will carry you throughout your life and your professional career.

Every story needs a beginning, and yours will start with the application process. The application and screening registration forms can be downloaded from www.mideca.org. Also an officer guidebook is available on the website to help you prepare to be a state officer.

Running for a state office is both fun and rewarding. The chance to serve Michigan DECA's 7,000 members is an exciting opportunity, and a big responsibility. Being elected as an officer is an honor - but serving entails a lot of commitments, hard work, and dedication.

Your story continues through the chapters to your achievements. Chapter one: the screening process. After you successfully complete the interviews, and demonstrate your public speaking ability and overall knowledge of DECA, you go to SCDC. Chapter two: campaign at the State Career Development Conference. You will give a speech at the State Career Development Conference to Michigan DECA explaining why you should be the next person to step into that state officer position.

A State Officer works as a member of a team to establish common goals and objectives and acts as a liaison between Michigan DECA and the student membership. Officers also act as the voices of DECA to those not familiar with the organization.

An officer is a dedicated and enthusiastic individual with the motivation and integrity to represent what he/she believes. As a flexible member of the team, he/she accepts the responsibility of being a leader as well as a follower. With public relations skills, the officer should convey professionalism through commitment, attitude, knowledge, and style in order to ensure a successful year.

It feels like it was just yesterday when I considered running for state office. It was an adventure all its own, and an adventure I will never forget. If you are truly passionate and enthusiastic about DECA then we all encourage you to log on www.mideca.org to download, fill out, and fax over your screening registration form.

The greatest asset in life is yourself. Invest in it, and watch yourself become wealthy!





College Choices

Sean Cope, Vice President of Business Partnerships

Hey DECA members, some of you are in the process of applying to and choosing a college. A few of your Michigan DECA state officers and I have been through this process already, so I want to share a bit of insight.

There are many colleges to choose from, each with its own unique programs and atmospheres. How do you know which one will fit you best?

There are many factors to take into consideration when choosing a college. There are five main aspects of colleges that students often base their decisions on: location, size, major /field of study, campus life, and cost. You can also look at schools that have Collegiate DECA chapters. However, each person is different; your reasons for choosing a college could be as unique as you are.

One of the first aspects to think about when deciding on a college is the location. The location of the college should best reflect your personality and interests, while balanced with what will provide you the tools to succeed. One option is selecting a college close to your home. This has benefits such as an opportunity to live at home, and being closer to your friends that have not yet graduated. On the other hand, it could also limit the number of new people you meet at the university. A second option is choosing a college far from where you currently live. This would give you more independence and the benefit of meeting many of new people. Then again, you may become homesick and lack the opportunity to go home if it is not a holiday or weekend.

The second aspect to consider is the student population size. Colleges range from under 1000 students at some private schools to over 45,000 students at large universities. If you are a person who likes to know everyone in school, then a smaller school would suit you well. If you are more interested in a larger atmosphere then a more populated school would suit you better.

If you already knows what field of study you want to enter, it is extremely important that the school you choose offers the major program you wish to pursue. If you are undecided, find a school that offers a wide range of academic programs, until you find something that you are very passionate about and would pursue as a career.

Regardless of where you go, college provides you the opportunity to meet interesting people. Each campus provides a variety of new activities and groups in which to become involved. Sports fans may be able to attend games at reduced prices and athletes can participate in intramural or varsity sports. Plus, there is a wide range of college clubs to check out, especially Collegiate DECA. When you go on college visits, do not hesitate to ask what students can do for fun at the school.

Paying for college can be one of the most stressful factors in applying; regardless if it is you or your parents paying for your education. Although college can be expensive, there are many ways to receive financial aid. For example, I encourage you to apply for scholarships. Remember to apply early and apply for as many as you can. (See the article on scholarships in this newsletter).

It is important to take time to personally choose your college. It can be costly to change your mind later down the road. Follow your heart. Once you have chosen your college, continue to work hard, make new friends, have fun, and get ready for the best years of your life!

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