

Spotlight on DECA



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DECA | 2011-2012

Fall 2011

Spotlight on DECA

A Publication of the High School Division
of the Michigan Association of DECA

Fall 2011

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Aspire Higher

Casey Block, State President

Hello Michigan DECA! Your State Executive Council is so excited for another great year. We can't wait to meet each of you. This year is sure to be packed full of fun activities and opportunities to learn more than you ever have before.

DECA is back with a new theme, Aspire Higher. DECA has given all of us incredible opportunities to better ourselves not only as DECA members, but also in our personal lives. Your State Executive Council is encouraging each of you to take full advantage of those opportunities to truly "Aspire Higher" to reach your goals and dreams with Michigan DECA.

As a four year member of DECA and now the State President, I am well aware of how exciting and fun DECA conferences can be. I know that all of you are excited about the State Leadership Conference in November, but there are many more fun and incredible conferences for you to attend. Your involvement is the key to Michigan DECA's success and we would love to see all of you at any of the following conferences:

- State Leadership Conference, Detroit (includes a Red Wings game)
- District Conference
- State Career Development Conference, Dearborn
- International Career Development Conference, Salt Lake City, Utah

All of these conferences are great experiences to learn more about DECA, to become a better leader and speaker, to travel, to prepare yourself for running for state office, to have fun, and to network with thousands of other members just like you! These conferences have been the highlight of my DECA experience for the past four years, and I can't wait to share all new experiences with you. For more information DECA's conferences go to www.mideca.org.

Your State Officers have decided to really make it a point to be more in touch with Michigan DECA members. After all, we all share one common characteristic - LOVING DECA! DECA means so much to all of us and we are working our hardest to make this year the best one yet. But we can't do it alone. Each and every one of you is a substantial part of this great organization and we can't wait to work with all of you to make Michigan DECA the best it can be. Keep in touch with all of us via Facebook, facebook.com/mideca. org. Also feel free to email or Facebook message any one of your State Officers for anything you need. My email is cblock@mideca.org. Hope everyone has a great start to their school year and we will see you soon!



A Publication of Michigan DECA

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Articles and letters welcome for publication

The policy of the Michigan Association of DECA is that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, marital status, weight, sexual orientation, sex or disability be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination, during any program, activity or in employment.



Membership is the Core

Benjamin Baker, Vice President of Chapter Development

In Michigan, over 165 high schools and area career centers have DECA chapters. Michigan DECA has over 6,900 high school members. Those members didn't join DECA just because Michigan DECA has 6,900 members; they joined DECA because they connected to their high school and career center chapter members. The individual chapters are the reasons for Michigan DECA's success. Our chapters are the core of Michigan DECA and chapter success' will take Michigan DECA to new heights. Michigan DECA will *Aspire Higher*, and we need all of our chapters to do the same. Increase membership, gain knowledge, have fun and win big.

To *Aspire Higher* in membership, you must have a plan. Begin where every chapter draws its awesome strength from within your current membership. Increase your membership by promoting benefits to your existing members. Remember, benefits can be different for every member, and are only benefits if they hold value for that potential new member. You cannot push

ONE benefit of DECA, and expect everyone to join. Some potential recruits see DECA as a place to meet people, while others join because they simply love marketing, finance, hospitality or management and want to learn more about business; and some may



motivated by financial benefits such as receiving scholarships. It doesn't matter which benefit attracts a member, as long as they are attracted. So the magic solution to increasing membership is proper communication and promotion of all DECA's benefits to existing members and then to new recruits.

When recruiting members, you must look at the individual. Some may consider this method as profiling or using prejudice, but I consider it a tool. You are simply reading your crowd and taking good notes. While speaking to fellow students about DECA, lightly touch every aspect of DECA, fundraising, competition, and fun, but heavily focus on what you know or think sparks interest in them. For instance, I like marketing and I like having fun, but I didn't join the group because it's fun and about marketing. The student who recruited me into DECA told me about how much fun DECA was, how much he learned about marketing, but he really sold me when he said, "The money I got from being in DECA, allowed me to attend the school of my choice." He further discussed with me how he wasn't sure if he would have the funds to attend the college. Once he found out that DECA has scholarships he went after them all. Again, I like marketing and I like having fun, but I LOVE financial benefits. Yes, Benjamin Baker, Michigan DECA VP of Chapter Development for 2011-12, joined DECA because he found out he could get money for college by being a DECA member and potential for even more through winning competitions and serving as a State Officer.

There is nothing wrong with joining DECA for just one reason because I learned DECA is more than just a financial opportunity, DECA is fun; DECA is real life preparation; DECA changed my life and opened my eyes to so much more than just the financial benefit. So first remind your membership of the many benefits DECA offers then challenge them each to attract a minimum of one new member. Become the best salesmen for your DECA chapter by finding out what is of value to each new member. Once new recruits are attracted and join, then train them to hook others on DECA as well. Sell DECA, so others eyes can be opened to everything DECA has to offer them and remember to *Aspire Higher!*



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Make them an Offer They Can't Refuse

Gordon Huston, Vice President
of Business Partnerships

Will we be able to afford to send chapter members to the State and International Conferences this year? ... Will we have enough money to hold chapter events? ... Will we even have successful fundraising events?

One of the most common challenges a chapter faces is funding. With declining budgets of many schools, it becomes more and more difficult to have enough money for everything that your chapter may want to do. So this presents us with the issue of fundraising. One way that many chapters solve this problem is through local business sponsorships. Luckily, many of these sponsorships are simply donations - acts of charity and goodwill. But, we could all use more pocket change; so in what ways can we have not only more businesses support us, but also have our current supporters commit more? Rather than presenting your local chapter as a charity case, why not approach local businesses as a viable partner, creating a business partnership. Being in a partnership means that benefits accrue to both parties. When trying to appeal to a business, it makes it much easier for the establishment to commit their funds to us if we offer them something in return. At first glance it may not seem that we have a lot to offer a business, until you consider that we can offer a lot, including exposure to Michigan DECA's 7,000 members and nearly 180,000 members nationally. Besides the obvious exposure of our members to their business, it helps to offer other incentives; a cherry on top, to sweeten the deal. This could include anything from heightened exposure of the business around your school via small paper ads, to detailing local haunts. For example, my chapter painted our school's rock to thank a local restaurant for a fundraiser with us. Another benefit of the sponsor businesses is that DECA members make great potential employees. We come into the job with more knowledge than our peers, as well as potential customers for those businesses that team up with DECA, whether it is now or in the future. Marketing studies show that the sooner a business can get that loyalty from a person, the more likely they will continue to be a loyal customer for years to come.

In latter issues of this paper, we will have more detailed ways to fundraise. But for now, it is important to know that a little work on your behalf could tip the tables towards a larger donation and more activism from the sponsor. And again to emphasize the cliché "You need to spend money to make money" and in our case, time as well.

While we covered some of the basics to managing your chapter's business partnerships, we can't forget help from other organizations. When we look at the direct benefits of the conjunction of another organization, we are going to focus on the manpower, not the capital that comes with the connection. If DECA creates a bond with the PTA or the School Board, then when decisions are made on budgeting and the school's opinion of DECA, we'll have a foot in the door and a step ahead of the competition.

When we think of the opportunities presented to each of us every day, the skill to appropriately network becomes massive. Many people say that we are defined by the people we are surrounded by. So push to fill your network with people who not only bring you joy, but those who will reciprocate enthusiasm and support. When you leave this issue to continue with your day, remember to Expand your Network and more importantly, Aspire Higher; not only for yourself, and your chapter, but DECA as a whole. Be a leader. Be the difference.



Begin the Year with Leadership

Markianna Svorec, Vice President
of Leadership Development

It will forever and always be known that the thing that makes the world go round is business and marketing. There would be no business or marketing fields without leaders. It's true; there are two categories in the world that we're faced with at a young age: leaders or followers. Which one are you? To find out, you have to be honest with yourself. Do you like to step up and know what is going on--do you like to lead a team to greatness? Or are you someone who likes to be told what to do and do it amazingly? No matter what category you fit into, I'm here to encourage you to be the best you can be in either field. Every team needs a leader, and every team needs the people who put all the pieces together. So, don't for one second think that you're not pulling as much weight just because you're not the head of the organization.

I cannot stress enough that life is what you make of it; whether that means you're a leader or a follower, it should count the same down the road. My first year in DECA was probably the best, because it forced me to see eye-to-eye with people whom I'd never even talked to. DECA opens a doorway of opportunities for us. By all means, if you were to ask me which category I fit in; I'm a leader. I've always been a leader and always will be. I feel like being the leader, I'm always going to know what's going on and when things will be done. But I envy the people who have the team working jobs because they get to interact on such a different level.



More things to keep in mind as you begin your year: every great leader started somewhere, and that goes hand in hand for every team. Look at Bill Gates for instance; his team is still reaching great heights. They've become the largest technology team in the world in less

than 40 years. If you compare that to some other businesses, it's taken them centuries to perfect their teams and products for the market. Some businesses look for good teams, some just happen. The ones that just happen seem to be assembled and learn from their mistakes, which cost the company time and money, and in return takes them longer to reach any given goal. The teams that are put together by boards, based on past jobs and qualifications, seem to work better together to get things done; that's what we have seen with Bill Gates and his team. So make sure you know where you stand and where you should be when it comes to teamwork. Every leader needs to see that the team is first and foremost the most important thing.

You are the future, and it's time to realize that! Every generation needs its leaders and the people who find innovations. So, leader or follower, this world needs you. It's time to notice that business and marketing make everything around you possible. The desk you're sitting at, the light letting you read this, or simply just the means of how this paper got to you. There were business pitches, advertising, and great teams behind all of it to get you to purchase that desk, the lamp or light bulb, or even support the company who delivered this paper. There are teams all around you, and they're making life livable and functional. The innovations of one century are the common sense of the next; business and marketing are always moving forward. So where will you be when your generation takes off? Will you be in the front seat, the middle, or the back? Don't be the student that forgets to board because getting to the top has to start somewhere, and in DECA, its leadership that will start your engine and start your year off right.



Would Have, Could Have, Should Have

Madison Mayleben,
State Secretary

You often hear people say, "I would have done well" or "I could have done better" or "I should have done more." Most people that have said, "Would have, could have, or should have" are those that failed to manage their time and often missed out on a lot of great opportunities. You don't want to be this person and you don't have to be.

An important aspect of my job as your State Secretary is to stay organized and manage my time well. I am not perfect at this by any means. I am forced to continually strategize on how to perfect my work.

This year I am trying a new strategy that involves making a list of things I need to achieve each day and establish a time frame for accomplishing these goals. Once I have completed something on my list, I check it off. This makes me feel like I am continually moving forward and it keeps me motivated to finish the remaining items left on my list. This strategy is reinforced by an emphasis on prioritization.

Here are some tips to help you get started. If you want to start managing your time, you must first make the decision that you want to. Nobody can want it for you. Furthermore, you need to evaluate your life and determine what the best strategy is to help you personally. When managing your time it is especially important to set specific deadlines. Finally, you will need to stick to your method. Professional Speaker Dr. Donald E. Wetmore pointed out in a popular productivity and time management seminar "It takes approximately 30 days to establish a new physical or emotional habit." So if you fail the first couple of times, don't get discouraged. Keep trying!

You may think you don't need to plan for the use of your time or that prioritization is not necessary in your daily life but "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail." This is what my parents tell me all the time. I hate to admit it, but I have found them to be right. Manage your time well and plan to make the most of this school year. Instead of saying, "would have, could have, or should have" you will be able to say "I did."



2011 State Leadership Conference

It would not really be fair for us to say, "DECA makes us into leaders at the snap of our fingers." Albert Einstein once said, "You must first learn the rules of the game, in order to play it better than the rest." The same applies to DECA. You must receive basic training in order to work toward leadership. Do you just start building a house before you take a math class? Of course not. You do not become a leader overnight either; it takes work. But you can get ahead of the game by attending Michigan DECA's State Leadership Conference (SLC) in Detroit.

Michigan DECA is changing it up this year; this conference is going to be a tad bit different from the previous years. It is being held in Detroit on November 1 & 2, 2011 at the Detroit Marriott Renaissance center. If you are new to DECA, this will be your first look at the world of DECA and all of the magic it holds. If you are a returning Michigan DECA member, then you already know what DECA is and what it is like. However, you have not experienced this. At this year's State Leadership Conference you will be able to meet so many new people from all over Michigan. There will be over 800 DECA members, business professionals and marketing educators there to take DECA to the next level at this conference. The SLC helps teach DECA members the proper way to present themselves in front of judges and to be well-rounded leaders. The workshops you will be attending are presented by your state executive council and FOCUS Training. FOCUS is a Wisconsin-based leadership development company that focuses on communication, teamwork, and organization skills, which will help you become a better business professional. You will have the option to attend workshops related to running for state office, DECA competitions, civic consciousness projects, and new chapter activities. The conference is designed to help you start your DECA year out right.

Michigan DECA is partnering with the Detroit Red Wings for SLC participants to attend a Detroit Red Wings home game. After a good game of hockey, Michigan DECA members will then rest for a second day of workshops. You will leave this conference knowing you are now prepared to be a leader. You will be ready to compete at the district and state conferences for that number one spot. The professional skills you have learned will be the key to showing Michigan DECA members what you have to offer.

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Six Reasons Why Social Media is Important to You

Brandon Wendell, Vice President
of Public Relations

Social media is an essential tool in networking with professionals, making new contacts, and keeping in touch with the world. If you're not participating in the top social media and networking sites, the world is leaving you behind. Why not become involved on the social media Web sites while your participation can increase your chances at maintaining your career, and enable you to easily stay in touch with who you meet all at one source.

You will need to explore the possible social media sites to see which sites fit your personality best. Some sites can be too annoying, complex, and just not user friendly for you. Luckily for all of you, you have options from LinkedIn to Facebook to even Twitter. I, myself have profiles and participate in some activities on all three. Social media sites are essential to those interested in professional networking, career success, and going forward. And luckily for you, social media sites play a role in all these goals.

Still not sure social media is really worth it? These are just a few reasons that may just change how you truly feel.

1. is to **stay in touch** with colleagues and friends, and meet a lot of people. Through social media sites, it is easy to look them up on the popular social media sites and you may never lose touch with them.
2. **Help colleagues find you.** I can't tell you how many former classmates, friends, and distant relatives have found my profiles and contacted me. Just recently, one of my classmates from kindergarten who was my best friend found me online and called. Who would ever have thought to look for her in North Carolina? Not me.
3. **Access to a job.** Do you have a friend, or peer that has a job or career in something you are truly interested in, but do not know where to begin for yourself? Well, you can easily contact those you are connected to on your networks and find out how they got their job. Maybe, if you are lucky, they can help put in a referral or land you an interview.
4. **Develop a network** of potential friends or co-workers with skills that will become increasingly scarce. Especially with the economy making it harder to find a job, entrepreneurship is becoming one of the top ways to succeed. Those who are on the same track as you, and become successful will be able to help you become as successful as them.
5. **Establish your online brand.** Who are you? How do you want to be known and recognized by colleagues, other professionals, and potential employers? The information you put in your social media profiles will eventually serve you well to promote your career progress - or, failing to develop an online presence in social media - not at all.
6. There are numerous **interest groups** to join for your community, your profession, or even education. Facebook as an example, allows you to create groups.

The Internet has opened up communication across world boundaries. Why not use its social media components to expand your network, enhance your career, add friends, make connections, communicate with people with scarce skills, and enlarge your world view? I'm participating. Why not you, too? Hopefully these few reasons have been able to encourage you to join the millions of users participating in social media networking.



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Are you "Wild about DECA?"

Micah Melling,
Central Region Vice President

If you are wild about DECA, the 2011 Central Region Leadership Conference (CRLC) is designed

for you. If you haven't yet become Wild About DECA, the CRLC will give you the opportunity to become enthusiastic about our great organization.

As your Central Region Vice President, I am thrilled to invite you to Omaha, Nebraska for one of the premiere student conferences of the year. In one action-packed weekend, the 2011 Central Region Leadership Conference will present a lifetime worth of lasting memories and exciting experiences. Through phenomenal general sessions, dynamic speakers, engaging workshops, and unlimited networking opportunities, you'll certainly become Wild About DECA in just three short days.

Visit the conference website at <http://www.crlcomaha2011.org> and get prepared for a "wild" conference.

The first day of the conference will be highlighted by the opening session, featuring established keynote speaker Bill Cordes. After the opening session, a wild DECA Dance Party will give attendees an opportunity to "bust a move" and meet students from throughout the Midwest. The second day of the conference will be filled with workshops, a DECA Leadership Safari, and an activity at the world famous Omaha Zoo. The day will be capped by a party you won't soon forget, featuring a rock wall challenge, inflatable obstacle courses, live music, and much more. The third and final day of the conference will bring everyone together for an unforgettable closing session. This session will star keynote speaker Kevin Wanzer, a former writer for The Late Show with David Letterman.



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How to Make Your Resume Radiant

Sara Landry, Vice President of Professional Development

Even the thought of creating a resume intimidates just about everyone. It's hard to know what to include or even where to start. The secret to getting a job interview is having a great resume. Creating a great resume is simple, but you must follow key guidelines. Three of the most important aspects to follow include, but are not limited to, creating content that sells, quantify and use power words, and using a design that stands out.

Think of your resume as a marketing tool to sell the benefits of your skills. Consider yourself a product, your potential employers as the customer, and your resume as the brochure. Explain to your potential employers your features and how they will benefit the organization in addition to explaining to them what differentiates you among the other candidates, again, just as if you were a product.

Another way to make your resume radiant is to use power words (i.e. achieved, exceeded, persuaded) and quantify - describing your responsibilities and achievements with numbers. Accentuating on numbers in your statements is less general and makes your past performance stand out against other resumes. In most cases, the more specific you can be about your accomplishments and responsibilities, the better. Also, when it comes to making your words count, make sure to leave out the word "I"; it makes the sentence sound declarative. You should also avoid passive language in your resume - be assertive but not aggressive.

One of the most important components of making your resume great is using a design that grabs attention. Believe it or not, the reader makes judgments of your resume at first glance. The layout of your resume must accentuate the most essential information about your education, skills, and work experience. Leading with your strongest points make them want to read more. Additionally, be sure to focus on the positives! Leave any negativity and irrelevance off. Having this layout on a professional looking sheet of paper is sure to impress your reader right away!

Although the thought of putting together an awesome resume might be slightly scary, remembering these three key components will surely put you in the running. Make sure to use statements that will sell you to your potential employer. The use of power words and quantifying your successes will create a bigger impact to the reader; and a professional design that will stand out so that even at the first glance, your reader will want to continue reading about you. Be sure to not only look over your resume several times before submitting it to possible employers, but also have a few others such as a family member, friend, or a teacher look it over as well. The more it is reviewed before submission, the better! So don't let the word resume scare you, get on out there and use these tips to make your resume radiant!



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