



NEWS RELEASE

For more information contact Allison Kreifels at (402) 471-4814 or allison.kreifels@nebraska.gov

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FCCLA NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE DRAWS RECORD NUMBER OF YOUTH LEADERS

*More than 8,000 students and advisers converged for inspiration, training
and opportunities to make a difference locally and across the country*

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) brought more than 8,000 of its student leaders, members and advisers to Washington, D.C., in early July to participate in its National Leadership Conference.

More than 300 students, advisers, and guests represented Nebraska.

The conference provided opportunities for students and advisers to come together for fun and to listen to inspiring speakers, as well as to expand leadership skills, sharpen talents and explore career pathways. The theme of this year's conference was *Together We Are Healthy*. Those attending the conference were challenged to explore the fitness of body, mind and spirit that is a product of healthy attitudes and habits and to pursue whole health through the conference's learning and networking opportunities.

Nebraska delegates not only participated in sessions and competitive events but led the way in both. Two state officers, 1st Vice President Courtney Russell from Medicine Valley Jr./Sr. High School and Secretary Luis Cuevas from Elkhorn South High School presented sessions on membership to packed

audiences. Justine Bauer from Elm Creek Jr./Sr. High School shared information on the best ways and steps to take to create an exceptional community service project.

In addition to the many learning and networking experiences offered at the conference, more than 30 Family and Consumer Sciences related events, known as STAR — Students Taking Action with Recognition — events were offered, providing competitions in such areas as Culinary Arts, Entrepreneurship, Sports Nutrition, Career Investigation, and Fashion Construction for more than 4,000 event participants. Nebraska came home with 90 Gold Medals, 62 Silver Medals, 9 Bronze Medals and had multiple individuals and teams score in the top 10 nationally. Addy Vinton and Liddy Vinton of Mullen Jr./Sr. High School placed first in the nation in Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation for their project in which they planned a restaurant and created a website to feature highlights of their business.

A definite highlight of the conference was a youth rally held on Capitol Hill for the dual purpose of celebrating the organization's 70th Anniversary and advocating for strong Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) education in schools.

The event, *70 Years Strong*, drew more than 3,000 FCCLA members and bathed the U.S. Capitol grounds in a sea of FCCLA red. In addition, members of the Nebraska State Officer Team and State Peer Officer Teams attended the Nebraska Breakfast as guests of Sen. Deb Fischer. This 70-year-old tradition offered students the opportunity to hear updates from each of Nebraska's senators and representatives. After the breakfast, state officers met personally with each Congressional representative to discuss the importance of FCCLA, Family and Consumer Sciences, and career education.

Another highlight of the conference for the Nebraska delegation was the opportunity to honor our fallen military personnel by placing a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. Four members of the State Officer Team had the opportunity to participate in the laying of the wreath. Students also enjoyed tours of the grounds, a trip to the Mt. Vernon home of U.S. President George Washington, and an informative tour of many monuments in the evening sessions.