

# the DECA Connection



A Product of Oregon DECA's State Officer Team

## Be the DECA Diamond *by Kate Fethers*

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Your State Officer team recently attended the Western Region Officer Training Camp, which was held August 8-10 in Portland. The team attended workshops at Portland State University coached by TRI Leadership, met and networked with Western State Officers, planned for this upcoming year, and toured our state's largest city. While in one of the workshops, Ryan Underwood, the CEO of TRI Leadership, brought up the phrase "be the DECA diamond." Collectively, the state officer team agreed that this is what all DECA members should try to accomplish during their years as high school and college members, and further it into the business world. To "be the DECA diamond" means you possess and emulate the four points of the DECA diamond: vocational understanding, civic consciousness, social intelligence, and leadership development. The state officers saw the points, which DECA actively teaches, as guidelines that, when followed, help members become successful business leaders and members of their communities. This issue of *The DECA Connection* includes articles written by the state officers on how they have included the four points in their lives to become the DECA diamond.

## Western Region Leadership Conference

This year is the perfect opportunity for all Oregon DECA members to advance their leadership training. Being versed in the basics of leadership helps in group situations, job interviews, and decision making tasks. The Western Region Leadership Conference

is being held in Portland from November 17-19. It is being hosted by John Lindstrom, current Western Region Vice President, and past two time Oregon DECA State Officer. It will feature leadership activities and seminars by business executives. You can talk to

your advisors for more information or contact Trina Lee, DECA Executive Director, at [trina.lee@wesd.org](mailto:trina.lee@wesd.org).



## Vocational Understanding *by Stefanie Schmidt*



Just a few weeks ago I bumped into my pre-school teacher whom I hadn't seen since I was about four years old. Talking with her brought back many memories; like drawing pictures with jumbo crayons, singing songs about baby bumblebees, eating applesauce out of plastic cups with those little wooden spoons, and taking naps with my blankie during the middle of the school day.

But my nostalgic trip down memory lane was cut short when my teacher casually asked, "So, are you a famous ballerina yet?" I couldn't help but laugh! You know when you are little and everyone always asks you what you want to be when you grow up? Yeah. Well, I wanted to be a famous ballerina.

It's amazing how much one can change over a period of time. I have gone from a tutu wearing ballerina to a board short wearing pro wakeboarder and am headed on to a potential business major in just a matter of years! The point is that there are thousands of occupations to choose from and although some may seem more appealing at times than others, the older we get, and the more we learn about ourselves, our strengths and our weaknesses, and the world around us, the more able we become in choosing one of those occupations for ourselves.

This is where Vocational Understanding on the DECA Diamond comes in to play.

DECA as an association is full of thousands of bright and intelligent, motivated individuals who all are striving for success. In order to truly be successful at anything, you must always be aware of what you are doing and what you are trying to accomplish. In other words, you need to have an understanding.

Vocational Understanding means not just knowing about different jobs and/or vocations, but taking the outside, real-world knowledge, that you have and applying it to your own life and playing that to your own strengths, weaknesses and general enjoyment. Often people will say that the most successful people are those who do what they love. And that makes sense, because how could you be excited about a job and work hard at it when you dislike it?

In DECA, we study the vocation of business. We all have some type of potential interest in business, or maybe we just have a general curiosity with this particular vocation. Regardless, we are studying it and participating in it in ways that not only give us a better understanding of the field itself but also of where we as individuals can fit into it.

As we grow older, our decisions regarding our futures become more serious. As a high school senior this year I am now facing the beginning of the applications process for college and deciding in what general direction I want to

steer my life and further career. For some this process is more difficult than for others. For those that struggle, it is usually because they have not taken enough time to really understand their surroundings and/or themselves and this is where they ought to apply Vocational Understanding. But for many DECA members this is not an issue. Instead you have spent the last four years trying your hand at vocations such as hospitality, management, and marketing.

Vocational Understanding breaks down into two main parts: understanding your surroundings and opportunities in "the real world" and also understanding yourself and how you can effectively combine the two in order to achieve happiness and a state of equilibrium. Always remember that no choice is the wrong choice as long as you believe in it. Take the DECA Diamond, apply the DECA Diamond and *be* the DECA Diamond and you will be continuously successful.

The most successful people are those who do what they love.



## Civic Consciousness *by Jenn Hylton*

There are many parts to Civic Consciousness, but the main meaning for learning and becoming this point of the DECA diamond is to better our efforts in recognizing people's needs and providing help and awareness. When asked about civic consciousness and what DECA is doing to promote this point of the diamond I think quickly about the hurricane relief efforts being made by DECA to our chapters and state associations that have been effected in the south. If you are looking for a way to increase your civic consciousness look no further than the DECA Inc. Web site. Relief efforts are being directed for DECA on a national level and they need every member's help.

In other times when such dire situations are not present there are many other ways that one can increase their Civic Consciousness. An example of this would be raising money for Doernbecher Children's Hospital. Most children here are diagnosed with a serious illness and therefore their lives have forever been altered. With the money raised, you can provide many fun and meaningful opportunities for the Doernbecher patients and their families.

And this is just the beginning, you and your chapter can volunteer at an senior citizens' homes, local food banks, childcare and community centers. Have three or four events a year, for the public, that provides awareness for a cause. There are so many ways to help. Just follow your heart and you will make a difference.

Now if you feel you have done a job well done on creating Civic Consciousness, there is DECA even called Civic Consciousness Project. It is a written manual sharing how you made a difference by raising awareness in your community. If you are looking for a way to represent your chapter on the state level get involved in a Civic Consciousness project by talking more with your advisor.

## Chapter Highlight: Willamette *by Curtis Haley*

Willamette DECA hadn't seen a state officer elected from its ranks for well over half a decade. That changed when Curtis Haley was elected State President at last year's SCDC, but in reality this was just the tip of the iceberg for member accomplishments in Willamette DECA.

In competition, Willamette has consistently been a power in the state, qualifying a high percentage of students for ICDC, and taking home at least one trophy from Internationals each year for the last four years. Their "Mini-State Nights" are a constant staple in the program, along with competition training meetings every week at lunch and their top-secret recipe for role-plays makes experts out of even the newest of members.

But it's away from competition that Willamette has really shined. For a Civic Consciousness Project they raised money for orphans in Europe. Ultimately around \$50,000 was raised, along with a promise to build a house. The chapter introduced the 30-hour fasting fundraiser – years later, the tradition has



Stefanie Schmidt and Katelyn Fethers at Habitat for Humanity in Salem

*The Oregon DECA state officer team bonded together on October 15 by building a house for Habitat for Humanity.*

Your chapter can help your community through a variety of ways. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Picking up trash for the adopt-a-highway program: <http://www.adoptahighway.com/>
- Helping serve food at the Union Gospel Mission: <http://www.ugmsalem.org/>
- Visiting a local hospital.

carried on, although the fast has now been extended to the Leadership Class.

Most of all, though, Willamette DECA is about family. When Chapter President Scott Edinger ran for office last year, he described himself as "the DECA Dad." Alumnus Jamie Barclift is familiar with that family feeling, calling DECA "The bonding, learning and training with my fellow DECA members was unbelievable. It really was as if we were a family."

Willamette's goals this year include extending that family to a larger amount of members, and then extending the "DECA Love" to all of its new family members.

## Leadership Development *by Curtis Haley*



The confidence, charisma, and competency that you see are largely a result of the leadership development opportunities that DECA affords its members.

For the first couple years of high school, DECA was all about the trophies for me. Oh, sure, there were other things about DECA that appealed to me. The people I got to meet at SCDC, and visiting places like Orlando and Nashville were amazing. It seemed like no matter where I went the people in DECA were energetic, intelligent, charismatic – all of the qualities that I admire in other people.

And speaking of Orlando and Nashville: the places I got to travel were one of a kind – huge conferences in huge arenas with huge amounts of people making a huge amount of noise. Better yet, when you walked out of the arena, and into the exotic locale of a new city, there were always new things to discover and experience.

But still, the trophies were my focus for the first several years. I got into DECA with a competitive frame-of-mind, and I was determined to win at least one national title before I graduated. Sophomore year, my goal was realized. Second place in Marketing Management Series. Cool. Now what?

It was then that I discovered an aspect of DECA that would help me more than competition ever could: Leadership Development. The leaders of DECA, I came to realize, are the reason that this organization is as dynamic and fulfilling as it is. Without my chapter officers, I would have never attended a social, or gone to a

competitive training meeting. Without my state officers, I never would have had the opportunity to benefit from a statewide Program of Work that created our district skills competitions, or had positive role-models toward which to aspire. Without my national officers, ICDC wouldn't have been nearly as exciting, and none of the national programs we have in place would be in up and running or fully utilized.

But there is a reason it's called "Leadership Development." The officers at the local, state and national levels didn't just fall out of the sky. The confidence, charisma, and competency that you see are largely a result of the leadership development opportunities that DECA affords its members.

At the local level, your chapter leadership teams probably take retreats to draw up their plan for the year. Much of the development at this level, however, isn't a result of any kind of workshop or seminar, but simply the product of a great advisor and the opportunity to work with other members.

At the state level, things are much more structured. Your state officer team works with a company called Tri Leadership Resources to develop our Program of Work, GO B.I.G. Goals, Accountability Chart, and the skills necessary to make our team a success whether onstage or not. We develop workshops around a variety of topics, learn how to

give better speeches, and attend several seminars and leadership camps to hone our abilities. The most renowned leadership conference is found at ICDC in a program called DECA LEADS – "a three-part series of training centering on the officer, management, and leadership skills needed to guide a state/province to a successful year."

At the national level, there are also some enormous opportunities to develop leadership abilities. The Leadership Development Academy (LDA) is perhaps the best-known, allowing students from all backgrounds and abilities to come together to learn more about how to effectively lead others.

And one of the most exciting leadership opportunities available through DECA that many people are not aware of is that there is a leadership opportunity specifically for seniors. The Senior Management Institute (SMI) gives outgoing seniors one last lesson in directing others before sending them out into the real world.



## Oregon DECA

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An Association of Marketing Students

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

District 2 Skills — October 29

WRLC— November 17-19

### The DECA Creed

I believe in the future which I am planning for myself in the field of marketing and management, and in the opportunities which my vocation offers.

I believe in fulfilling the highest measure of service to my vocation, my fellow beings, my country and my God- that by so doing,

I will be rewarded with personal satisfaction and material wealth.

I believe in the democratic philosophies of private enterprise and competition, and in the freedoms of this nation- that these philosophies allow for the fullest development of my individual abilities.

I believe that by doing my best to live according to these high principles,

I will be of greater service both to myself and to mankind.

## National Membership Campaign

Has your chapter been growing annually? Are you recruiting underclassmen to join DECA and assisting them in recognizing all the reasons why they might want to be a member? Any growth, small or large, could lead your school to win one of four levels in the National Membership Campaign.

If you believe your chapter could qualify to win a National Membership Campaign award or if your chapter is interested in winning, contact your head advisor or one of your state officers for more information.

*We are always here to help!*

