



»» Plan Now for SkillsUSA Week!

It's not too early to begin planning your chapter activities for SkillsUSA Week, which will be celebrated Feb. 2-8, 2025, at schools nationwide. Each day of the week has suggested activities, including Recognition Day, Give-Back Day, Partner Day, Advocacy Day and SkillsUSA Day to wrap up the week. For all the details, [see the website](#), and a SkillsUSA Week chapter guide will be posted soon. Start planning now for any partner visits or presentations to be scheduled outside of the school day.



»» SkillsUSA Winter Break

SkillsUSA Headquarters is closed for winter break from Monday, Dec. 23, through Friday, Jan. 3. The Friday Flash will resume on Jan. 9. Wishing you the happiest of holidays and a prosperous New Year!

»» SkillsUSA Champions Spotlight on South Arkansas College

With the holiday season in full swing, the SkillsUSA chapter at South Arkansas College in El Dorado, Ark. found a heartfelt way to give back to their community while developing valuable professional skills when students came together to create nearly 100 personalized Christmas cards for residents at the local Hudson Memorial Nursing Home. This project marked the third consecutive year of spreading holiday cheer to the nursing home, solidifying it as a cherished tradition for the chapter. See SkillsUSA's latest spotlight story about their project.

»» Share Your Community Service Stories with SkillsUSA!

The [SkillsUSA Champions digital hub](#) provides new content frequently, from inspiring features to stories about the great work chapters and partners are doing. We know your chapters are doing some amazing community service work this holiday season and we would love to write about it. To submit a story idea, send us the details through our ["Submit a Story"](#) link, and we'll contact you.

»» Winter Professional Development for Instructors

SkillsUSA is offering free virtual [Professional Development Training Sessions](#) in January and February. Check out the [Professional Development page](#) on our website where you'll find training information and our featured Activity of the Month. Don't miss out on these resources to enhance your chapter's programming! Class size is limited, so be sure to secure your place. Participants will earn a Professional Development (PD) certificate. For questions, contact [Karolina Belen](#).

»» SkillsUSA Scholarships Open Soon

Many students are thinking ahead to the cost of college and SkillsUSA offers exclusive scholarship opportunities for members pursuing postsecondary education. Registered SkillsUSA members with upcoming tuition expenses for the fall 2025 academic term (or the term following high school graduation) can apply for scholarships provided by SkillsUSA and our industry partners.

Scholarships opening on Jan. 2, 2025 include:

- Bob Westphal Memorial Scholarship (closes May 30)
- Clifford “Ted” Rees Memorial Scholarship (\$2,500, closes April 15)
- Fine Homebuilding #KeepCraftAlive Scholarship (\$2,500, closes April 15)
- Larry Rash Memorial Scholarship (\$2,500, closes April 15)
- Marsha Daves Memorial Scholarship (\$1,500, closes April 15)
- National Technical Honor Society Scholarship (\$1,000, closes April 15)
- Sharon Melton Myers Memorial (\$1,000, closes April 1)

SkillsUSA partners with Kaleidoscope to provide a streamlined application platform. Students are encouraged to explore the [SkillsUSA Scholarships webpage](#) now to view available opportunities and more will be posted soon. For scholarship questions or assistance in applying, reach out to [Customer Care](#).

»» 2025 Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation Youth Grant Applications Open

The application is now open for the Youth Service America (YSA) 15th Annual Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation Youth Grants program. YSA, with the support of the Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation, is offering project grants to youth changemakers, ages 5 to 25, to lead awareness, direct service, advocacy and philanthropic projects that focus on ending childhood hunger in their communities. Youth may apply for grants of \$500 for projects that engage at least 50 other youth as volunteers (project planners, project leaders, and day-of volunteers) in activities designed to help end childhood hunger in their community. [Learn more and apply by Jan. 26 at YSA.org/Sodexo](#).

»» SME Foundation Scholarships Open

The SME Education Foundation awards scholarships to graduating high school seniors and current college students pursuing an associate or bachelor’s degree in technical fields that directly support manufacturing. [Applications](#) will be accepted until **Feb. 1, 2025**. If you have already registered on the site, use your email and password to login. If you have not registered, please complete SME’s [registration form](#) to set up an account and begin your application. With more than 60 scholarship programs, the SME Foundation provides both merit and need-based scholarships, issues renewing and one-time awards, and seeks applications from all eligible students including women and under-represented communities. The Foundation awards nearly \$1 million dollars in scholarships each year and has awarded \$18 million dollars to over 5,000 future industry leaders since 2005. By submitting one application, you will be considered for all SME Foundation scholarships for which you are eligible.

»» Honorary Life and Outstanding Educator Nominations Open

If you would like to nominate someone for recognition by SkillsUSA as an [Honorary Life](#) or [Outstanding Educator](#), please complete the online applications. Be sure to notify those you nominate and provide all of the information that is requested. Learn more about these awards and eligibility by visiting the [Awards Programs page](#) on the SkillsUSA website. The deadline is **Feb. 14, 2025**. For questions, contact [Madison Kraemer](#).

»» Seeking Musical Talent to Perform National Anthem at NLSC

If you have a musical gift to share with the SkillsUSA community and love to perform, you are encouraged to apply to perform the national anthem at the Opening Session of the 2025 National Leadership & Skills Conference. The chosen performer will be offered a spotlight performance opportunity on the big stage in front of over 15,000 people plus complimentary conference registration if your sole purpose of attendance is to perform the national anthem. [Apply here](#) by 5 p.m. ET on **Feb. 14, 2025**. For questions, contact [Melinda Lloyd](#).

»» The SkillsUSA Store Featured Product

Stay cozy this winter and show off your SkillsUSA pride with the [SkillsUSA Spirit Blanket](#)! This soft and durable blanket is perfect for chilly nights or relaxing at home. Whether you're gifting it or keeping it for yourself, it's the perfect way to stay warm while representing SkillsUSA in style. The SkillsUSA Store offers fast, free shipping!



»» Seeking Innovative Chapters to Prototype a New Product

SkillsUSA is collaborating with Make48 to bring hands-on innovation challenges to more students in the 2025-26 school year. Beginning next August, teams of students will compete to innovate and prototype a new product for a sponsoring business. The team whose product has the best potential to go to market, as chosen by the business, will advance to compete in a regional playoff competition featured in Make48's Roku television series. Check out this [sizzle reel](#) showcasing the work of SkillsUSA Wisconsin students in 2024! SkillsUSA hopes to fill 25% of the Make48 national tournament bracket, which would lead to a SkillsUSA-themed competition and TV show for their regional playoff and ensure SkillsUSA representation at the finals.

Applications for the 2025-26 tournament will open in early 2025 and close on **March 1**. To learn more, visit www.make48.com or fill out the [interest form](#).