



**State Officer Candidates**  
*Colorado FBLA Today*

SLC 2024 Special Edition



# Lauren Anderson Triples FBLA Chapter Size

Lauren Anderson  
Pine Creek High School

Candidate Article

High school students face challenges today that our nation has never seen before. Experts still struggle to understand the long-term, social and academic ramifications of COVID-19 on today's students. Regardless, most of us still simply long for a community of high-character friends that makes smart choices. At Pine Creek High School, FBLA gives our students that exact community--and the results speak for themselves!

My personal, three-year, FBLA leadership journey has changed my life by offering me unmatched, incredible opportunities! As a sophomore, I served as the Pine Creek FBLA VP of Outreach, where my growth strategy focused on offering character development and community service opportunities, not traditional FBLA business opportunities. Capitalizing on our school's large, service oriented military population, our chapter doubled in size, growing from 32 members to 64 members.

This year, as a junior, I've not only served as the President of the Pine Creek chapter, but I've also served as the VP of Education for District 6. As President, we significantly grew our social media outreach, and I challenged our chapter to continuing its focus on FBLA's national goals of character and service. So far this year, we've enjoyed another growth surge, moving our chapter from 64 to 98 members.

My most proud moment as a District officer was organizing and leading the community service project for our District Conference. Ultimately, conference attendees assembled 400 hygiene bags through a meticulously organized assembly line, benefiting the Springs Rescue Mission—a local charity supporting the homeless.

By focusing on character and service, Pine Creek's FBLA chapter has successfully met Colorado FBLA's mission; to inspire and prepare students to become community-minded business leaders in a global society through relevant career preparation and leadership experiences.





# The Value of Speakers

Lucas Barun

Cherry Creek High School

Candidate Article

Growing up, I have found the opportunities to learn from those who have more experience than me undeniably valuable in my decision-making. Seeing the experiences that others have had, both successes and failures, has shown me the value of gaining knowledge from others. Great examples of this fact in my life come from when FBLA has provided me the opportunity to make these leaps and learn from others. A great way to provide that experience to many future business leaders at once is through guest speakers. Guest speakers can provide an idea of what people may experience going into that field or area of business. Being able to understand what they might expect when they make that decision can be helpful in ensuring that the choices they make are the best ones possible.

Other than providing an opportunity to gain experience for future business leaders, speakers can elicit connectivity and empathy. Instead of the normal meeting that just goes over upcoming events and maybe a business lesson, the speaker removes kids from the day-to-day and shows them a real connection to the business ideas that they are learning in class or in the club. In addition, a diverse group of speakers helps a diverse group of people see themselves as entrepreneurs, allowing them to take more confidence in their dreams, and to start thinking about their futures. It's clear that a more diverse team of professionals can lead to greater success in the industry, so no matter what your situation or ideals in life are, doing your best as a person or chapter to provide those opportunities for others will undoubtedly bring everyone up together.

Overall, an abundance of opportunities to learn and grow from those who have already had those experiences can only help.





# What got you involved in FBLA?

**Anthony Bermudez**

Longmont High School

*Candidate Article*

## The Start

Growing up, my fascination with shoes wasn't just about style; it was about the business potential. Trading the newest Jordans with friends evolved into making a profitable profit reselling them, introducing me to entrepreneurship. But it was in middle school, amid the whirlwind of my sneaker business, that I realized I needed a deeper understanding of business fundamentals to succeed truly.

## Becoming Part of FBLA

The Longmont High School of Business provided me with that opportunity, and I took it. Joining the program and FBLA wasn't just about expanding my knowledge but also finding my community. The moment I stepped into my first business class, we began learning about basic leadership and what it took to be a leader. All of us understood that it was a team effort, and we had to work together, so we did. The inclusiveness of the community and the shared passion for business encouraged me to strive for greatness within the program, solidifying my commitment to FBLA. For example, When I stepped up to run for state officer I knew that I would be undertaking a large workload and commitment but something I gained throughout these past few years was the ability to take risks to grow both in my leadership and also in my personal connections. To further that I am organizing a local 5k in my community.

## Why FBLA?

Initially, my reasons for joining FBLA were simple: to enhance my business skills and explore potential opportunities for my future. However, as I became more involved in the organization through volunteering at our events, such as setting up a tent at the carnival and interacting with children, or painting bowls for the Empty Bowls fundraiser at Crackpots, I uncovered something more profound. FBLA wasn't just about personal growth; it was about making a difference. It was about service and giving back to the community that had warmly embraced me. My community encompasses all members of the Longmont FBLA chapter, every student at Longmont High School, every parent of a Longmont High School student, and every member of our broader community, including locals residing near the high school and those who support our school from afar. They embraced me by providing opportunities for education and these incredible experiences. From everyone supporting each other at the high school to parents contributing as sports coaches, making donations, and warmly welcoming me into their homes to spend time with their children, these individuals constitute my community.

## Service and Leadership

After joining FBLA, I knew I wanted to do more. Assuming leadership roles within my chapter, starting as the Chapter Reporter and then becoming the Chapter Vice President, was a natural progression. Inspired by FBLA's emphasis on service, I am also taking the initiative of organizing a 5K fun run event to support the March of Dimes Foundation, allowing me to utilize my business logistic skills and beliefs in community service to leave a lasting impact within Longmont High School and my local community.

## Renewed Purpose

Looking back on my journey, I'm struck by how far I've come. What started as a kid just wanting to profit and network off shoes to gaining business knowledge and having a deep commitment to leave a lasting impact before I graduate with FBLA. As I prepare to run for FBLA state office again, I do so with a renewed sense of purpose. My experiences such as learning to lead and guide my team while injured have helped shape me, instilling a steadfast dedication to FBLA's goals and mission. I am ready to continue advocating for the growth and prosperity not only within my community but also within Colorado FBLA.





# Conexión Comunitaria & FBLA

Yaelyn Chavez

Roosevelt High School

Candidate Article

As the Colorado FBLA District One State Officer this past year, I have taken advantage of numerous opportunities. One of our state officer initiatives this year was for all officers to complete the four levels of the Business Achievement Awards (BAAs), including the final capstone. At first, I was hesitant to begin. Uncertainty overshadowed what direction to take with my capstone or how best to contribute to my community. However, it became clear that the BAA capstone aimed to spark a passion project in each member, evoking growth in leadership skills and empathy.

An idea for my capstone emerged while working on a simple essay for my Spanish class. I have observed a persistent communication barrier faced by Hispanics in my local community, including my parents. Their lack of confidence in the English language often led to missed news and opportunities such as school functions, town celebrations, and local elections. In response, I created a program called Conexión Comunitaria, or Community Connection. Conexión Comunitaria entails monthly in-person meetings and Spanish-language newsletters tailored to Hispanic residents of the Johnstown-Milliken community. Its primary goal is to break linguistic and cultural barriers. Thus far, we've witnessed a gradual yet consistent rise in meeting attendance along with unanimous positive feedback on content and enjoyment. The success of Conexión Comunitaria underscores the vital role of FBLA and its programs. Through just one of its many initiatives, FBLA promotes significant impact and change. The experiences I have gained as a state officer, through attending conferences, meeting new people, and exploring the business world have profoundly shaped me both as a leader and as an individual. I am thoroughly grateful for the lessons FBLA has imparted over the years and eagerly anticipate further growth and learning opportunities.





# Foundations in Finance for Youth

**Caleb Cole**

Cherry Creek High School, Junior

*Candidate Article*

At a high school as large as Cherry Creek High School, it is not uncommon for our incoming 9th Graders to be overwhelmed by all of the opportunities available, and decisions rashly made based on which club had the best food at the club fair. Luckily for me, FBLA happened to be selling cotton candy when I stumbled my way through the club fair as a confused freshman. Since then, I have made it my goal to show other students how FBLA can profoundly impact every single member who interacts with this wonderful program. I believe that students need to be aware of the outstanding opportunities FBLA provides to its members. It serves as a one-stop shop, allowing students to participate in engaging traveling competitions, social events, and a large variety of community service, all while cultivating an interest in the world of business and financial literacy, a skill almost as fundamental as reading and writing.

My experience as a freshman inspired me to spread the positive impact and experiences that FBLA offers, showing students that FBLA isn't just a club with killer snacks, but a place for them to reap real-world benefits. As an FBLA Officer and the FBLA Vice President of Education at Cherry Creek High School, I embarked on campaigns to spread a love for business that would allow new and existing students to develop a passion for the world of business and act on their curiosity at Cherry Creek High School's FBLA.

## **Young Business Leaders:**

My first campaign to spread awareness involved establishing a Business and Financial Education club at Campus Middle Schools, one of Cherry Creek High School's largest feeder schools.

After recognizing a lack of opportunity for students to explore their interest in the business world, we established Young Business Leaders during the 2022-2023 school year. We reached twenty-two 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade students and created lessons to simulate an experience similar to that of a Middle School FBLA Chapter. Lessons included practice competitions covering skills such as Marketing, Entrepreneurship, and Competitive success.

This first attempt to grab students' attention and promote awareness for the American Enterprise System and FBLA was a huge success as all the 8th graders who graduated from YBLs joined our FBLA Chapter this year and even took first at the District Leadership Conference in their respective events.

## **Cash Crash Course:**

On a personal level, it was gratifying to see the immense success of Young Business Leaders at Campus Middle School; I felt we could take this one step further and expand into a new audience. This year, we looked to provide opportunities for elementary schools, serving two purposes: Allowing other Cherry Creek FBLA members to share their love of business with these younger kids while also creating opportunities for the elementary school students to see finance and business in a fun way and foster a passion for financial education.

We successfully reached three different elementary schools, with around 18 different classrooms in total, meaning we were able to impact over 400 students, ensuring that not only students but other teachers and schools see the benefits that FBLA brings to its community. In the upcoming years, we hope to utilize the

lessons specifically developed for each grade level and expand into other elementary schools outside of our school district. I hope to one day see these young students as members of Young Business Leaders, and ultimately as members of an FBLA chapter.

**State Office Candidate:**

Colorado FBLA, as a State Officer and prospective National Officer, I plan to continue what I have started, advocating and growing FBLA as an organization and spreading awareness of the positive impact we bring to our communities through our continued endeavors. I want to develop an environment which allows every member to shine on their journey, as together we can create a brighter future for FBLA and leave a lasting impact on the people we come across.







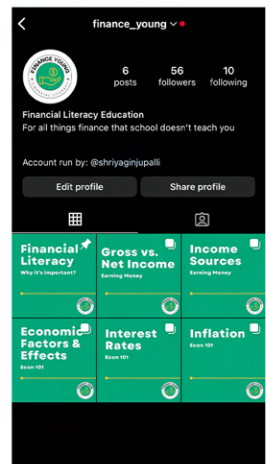
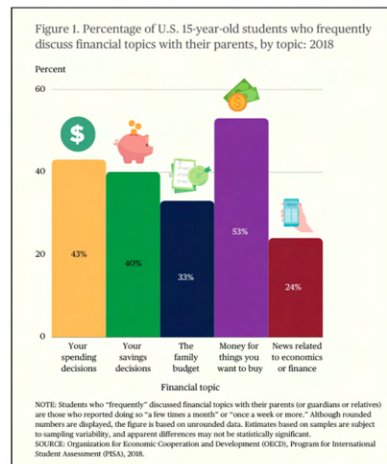
# The Financial Literacy Deficit

Shriya Ginjupalli

Grandview High School

Candidate Article

My name is Shriya Ginjupalli, and my passion is to empower youth with financial literacy. My journey began in middle school, where I delved into the intricacies of investing and the stock market. Over the years, I pursued self-study and actively engaged in personal finance courses, both within and outside of school. Upon entering high school, my involvement in FBLA became a pivotal aspect of my personal and professional development. Starting as a general member, I began to further explore my financial interests and competed in events from international business to financial statement analysis. I steadily progressed to become a chapter officer and ultimately assumed the role of chapter president at Grandview High School. Leading a sizable chapter of more than 130 members, I honed my leadership skills while becoming acutely aware of the prevailing lack of financial education among my peers. My drive to address this issue was fueled by alarming statistics revealing the financial anxieties plaguing today's youth, with many burdened by credit card debt and uncertain about their financial future. According to CNBC "some 54% of teens say they are worried about financing their futures", while Youth.Gov reports that "the average college student has approximately \$3,100 in credit card debt." Motivated to make a difference, I have begun to embark on a mission to simplify financial concepts and make them accessible to high school students through my Instagram page, Finance\_Young. My journey with FBLA has been transformative, shaping my understanding of business education and leadership. As I continue to pursue my goals of empowering young people with financial literacy, I am grateful for the foundation FBLA has provided me and the opportunities it has offered to grow as a future business leader. I am eager to continue contributing to FBLA's mission and to inspire others with my FBLA story.





# The Spirit of FBLA. The Growth of a Member.

**Gabriel Hankins**

Vista Peak Preparatory

*Candidate Article*

Through FBLA I have found people that inspire me, push me further, and laugh with me. I initially joined this organization hinged on the possibility of winning nationals. To prove myself the best. Yet, my paradigm shifted when opened to the idea of helping others. I headed an initiative to read to second graders, an initiative to help the homeless, an initiative to help local veterans. FBLA in my life represents independence, the ability to pursue my passions. And through FBLA I discovered my love for teaching. As of the 2023 State Leadership Conference I began my journey as the Colorado FBLA VP of Education, and through my time as a state officer, I have learned more than public speaking, but when to listen and how to foster growth. Whether it be by Connecting for Success, competing, or serving as community leaders I have been moved by the impact of Colorado FBLA. In this term I attended adviser trainings, CTSO advocacy meetings, chapter visits, and our leadership conferences. Alongside my teams we found success in advocating for your state and national opportunities, while developing resources to better the FBLA experience.

Refinement and dedication to a craft is how I approach every skill, hobby, activity, and my person. I have spent weeks on our state newsletters, hours practicing workshops, realizing I not only represent myself, but FBLA as an organization. Eventually I learned that improvement is, massively, the byproduct of reflection. FBLA made me realize what matters most is servanthip and education, that it takes a team to build a brand, deliver on a promise, and build something meaningful. In my dedication to leadership, in my dedication to you as a member, and in dedication to the tenants that are service, education, and progress, I am not ready to stop serving.





# Following Footsteps

Addison Hoozee

Prairie High School

Candidate Article

Through junior high, I was always told that high school would be the time of my life. I would be able to participate in FFA, FBLA, FCA and so many other amazing organizations. At first, I was skeptical as to how those organizations could change my life. Now, looking back on my freshman year, I believe every word they said. Throughout the year I met so many new and amazing people that I still talk with to this day. I was able to compete in my competitive event at the district, state, and national levels, which took me to explore some beautiful and fascinating destinations. My favorite memory by far was the feeling of standing on the stage at State Lea-

a rush of excitement and disbelief. That was the moment I knew I would go far in this organization. As the year came to a close, my advisor approached me about running for a district officer position. I, of course, agreed and started working on my application that night. I was then given the honor to serve as the 2024 District 3 Executive Vice President, an absolutely unforgettable experience. My mom is the person I look up to for everything FBLA because she was a chapter officer for three years, and a state officer for two, including state president. We have daily conversations about the amazing experience she was able to have through her terms. In the end, I aim to grow in my leadership skills, network with many more members, and pursue my passion for public speaking. While along the way, following in my mom's footsteps.





# "Mom, I Want to be a Successful Business Woman"

Lyndi Huelskamp

Flagler High School

Candidate Article

I distinctly remember heading to my first day of fifth grade with “Lyndi Huelskamp” and becoming “a successful business woman,” on my back-to-school sign. That same year, I joined Middle Level FBLA, embolden my spirit for service, strengthen my education, and start a journey that would progress my abilities. FBLA would make me a confident leader and changemaker.

My journey began in 2017 when my father became the business instructor and FBLA adviser at Flagler. I spent many hours unobtrusively observing driven individuals from the corner during meetings and competition prep. These were my people and I wanted to be just like them. I began my FBLA journey by imploring for a Middle Level FBLA chapter, and enjoyed my first ever competition in my power red cardigan and ballet flats. After three years of middle level, freshman year approached and I was ready for the big leagues. I ambitiously interviewed for a district office, unfortunately failing, but taking away lessons, so I poured myself into serving as chapter Chief Relationship Officer. Freshman year was filled with immense success from growing a well-rounded chapter to tackling the Business Plan competition with my best friend. Our project created a School Based Enterprise dubbed 395 Apparel & Graphics. 395 took us to first place at districts, third at state and a trip to Alanta for Nationals. At state FBLA, I was also honored to serve on the state officer selection committee, one of my favorite experiences thus far.

My journey is still full speed ahead as I am serving my second term as chapter CRO and finding success as District 3’s Vice President of Education. At the District 3 Leadership Conference, my partner and I placed first in Broadcast Journalism. On top of this, I ran a workshop during the conference and assisted with opening and closing sessions. While awaiting my turn to speak at session, I looked out at the packed auditorium, my stomach turning. I stepped up to the podium, once again looking at the crowd and any nervous feeling went away. I knew this was it, I felt at home. FBLA is where I belong.





# The Real Life Applications of FBLA

**Mahathi Jasty**

Legend High School

*Candidate Article*

High school and college can present many students with the daunting task of learning practical skills for a profession while balancing social engagements. FBLA may consist of taking tests and preparing for events but it provided practical skills that I would never have learned in a classroom setting. Being able to understand the different aspects of a company and the many fields that exist in business helped hone my skills and understand the opportunities present. In FBLA, I was able to understand the true impact and importance that it had on not just myself but the entire chapter. While other officers and I help prepare members for their events, we also create personal connections and a welcoming atmosphere for others as well. Learning the technical side of business is very important to being successful in the field, but above that is being able to make connections and form relationships.

Through word of mouth, social media, awards, and other strategies, our chapter has nearly quadrupled since we restarted the program after COVID because we have formed connections with our members and created a community. Not only did we as a chapter prioritize learning skills and practicing knowledge, but also team building and fun opportunities to meet new people. While FBLA might have been recommended to me through friends as a way to be involved in the school, it provided me with a community that shared a common interest. Through our Member of the Month program, we have been able to award outstanding members who have prioritized helping other members and helping to create a community within our chapter. Through all these efforts taken by members, officers, and advisors, our members learn skills, participate in a community, and have fun which can ultimately be utilized for any prospective job in the future.





# The Transformative Opportunities in FBLA

**Ben Kleve**

Holyoke High School

*Candidate Article*

As a passionate advocate for business education and leadership, my journey with FBLA has been nothing short of transformative. From the moment I joined, I embraced the opportunity to grow personally and professionally. My journey began with a spark of curiosity and a willingness to try anything. FBLA has provided the perfect platform to channel my enthusiasm and cultivate essential skills that would shape my future endeavors. Through various workshops, conferences, and competitions, I discovered the power of effective communication, strategic thinking, and collaborative teamwork. One of the defining moments of my FBLA journey was stepping into a leadership role within the state chapter. As the District 4 state officer, I have learned the importance of servant leadership, and the power of your network. Beyond the realm of competitions and events, FBLA became a source of inspiration and camaraderie. I found mentors who believe in my potential and friends who shared my passion for business and leadership. Together, we celebrated victories, overcame challenges, and forged life-long bonds rooted in a dedication to becoming the best version of ourselves. As I reflect on my FBLA journey, I am filled with gratitude for the invaluable experiences and lessons that have shaped me into the leader I am today. FBLA has not only equipped me with the skills and knowledge to thrive in the ever-evolving business landscape but has also instilled in me a sense of purpose and a drive to make a difference in the world around me. This story is not finished yet, as I have one more year, one more chance, to make a difference in this organization that is so near and dear to my heart.



# My FBLA Story

Josephine Langdon

Ellicot High School

Candidate Article

"We cannot become what we want by remaining who we are," remarked Max Depree, an American businessman and writer. Personally, I have always looked up to my brothers for guidance on who I should aspire to be and what path I should follow. It wasn't until my second semester of Sophomore year that I discovered my own identity and aspirations. Initially, I felt the need to mirror my brothers to achieve success until I joined FBLA. Through my involvement in FBLA, I have undergone significant personal growth and transformation, gaining newfound confidence, and enhancing my public speaking skills. I am proud of the person I have become.

My introduction to FBLA came through friends, and I attended my first meeting just a month before the District 6 Leadership Conference. Although, I did not have sufficient time to participate in a competition, I attended the conference as an observer. The welcoming environment and professional demeanor instantly resonated with me, shaping my aspirations. From that moment, FBLA became a top priority. I eagerly engaged in a straight-to-state competition with two friends, taking the lead role and diving into the project.

Our community project, while challenging, was highly rewarding as we contributed in various ways, from organizing a food drives to delivering toys to the children's hospital. We as a group totaled over 150+ hours giving all we had towards serving our community. Despite the initial overwhelming feeling of compiling a 15-page report, we were immensely proud of our collective effort. Nothing will amount to the excitement the nurses had when we delivered 315 toys to my local children's hospital. Although, we were not victorious, my pursuit to grow in my chapter continued and fueled my ambition to run for a state office.

This journey highlighted my passion for community service and reinforced the joy of teamwork and achievement. The sense of fulfillment and collaboration returned when I competed in Broadcast Journalism at DLC 2024 and secured first place. Despite my relatively short history in FBLA compared to other members, I have undergone significant personal and leadership growth. I am eager to embrace the opportunities that the upcoming year holds for me, my chapter, and Colorado FBLA.





# A World of Possibilities

Isabella LeBoeuf

Arapahoe High School

*Candidate Article*

When I joined FBLA last year, I was just a little freshman surrounded by 1600 unfamiliar faces and had one friend. Ever since preschool when my mom was a real estate agent, I knew that business was the path for me so I was drawn to FBLA. My advisors quickly recognized leadership skills that I didn't know I possessed. In fact, I couldn't even give a definition of what it means to be a leader. I was invited to be a chapter officer intern nonetheless and I became an official chapter officer at the end of the year. My freshman year got even better after qualifying to compete at nationals. I couldn't believe it. Between competing at NLC and becoming a chapter officer, I finally realized that I am capable of so much more than I ever thought possible. Without FBLA, I wouldn't be the person I am today. If I told my middle school self that I have the ability to make my dreams come true or that I have made friends across the state and nation, she wouldn't believe it.

Now, my goal is to help all members across the organization to discover their full potential, just like I have been lucky enough to. I want everyone to experience the unmatched energy of having 13,000 ambitious FBLA members all together in one room at NLC. I want everyone to see their ideas become reality. I want to foster a community where others feel comfortable and inspired to achieve their dreams. While on the President's Council and the District 10 Officer team, I got to work towards this goal. However, I am not done. I have committed my whole heart and soul to achieving this one way or another.







# Lasting Growth and Connection

Annabelle Rusco

Roosevelt High School

Candidate Article

From the moment I enter an FBLA conference, I find myself thriving, filled with energy. I still vividly remember attending my first NLC in 2022 as an eighth grader. Seeing the support and passion that fuels members in what they do. There was a sense of belonging I felt from the second I arrived, to stepping on the stage in front of 10,000 attendees. After encouragement from various officers, members, and new friends, and recognizing how Colorado FBLA has helped shape the leader I am, I knew that I wanted to pursue a leadership role.

At the time, I had no idea my leadership would develop into what it is today, blossoming as I continued to serve in different capacities. I've found a love for fundraising, service, networking, and FBLA itself. Holding officer positions in various forms, I've had the opportunity to see many elements within the organization. I am constantly looking for the best ways to impact others. As I serve in roles at the chapter, district, and state level on council, I remain committed to my goals while working in the best interest of our members, dedicated to everything I'm doing.

As an officer, I've learned that my leadership approach is closely aligned with servant leadership: emphasizing communication and team inclusion. I work to ensure that everyone has the resources to fulfill their potential—a commitment that echoes my own experiences as an eighth grader.

My goal is to inspire those around me, building others up as I go. Jack Welch said, "Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others." This is the type of leader I strive to be—a leader full of potential, capable of fostering a successful year for Colorado FBLA.





# FBLA: A Catalyst for Change

Emmet Smith

Pine Creek High School

*Candidate Article*

Throughout my years in FBLA, my only regret has been not joining earlier. The impact it has had on my life has been profound, introducing me to a community of dedicated friends and passionate individuals from around the world. Through FBLA, I have not only developed lasting friendships but also embarked on entrepreneurial ventures that have evolved into meaningful projects and businesses. FBLA has positively impacted my life in so many ways such as friendships, internships, collegiate level networking, a network of passionate individuals from around the world, and business schemes that have developed into small companies. In my past year of FBLA, I have participated in several of the partner association competitions and games, made it to nationals, and started several passion projects stemming from FBLA lunch or dinner table discussions.

The first club I started at my school that was inspired by FBLA was the Stocks and Finance Association (SAFA). Through SAFA, we have expanded to five chapters across the nation from coast to coast and have over 50 members throughout our several chapters. In SAFA, we teach financial literacy, compete in financial and stock related competitions, and promote individual awareness and investing in the stock market. We have gained two key sponsorships which allow us to host our own nation-wide stock market exchange competitions with real money and trophies as prizes. You can learn more at our website: [stocksandfinance.org](https://stocksandfinance.org). Demeter's Demeanor was the second organization I founded that would not have ever started without FBLA. I remember driving back from the SLC with my friends and we stopped for lunch at a fast-food restaurant on the way home. When we stopped, I thought this would be a short fifteen-minute lunch and then we would head home to a full day of rest and relaxing at the house, however, the lunch turned into a three to four hour ordeal as the time flew by and we rifled off business ideas until we found one that stuck and continued to develop it. Demeter's Demeanor was ultimately decided on to be an environmental awareness page dedicated to promoting technology that is sustainable or eco-friendly. For this project, I wrote a myriad of articles about new and emerging sustainable technologies improving our world. I also created an Instagram page to post ecologically sound inventions and general news. Find out more about Demeter's Demeanor at our website: <https://demetersdemeanor.wixsite.com/demeters-demeanor>.

The final project stemming from FBLA that I am most proud of is Apex SAT. The idea of Apex was formulated as all great ideas do: in a late-night hotel room discussion. We have even translated this company into the FBLA event Business Plan, which we won first in our district and will be competing at state in the near future. Apex SAT is a distinguished 501(c)(3) non-profit organization committed to eliminating socioeconomic barriers and providing equitable access to SAT tutoring services. Our mission reverberates through a multitude of impactful endeavors that have touched lives globally. Spearheading a team of 115 volunteers from across the globe, we championed free SAT tutoring for high schoolers, transcending borders and reaching over 5,000 students in all 50 states and 67 countries. Our chapters branch internationally, such as one of our vibrant chapters located in Taipei, Taiwan. Recognized by Pine Creek High School, we were entrusted to teach 100 juniors, amplifying our impact within local communities. Not content with solely providing tutoring, we ventured further, raising over \$30,000 through diligent grant applications and donations, channeling these funds into scholarships that became bridges to students' dream colleges, irrespective of their financial circumstances. Additionally, we broadened our scope to encompass tutoring for AP exams, college consulting, general academic support, and went the extra mile by translating our services into various languages. This initiative aimed to assist a broader international audience, breaking language barriers and ensuring accessibility for students worldwide. Our commitment to inclusivity and diverse learning needs remains steadfast at Apex SAT as we have published several

articles on our blog and even recruited specialized volunteers to ensure our company is a safe space for all. One pinnacle achievement was our summer camp, uniting 350 students worldwide for an immersive week-long learning experience crafted by our dedicated team of tutors. This initiative not only nurtured academic growth but fostered a global community bound by the pursuit of knowledge. Through this journey, I honed entrepreneurial skills, led diverse teams, formulated robust marketing strategies, and cultivated a keen sense of effective fundraising. Our dedication to accessibility and excellence is encapsulated in the work we do at Apex SAT, showca-  
powerment for all.

Achievements made through these three organizations highlighted above were exclusively made possible with the dedicated and passionate member base of FBLA. The entrepreneurial mindset that is so vibrant and present in FBLA resulted in a broad network of connections of friends you can trust to help you achieve your greatest aspirations.



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# Stories of Growth and Leadership Through FBLA

Laiq Sorrell

Cherry Creek High School, Junior

*Candidate Article*

FBLA is more than just a club. It is a platform for connection between students, allowing for networking while simultaneously providing professional development. Our chapter members' journeys have been profoundly impacted by FBLA enhancing their business skills and creating connections. Through a series of stories, including my own, we will gain an understanding of how FBLA has changed people's lives.

FBLA also develops business and speaking skills in our members, crucial throughout life. Dongyeon, a new member this year, said FBLA's competitive events "taught [him] speaking skills" and how to "perform under pressure." Personally, through FBLA's competitive events, I have gained knowledge about various business topics such as UX Design, Business Ethics, and business reports. This club has provided me with business knowledge and experiences that will last a lifetime.

Additionally, FBLA allows for leadership skills to flourish through various opportunities such as volunteering, running social events, and mentoring. A chapter officer stated that FBLA helps "leaders create other leaders." Zachary Gao, a sophomore, claimed his leadership skills grew "immeasurably by helping run social events." When I first joined FBLA, it was the complete opposite of everything I had ever done, and challenged me to leave my comfort zone. Being in a leadership position in the club has developed my speaking skills far beyond what I could have anticipated, and skyrocketed my public speaking confidence. Being an officer in a room of hundreds of students no longer creates fear, but inspires me to lead.

Sharing our chapter's stories showcase the profound impact of FBLA's programs on students' growth as confident young leaders who are ready to take on the world. The impact on its members' lives solidifies FBLA as not just a club, but a tool which fosters leadership and develops business skills.





# Behind Soccer Smiles

Vivian Yang

Grandview High School

Candidate Article



I am Vivian Yang and I am one of the representatives for the Grandview High School Chapter. One of the things we believe the most in include providing community service to every individual regardless of their race, background, or their location in Colorado. Our chapter had an amazing volunteer opportunity at Soccer City, where the officer team went to Colfax and we all had different jobs to make the soccer experience meaningful for all the little ones.

For me, I was in charge of concessions, specifically, snowcones. After each game, the energetic kids would run straight to the concession stand. Their hands all attached to a little red ticket, given after every game, eligible for one free snow cone.

I would say, “How was your game? What flavor would you like?”

Through giggles and excitement they would reply, “We won! Can I get a rainbow one Please?”

I would then proceed to pump every flavor into the snow cone while another officer friend would grind the ice straight from the bag. But what was most impactful about handing out snow cones with seemingly no deeper meaning behind it, was the expression on their faces. As soon as I handed it to them, their entire face would light up, a boy that lost his game would feel better, an excited blush would appear in their cheeks and the sun hit their eyes just right so that the officer team could just see their whole face light up. So even though the snow cone machine would break, or the flavors would run out, seeing every single kid smile is what kept us going. We were happy and grateful to give back to the community’s youngest.

On the other side of the field, there would be a few other officers handing out raffles to the kids after their game. After each game, no matter winning or losing they would hurriedly run to an officer and collect their tickets. Patient and respectful. Each thank you was heartfelt, that level of respect at such a young age was so meaningful to our chapter, and we admired that attitude towards their opponents. We would sit out in the sun and watch them play match after match rewarding them with their well deserved tickets.

To my chapter, FBLA means seeing the smile on a kid’s face. It means collaborating and working together to achieve a common goal. Our officer team works really well together and we all know the roles that we play. Our end dream is to be able to provide for the community whether that be small actions like handing out tickets or making snow cones.

But also, we are there to show up for the bigger cause, assisting our Soccer city to help the parents feel safe, knowing their children can have fun and be rewarded. Getting to be a part of this community service project not only helped out the kids but it also strengthened our officer and chapter bond. We were so thankful to be given that opportunity. As Grandview, we hope to continue giving back to our community, and we can’t wait for what’s more to come!

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