



# New Directions

*"Connecting NJ one chapter at a time." Winter 2025*

## President's Address

Dear New Jersey FCCLA Members, Advisers, and Alumni:

The winter season is upon us, providing us the perfect opportunity to drink another cup of hot chocolate, play board games with your family or learn a new hobby! Not only does winter give us time to spend with our family, but also encourages us to reflect and seek opportunities for self-improvement. I urge you to take a moment to think about how you can become a better family member, friend, employee, and FCCLA member.

As we continue along our journey, it is important to recognize the moments that got us to this point. The 2024 Fall Leadership Connection was the first of three dynamic conferences planned for this school year. This FLC was packed with action. NJ FCCLA members demonstrated their hard work and dedication through community service, workshops, and competitive event participation. It was incredible to see members actively networking in their workshops, Service Ambassadors organizing the donations, and wide smiles as many members received medals for their competitive events. Thank you to all members, advisers, and alumni who helped shape this conference into The Ultimate Leadership Experience.

There are many exciting opportunities that await NJ FCCLA members especially regarding leadership development. I want to remind you leadership is not defined by authority, but by the ability to connect with others on a personal level and influence action. Leading with purpose and embracing core values align a leaders' behaviors with their goals. So, the next time you carry out a fundraiser, organize a community service initiative, or conduct a meeting within your chapter, keep this thought in mind to help you become the best leader you can be.

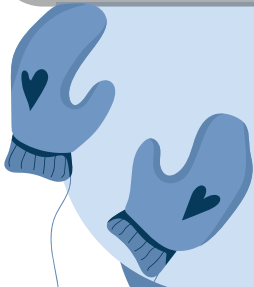
This year's theme, "Dream. Believe. Succeed," reflects our commitment to achieving dreams, while challenging us to step out of our comfort zones, embrace our potential, and create a ripple effect of positive change. The 2025 Leadership Bootcamp embodied this theme, as we learned about how our mistakes and failings influence our learning with lessons from the book *"Sometimes You Win. Sometimes you Learn"* by John C. Maxwell. Our amazing facilitators conveyed this message through a variety of activities. We hope that you will value this opportunity on your FCCLA journey with the t-shirts and book that will help you reflect on the core concepts of this virtual leadership meeting.

As we look ahead, let's remember that our strength lies in our unity and shared vision. Together, we will continue to make a difference in our schools, communities, and beyond. It's time to gear up for the State Leadership Conference that will take place on March 19th and 20th. All the competitive Events are available on the NJ Website. There are three new events that deserve your attention. I hope to see you all in Cherry Hill in March.


Here's to a year of excellence, success, and making dreams a reality. I am excited to see the amazing accomplishments we will achieve together as NJ FCCLA warms our hearts and promotes leadership and service!

Best,  
Malav Shah

NJ FCCLA State President



WINTER MEMBERSHIP INITIATIVES.....	PAGE 2
STRENGTH IN SERVICE: SERVICE AMBASSADORS.....	PAGE 4
WINTER DRIVING TIPS & CAR CARE.....	PAGE 5
COLLECTION OF WINTER FUNDRAISING IDEAS .....	PAGE 6
RED ROSE CHAPTER AWARD APPLICATION.....	PAGE 7
RUN FOR STATE OFFICE.....	PAGE 8
CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT - SOUTHERN REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL.....	PAGE 14
BYLAWS UPDATES & A GRILLED CHEESE TO DREAM ABOUT!.....	PAGE 15



# Winter Membership Initiatives

By: Pragma Bhatia, Vice President of Membership

Although the fall has blown away, membership initiatives have not. As the year continues, it is important to continue dedication to membership. Here's to sharing FCCLA spirit over a cup of hot chocolate! If your chapter has been experiencing lulls in membership and member activity, here are a few ideas to get your school excited once again.

## 1. Winter-Themed Fundraiser

Nothing brings a chapter together like a fundraiser! Build chapter resources that support member participation in state and national conferences. Work together with your members to showcase an amazing fundraiser; make it creative!

## 2. Social Media

Social media continues to be the prevalent source of information. Advocate for your FCCLA chapter by posting regularly on your chapter social media page. Connect with individuals from your school through social media and encourage them to join.

## 3. Hold engaging meetings

Meetings are a key cornerstone to gain members so make meetings fun and informative. Be sure meetings start with icebreakers and always have an agenda for every member. During meetings, make sure to address common questions, promote competitive events, and start informing members about the State Leadership Conference.

## 4. Recognize Members

Recognition is a very positive way to appreciate and motivate members. If your chapter has not been recognized on a school-level, you can advocate for this through a meeting with your school officials. Start small, like asking your guidance counselors to put up a picture of your chapter at FLC. Use a bulletin board in the hallway near the FCS rooms to recognize member achievements and contributions. This will help spread the word of what FCCLA does at your school.

These ideas are a great way for membership to go above and beyond at your school. Share the spirit of FCCLA all throughout winter and spring.

# Reliving the Excitement: 2024 Fall Leadership Connection!

By: Lucais Romo, National Vice President of Programs

On November 25, 2024, over 700 enthusiastic New Jersey FCCLA members and advisers came together at the Pines Manor for a day filled with energy, inspiration, and impact! The Fall Leadership Connection wasn't just a conference; it was an unforgettable journey to Dream. Believe. Succeed!

## What Made It Unforgettable?

This one-day extravaganza had it all—delicious breakfasts, a powerful opening session, hands-on workshops, exciting awards, and a chance to connect over lunch. The spotlight of the day? Community Service! Together, we made a difference through incredible initiatives:

- Pull Tabs for the Ronald McDonald House 🏠: 46.6 pounds collected!
- Non-Perishables for REPLENISH Food Pantry 🛒: Nearly 3,000 items donated!
- Cupcakes for Covenant House and Americares 🍰: \$2,000 raised for homeless teens and hurricane relief!

## A Keynote to Remember

The opening session set the tone, led by your 2024-2025 State Executive Council and featuring keynote speaker Lasada Pippin. His message was simple yet profound: Dare to dream, and don't stop until you achieve it! His story fired up attendees to take action and believe in their limitless potential.

## Workshops That Empowered...

- *Destination Leadership*: This session covered membership strategies and provided officers with ways to engage their members facilitated by State Officers and Alum David Shah. This group enjoyed hearing from Kirsten Corley from the Covenant House.
- *Passport to Service*: Provided officers with community service and fundraiser ideas, included tips to make these events successful led by State Officers and Alumnus Catherine DiGioia-Weinfeld. This group heard more about "Explore. Act. Tell" from representative Dr. Jennifer Blalock.
- *Unlocking Greatness & Dream Big*: Two separate workshop sessions were held. Mr. Pippin continues his message Dare to Dream. In a separate session, Ms. Katina Lindsay provided a transformational session on leadership with her workshop "Dreaming Big."

## Thank You for Making It Magical!

Your enthusiasm turned this conference into a success story! Whether you learned, served, or showcased your talents, you made an impact. See you in March 2025 for the State Leadership Conference where even more opportunities for growth and service await. Let's keep the momentum going! 🚀



## Fall Leadership Institute In Review

By: Lucais Romo, National Vice President of Programs

From October 18 to October 21, more than 200 FCCLA members from across the nation gathered in Orlando, Florida to participate in the first annual Orlando Fall Leadership Institute. Five officers of the National Executive Council (NEC) joined members and advisers to kick-off this leadership conference with a sneak peek at the accredited Disney Imagination Campus Leadership Training and prepare the attendees for a magical weekend ahead of them!

Our national organization piloted two Fall Leadership Institutes this year; the first held at Disney World in Orlando and another at Disneyland in Anaheim, California. These national events provided training crafted by executives of the Disney corporation rooted in leadership principles and teamwork called the Disney Imagination Campus Leadership Training. Led through two of the Disney parks by Imagination Campus Trainers, and behind the scenes to learn from cast members and executives, FCCLA members applied their lessons in leadership and teamwork to solve puzzles and participate in discussions.

The two half-day trainings left free time in the schedule to enjoy the magic of the Disney parks with fellow members and their advisers. Rollercoasters, interactive experiences, spectacular live shows, delicious food and drinks, and the acclaimed stars of beloved Disney properties brought joy and wonder to the members of FCCLA.

To begin and conclude this conference, the NEC facilitated sessions to supply updates to national initiatives, opportunities, and the upcoming National Leadership Conference in Orlando, FL. The officers led networking and leadership activities. On the first day, chapters and state associations set goals for how they would engage with the leadership training and bring back what they learned to their schools and communities. The closing session allowed them to reflect on their experience. Every activity and icebreaker was a chance to enhance their Ultimate Leadership Experience.

The Fall Leadership Institutes were magical ways to develop leadership, connect, and, of course, start the year by dreaming big! Be sure to secure a space for next year's Institutes by frequenting the FCCLA website, [www.fcclainc.org](http://www.fcclainc.org), for more details.

### Bring FCCLA Energy to Your Chapter This Winter!

By: Brian Muirhead, Vice President of  
Leadership Development

Even during the chilly winter months, your chapter can keep momentum by inviting state officers for an inspiring visit! Whether it's diving into competitive events, sparking fresh ideas, or guiding your team toward success, we're here to make it happen. Need help launching retention strategies, prepping for conferences, or organizing an unforgettable chapter event? Let's collaborate!

Why not shake things up by hosting a group of state officers at your next meeting? We're ready to bring the excitement and expertise to help your chapter thrive. Head to the Membership Tab on the New Jersey FCCLA website to find the request form or email the state office directly at [njfccla@gmail.com](mailto:njfccla@gmail.com) to schedule a visit. Be sure to share your meeting date, time, and topics of interest so we can customize the perfect experience for your team—whether in person or via Zoom.

Don't miss out—the state officers can't wait to meet with your chapter and help you achieve greatness!

# Strength in Service: The Incredible Work of our Service Ambassadors

By: Malav Shah, State President and  
Mishree Patel, Vice President of Community Service

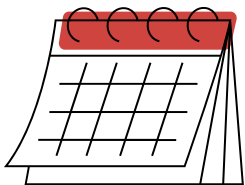


This year, NJ FCCLA introduced a new leadership position to enhance one of the most integral parts of our organization, community service. Community service has always been the cornerstone for NJ FCCLA and the Service Ambassadors program provides leadership opportunities for service-minded members throughout the state. Many of our service opportunities require little to no money, but the drive and motivation to give back! We want to ensure that all chapters have an equal opportunity to get involved, which is why we are piloting the Service Ambassador Program this year.

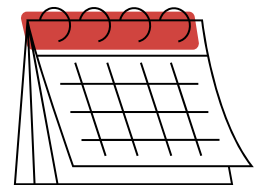
The Service Ambassadors of our state are motivated, dedicated, and are beyond excited to nurture service growth within their chapters. Ahead of the Fall Leadership Connection, there were two meetings that showcased the leadership, service, and action qualities of these talented individuals. With the help of the Service Ambassadors, NJ FCCLA surpassed our goals for the community service initiatives at the FLC.

Many chapters in attendance made a difference, however, we are shining a spotlight on Ocean County Vocational High School, for making an exemplary commitment to making a difference. With a total of 6,000 pull tabs and 228 non-perishable food items collected, the chapter, with the encouragement of their Service Ambassadors, worked collaboratively to ensure their drives were successful. Members divided tasks, developed innovative ideas, and reached out to local organizations and businesses for support. Their teamwork not only strengthened their chapter but also demonstrated the power of collective action.

We want to give a special shout-out to Ocean County Vocational Technical School and to the OCVTS Service Ambassadors: Addyson Patrick and Liora Orshen. They worked hard to motivate their chapter members to participate in the state service initiatives for FLC. Addyson and Patrick are active in our monthly virtual meetings. We applaud these Service Ambassadors and their chapters for their incredible efforts. NJ FCCLA looks forward to the active participation of all the Service Ambassadors in our state and the continued impact that each chapter's service projects have on making your school and community a better place. Keep up the amazing work!



## Mark Your Calendar!



- January 27 – Program Cover Design Due
- February 1 – State Officer Applications Due
- February 14 – State Leadership Conference Registration Due
- February 18 – Red Rose Chapter Award Applications Due
- February 22 – State Officer Candidates Meeting
- March 1 – Culinary & Baking and Pastry STAR Events (contact State Office)
- March 1 – NJ FCCLA Scholarships & Adviser Award Applications Due
- March 1 – National Program Applications Due on FCCLA Portal
- March 11 – Digital Folder Uploads Due for SLC Competitive Events
- March 19–20 – State Leadership Conference – Cherry Hill, New Jersey
- July 5–9 – National Leadership Conference – Orlando, Florida

# Safe Roads Start with You: Winter Driving Tips and Car Care

By: Lucais Romo, National Vice  
President of Programs

Driving is a privilege and a huge responsibility! On the way to winter activities like ice skating, movies, and cafes use these best practices to do your part to create a safe experience on the road for yourself, those in the car with you, and those around you.

During the morning commute, frost on the windows and low tire pressure can interrupt a routine. Here is a reliable method to defrost the car if automatic defrosters are not doing the trick.

1. **Pump heaters on the highest setting:** Warm air has a higher moisture-carrying capacity than cold air which can pull the condensation off the windows.
2. **Turn A/C on:** this draws moisture out of circulated air, so it can be used again to get rid of condensation.
3. **Turn the air re-circulation off and crack the windows open for a short time:** This will cause your vehicle to take in new, cold air from outside to be warmed up inside the car. This also increases the moisture capacity of the air leading to defrosted windows faster.

While nice to see, items hanging from the rear-view mirror are distractions and against the rules of the road; opt for an air freshener that plugs into your air vent. There are refillable types that can reduce waste or natural options with essential oils or scented items in linen bags that you can hang in front of the vent to keep your vehicle smelling clean and airy. Use a rag and snow scraping tool before using your car. It's helpful to keep these in the same place every time to ensure easy use after a snowy night.

FCCLA is bringing the Safe Roads Challenge back and partnering with the Trypscore app once again! You can earn points for using safe driving practices on the road or for being a responsible passenger; these can qualify you, your friends, and family for national awards. FCCLA is awarding two all-expenses-paid trips to the national leadership conference, regular gift cards to members, and a chance for \$500 in gift cards to those who use the new Friends and Family Code. To find out how to join the Safe Roads Challenge, view the member minute updates sent to the email associated with your FCCLA membership.

Safe driving and well wishes for the winter from your State Executive Council!

# Winter Chapter Meeting Ideas



By: Stuti Shah, First Vice President

Winter is here, and it's the perfect time for your FCCLA chapter to have some seasonal fun while growing together! From staying healthy to giving back, the colder months are full of opportunities for creativity, teamwork, and service. Ready to kick off some exciting meetings? Here are some specific, fun ideas:

1. **Winter Wellness Challenge** - Set a group goal to track steps or try a new indoor workout together
2. **Winter Career Panel** - Invite professionals from cool jobs like ski instructors or snowplow drivers to share their careers.
3. **DIY Winter Projects** - Make eco-friendly hand warmers or upcycle old clothes into winter accessories.
4. **Community Service** - Organize a winter clothing drive or volunteer to help shovel snow for seniors.
5. **Winter Cooking Challenge** - Host a cozy soup or stew cook-off to share healthy winter recipes.
6. **Outdoor Winter Fun** - Go ice skating or have a snowball fight to build teamwork and have fun together.
7. **Winter Photography Contest** - Capture the beauty of the season with a fun photography competition.
8. **Hot Apple Cider** - Sell apple cider with a gingerbread cookie for a delicious way to fund raise.

Winter is the perfect time to stay active, get creative, and make a positive impact! With these fun, engaging ideas, your FCCLA chapter can stay connected, learn new skills, and spread some seasonal cheer. Whether it's through community service, creative challenges, or just enjoying the outdoors, there's something for everyone. So, bundle up; get ready to make the most of the season, and create memories that will keep your chapter energized all winter long!

Participate in the "Clever Cookie"  
(for a cause), Competitive Event at  
SLC. Don't forget to buy your  
cookies at the conference to  
support our service initiatives!



# Collection of Winter Fundraising Ideas

By: Mehak Patel, Vice President of Parliamentary Law

Winter is the perfect time to get creative with fundraising activities. With a little planning and a lot of enthusiasm, you can organize events that raise funds and bring joy to your community. Here are some engaging winter fundraising ideas:



## 1. Valentine's Candy Heart Sale:

Set up a system where people can purchase small candy hearts or similar treats to send to friends or teachers. The treats can even be personalized by adding customizable notes.



## 2. Trivia Night:

Host a trivia or game night to gather students for an evening of fun competition. You can charge an entry fee, sell snacks and drinks, or even include a raffle at the event.



## 3. Pop-Up Thrift Store:

Ask members to donate gently used clothing and accessories and sell them or partner with a local thrift store.



## 4. Hot Cocoa Sales:

Set up a hot cocoa stand in your school's lobby before or after school. You can even offer a variety of toppings like marshmallows, whipped cream, or chocolate shavings.



## 5. Winter-Themed Movie Night:

Transform your school's gymnasium, cafeteria, or auditorium into a cozy theater for a winter-themed movie night. Your chapter can display a classic movie. Fundraise and create a cozy atmosphere with blankets and cushions. By charging an admission fee and selling popcorn and treats, your chapter is sure to collect funds!




## 6. Cookie Grams:

Take pre-orders for homemade cookies and deliver them to students and teachers. Your chapter can offer different flavors or decorating options to make the cookies more appealing.

By tapping into the season's cozy and festive vibe, your chapter can create memorable experiences through fundraising activities that can bring people together while supporting your chapter's goals. Each of these ideas offers a unique way to emphasize the "fun" in fundraising.

## Upcoming Conferences

### 2025 State Leadership Conference


 March 19–20, 2025

 Details at [NJ FCCLA Website](#)

 Register by February 14, 2025

Get ready to Dream, Believe, and Succeed in New Jersey!

### 2025 National Leadership Conference

 July 5–9, 2025

 Orlando, Florida

Pack your bags for a week of inspiration, leadership, and magic in the Sunshine State!

Don't miss out—these conferences are where memories and milestones are made! ✨

# Snowflakes of Service: 5 Winter Community Service Ideas

By: Mishree Patel,  
Vice President of Community Service

Winter is the perfect time to show kindness and support those in need. As the cold weather settles in and the days get shorter, many communities face unique challenges. The winter months can be especially tough for vulnerable populations—whether it's the elderly, homeless, or families struggling to make ends meet. Here are five impactful community service ideas that can make a real difference during the colder months:

## 1. Clothing Drives

Organize a drive to collect coats, hats, gloves, and blankets for individuals facing homelessness or financial hardships. Partner with local shelters or community centers to distribute donations and help keep people warm during the colder weather.

## 2. Deliver Meals to The Senior Citizens

For many elderly or disabled individuals, winter can make them feel lonely. Volunteer to deliver hot meals or groceries to those who are unable to leave their homes, offering both help with a simple task and companionship.

## 3. Snow Removal for Seniors & Disabled Neighbors

Help clear snow from driveways and sidewalks for the elderly or disabled neighbors, who have difficulty in doing so themselves. This simple act of kindness can make a big difference in their safety and mobility during the winter months.

## 4. Winter Care Kits for The Homeless

Assemble care packages filled with warm socks, gloves, hand warmers, and snacks, then distribute them to homeless individuals in your community. These kits provide warmth and comfort during the harsh winter months.

## 5. Support Local Animal Shelters

Winter is especially tough for animals in shelters. Volunteer your time to walk, feed, and care for the animals. You can also organize a donation drive to collect pet food, bedding, and toys.

Winter presents an opportunity to spread warmth and kindness. Whether you're helping clear snow for a neighbor, providing meals to those in need, or supporting a local shelter, your community service efforts can make a significant impact. Let's make this season one of giving and compassion.

# NJ FCCLA Red Rose Chapter Award Application

By: Shridhar Garg, Vice President of Programs

The Red Rose Chapter Award is a prestigious honor that recognizes NJ FCCLA chapters for outstanding leadership, service, and dedication. It's time to start working on your application! With a little planning and teamwork, you can make sure your chapter's submission stands out. Here's how to create a standout application while motivating your members to get involved.

## Tips for a Perfect Application

### • Review the Criteria:

Begin by carefully reading the application guidelines. Make sure you understand each section and how your chapter's activities align with the specific criteria. Highlight your chapter's strengths and ensure you meet all the requirements.

### • Showcase Your Achievements:

Be specific when documenting your chapter's activities. Include community service projects, leadership initiatives, and FCCLA events based on the points chart. Use dates, numbers, and examples to demonstrate the impact your chapter has made in the community.

### • Involve Your Members:

The Red Rose application is a reflection of your entire chapter. Involve your members by assigning roles—whether for gathering information, taking photos, or writing about specific events. Encourage everyone to contribute, showing the collective effort behind your achievements.

### • Show Leadership and Teamwork:

Showcase your chapter's leadership efforts, whether it's through organizing events or mentoring younger members and chapters. Demonstrate how your members work together to achieve common goals and support each other in their personal growth.

### • Proofread and Revise:

Once the application is complete, take the time to proofread and refine your submission. A polished, well-organized application will help your chapter make the best impression.

## Motivating Your Members

Take pride in the application process. Make it a team effort and celebrate member involvement throughout. The Red Rose Award is not only about recognition but about celebrating your chapter's hard work and dedication to FCCLA's mission.

By following these tips and involving your members, your chapter can submit a strong, successful Red Rose application. Let's make this year's application one to remember!



# Leveling Up Your Leadership: Run for State Office

By: Malav Shah, State President



Have you ever dreamed of being a leader who inspires others, makes meaningful changes, and represents thousands of peers across the state? Running for a state office position in NJ FCCLA is your opportunity to make that dream a reality. It's a chance to challenge yourself, grow personally and professionally, and leave an enduring legacy on the FCCLA community!

State officers are the face of NJ FCCLA, leading the organization and executing initiatives, conferences, and resources for members. As a state officer, you have a platform to advocate for issues that matter to you and your peers, and addressing these challenges faced by students, your voice will shape the direction of our state association and impact members statewide.

Running for state office is a journey worth taking. Here are some steps to help you prepare:

- 1. Learn the Requirements:** Review the eligibility requirements on the [NJ FCCLA website](#). There is an application process.
- 2. Get Support:** Talk to your chapter adviser and fellow members for encouragement and guidance.
- 3. Show Your Passion:** Highlight your dedication to FCCLA's mission and how you hope to contribute as a state officer.
- 4. Be Authentic:** Your unique personality and perspective are your greatest assets—let them shine!

I can assure you that it is one of the most transformative experiences you will come across. Prior to being a State Officer, I was a shy and timid sophomore with no real confidence or motivation; this quickly changed with my orientation as a new state officer. The State Officer experience has given me a purpose to do my best in every endeavor I pursue, and gives me the confidence to follow through.

Running for state office is not just about gaining a title—it's about personal growth, making a difference, and creating memories that will last a lifetime. If you're ready to challenge yourself, lead with purpose, and be a voice for your peers, don't hesitate to take the leap. Your journey toward becoming a state officer could be the start of something incredible—not just for you, but for everyone you inspire along the way.

## Competitive Events: Why They Matter

By: Pragma Bhatia, Vice President of Membership



Competitive events are one of the most gratifying projects. Getting recognized for persistent and diligent work is always amazing— but competitive events go even beyond getting a medal. FCCLA competitive events give students a chance to branch out, from learning to organize a team or create new friendships.

FCCLA lifelong skills are honed with each event that you take part in, no matter how small or big. These skills come along in a myriad of different types; not just simply learning something new! FCCLA competitive events hone soft skills. For example, how to respond to negative feedback, developing your professional writing skills, and of course, public speaking! These experiences go above and beyond in creating a well-rounded student. Learn how to combat obstacles, and above all, explore new areas of knowledge.

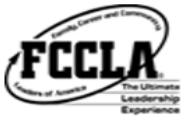
Here is a small sampling of the 22 State Events, 30 NJ FCCLA STAR Events and 4 online National Events and a minuscule sampling of skills you might learn in each:

- Public Policy Advocate (STAR event): Networking with professionals and organizations pertinent to your cause to make a difference!
- Bread Basics: Perfect the skill and science of bread-making!
- Program Cover Design: Experiment with online technology and unleash your creative talents!
- Parliamentary Procedure (STAR Event): Become a master of Roberts Rules and engage your critical thinking skills!
- Sports Nutrition: Learn the ins-and-outs of nutrition science!
- Clever Cookie- Make sweet treats with skill ans sell them to support the NJ FCCLA Service Project.

FCCLA competitive events allow students to explore new subjects, discover passions, and build new experiences; the skills only get sweeter when earning a medal! Start your competitive event today! See more details at [njfccla.org](#).







# FCCLA National Programs: Apply! Apply! Apply!



By: Lucais Romo, National Vice President of Programs



*Pick one today!*

FCCLA has a plethora of opportunities for chapters and individual members to earn recognition for their dynamic school initiatives, competitive events, and service projects. Using the applications for national programs and scholarships, members can begin with the end of their project in mind and demonstrate the unique impact they are making in their community. The possibilities for cash prizes and recognition at the New Jersey State Leadership Conference in March and the National Leadership Conference in July are at the fingertips of every member and adviser.

Using the national FCCLA website as a guide and quick communication between a chapter adviser and the state adviser to acquire national program resources, any chapter project, initiative, competitive event, national challenge, or school event has the potential to be developed into a dynamic national program application. There are eight total national programs ranging in topics from community service to career preparation to the organizations focus on family. Identify the goal of your chapter's project, such as preparing future educators for their careers through a child development workshop and choose the program of best fit. For this example, the Career Connection national program and its associated action steps would work! With the Planning Process Sheet and Program Application Rubric as your toolkit, a group of devoted members, and a goal, any chapter can turn their vision of shaping future leaders in the home, workplace, and beyond a reality.

FCCLA offers scholarships for members who have made the most of their time in the national organization. There are five youth scholarships available to graduating seniors which require an application. Details can be found on the national website. There are scholarships being offered by the National Technical Honor Society, Johnson and Wales University, an FCCLA Memorial Scholarship, Zwilling Culinary, and The Rosen Centre.

Speak with an adviser today about submitting a national program application and to gain access to your FCCLA Members portal to submit applications to FCCLA's esteemed scholarships.

## Explore. Act. Tell

By: Mishree Patel, Vice President of Community Service

The Albertsons Companies Foundation and Nourishing Neighbors charitable program make up the student service project "Explore. Act. Tell." which is FCCLA's national outreach partner for this year. This program encourages peer advocacy with our new partner and FCCLA-sponsored service projects. The Explore.Act.Tell (E.A.T.) program is available for students in grades 6-12 as FCCLA's National Outreach Partner. This program empowers students to tackle food insecurity in their neighborhoods by completing four interactive lessons, leading them to create a hunger solution project in their local community, develop a PSA video, and participate in an annual challenge and win grants.



### Why Get Involved?

The Explore.Act.Tell. (E.A.T.) FCS Crosswalk will offer a clear vision of how the program aligns with Family and Consumer Sciences. It is an off-the-shelf, project-based learning program that provides engaging lessons and a project challenge for students. Student projects may win grants to provide additional resources for a community non-profit serving food insecurity or your public school.

### Benefits:

- **Create Future Leaders:** Give kids leadership training and chances to demonstrate their abilities.
- **Boost Student Involvement:** Promote community service initiatives that tackle hunger insecurity and meaningful leadership.
- **Offer Training and Educational Resources:** To ensure program success, provide workshops, training, and resources.
- **Boost Community Impact:** Encourage cooperation between chapters and neighborhood groups to combat hunger and advance literacy.

Overall, FCCLA's National Outreach Partner initiative is a powerful way for students to get involved in their communities and contribute to causes they care about. Through the steps of properly conducting a community service program FCCLA members not only develop leadership skills but also help tackle one of the most pressing challenges in society: food insecurity. FCCLA's outreach partners provide an invaluable platform for students to make a lasting impact on their communities and the world.

By: Lucais Romo, National  
Vice President of Programs

# FCCLA Week: Celebrating in Homes, Schools, and Communities

What makes February 9-15 special? It's FCCLA Week! Every year, members, advisers, alumni, and associates come together to recognize the hard work of chapters, promote our organization, and spread the word about FCCLA on social media and in local communities. FCCLA Week festivities begin on Sunday, February 9, with Family Day. Follow along with state officers on the NJ FCCLA Instagram and tag @njfccla to share your chapter's activities for a chance to be featured on our story, in the New Jersey FCCLA Chapters Group, and in future NJ FCCLA posts!

**Family Day** - FCCLA's central focus is family, and this is your chance to celebrate that core value. Host a workshop on child development or basic first aid for your community as part of a greater Families First National Program project or compile family recipes submitted by your chapter into a cookbook for a unique fundraiser idea. These activities help promote family connections while supporting your chapter. This is also a good day to focus on your own family by making dinner together and create a day where your family has your attention and is your priority.

**Member Monday** - Recognize your members' hard work and commitment by celebrating them on Member Monday. Decorate lockers for senior members, create goodie bags to thank returning members for their commitment, or even launch a "Member of the Month" program on your social media account. It's a great time to plan recruitment efforts and engage your chapter. Get creative with brainstorming ideas for the next year!

**Day of Service** - FCCLA leaders know the importance of service. Encourage your members to take on new chores at home and keep one another accountable by pairing up. Try a new community service project to tackle a concern in your neighborhood or school. Inspiration can be found on the NJ FCCLA website, and your service ambassador can help organize events to serve others.

**FCS Educator Day** - Take a moment to recognize the dedication of your advisers. Share personal stories of their impact with your administration or create a small heartfelt gift to show your appreciation. You could also decorate the adviser's classroom or office with banners, posters, or notes from your members, celebrating their hard work and leadership. Your adviser's guidance is essential to your chapter's success.

**Alumni Day** - Invite your chapter's alumni to reconnect by sharing their experiences with current members. Host a virtual alumni panel via Zoom or Google Meet, where alumni can share how FCCLA impacted their lives in high school and beyond. You can also hold a networking event where alumni and current members can come together, share stories, and discuss how FCCLA has influenced their personal and professional journeys. Additionally, interview alumni for a series on your social media page or encourage them to join New Jersey Friends of FCCLA and Alumni and Associates for networking and support.

**FCCLA Spirit Day** - Show your FCCLA spirit by decorating your classrooms in red and white, sharing themed food, and wearing FCCLA attire from the official FCCLA Store found on the National FCCLA website. Capture your chapter's energy in a promotional video to share at local events, school news, or district meetings, showing everyone what FCCLA is all about.

**Success Saturday** - Celebrate your chapter's achievements and embrace our state theme "Dream. Believe. Succeed!" by organizing a presentation of past accomplishments for local officials and school board members. Send FCCLA Scrapbook Kits home with members to capture their leadership experiences and showcase them at your next chapter meeting. Make this FCCLA Week count and join the thousands of chapters celebrating across the country. Use hashtags like #FCCLAWeek or #MemberMonday to boost your posts on social media and visit the national and state FCCLA websites for updates and resources for your participation.

**Let's Rock the Red, February 9-15!**

Tag @njfccla and @nationalfccla on social media to show your FCCLA Spirit!



# PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS: DIFFERENT METHODS TO ENCOURAGE A HABIT OF DAILY REFLECTION



BY: STUTI SHAH, FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

In today's digital world, it's easy to get overwhelmed by the constant flow of information. But what if we could turn to a simple, timeless practice like journaling to stay grounded and inspired? Journaling isn't just about writing down your thoughts—it's about connecting to your creativity, goals, and inner peace. Here are some fun and fresh ways to enhance your journaling practice and make it more engaging.

## 1. Decorated Habit Trackers: Stay Motivated

One of the best ways to stay motivated is by tracking your habits, but why not make it visually exciting? Create a decorated habit tracker in your journal, where you can color in squares, add stickers, or draw designs each time you complete a goal. Whether it's drinking enough water, exercising, or practicing mindfulness, visually tracking your progress makes it more rewarding and fun to stay on course.

## 2. Mindfulness through Social Media

We often scroll mindlessly through social media, but it can also be a tool for mindfulness. Instead of just skimming your feed, respond to daily mindfulness quotes from creators you follow. Take a moment to reflect on their words and write down your thoughts in your journal. This practice helps you step away from the screen, become more present, and allows you to appreciate the small moments of your day.

## 3. Turn Journal Entries into Video Diaries

Why not take your journaling to the next level? Try turning your written entries into video diaries. Record short clips where you talk about your day, your emotions, or your goals. You can add music or fun visuals to enhance the experience. Video diaries help capture your memories in a new, personal way and create something visual to hold on to. It's a great mix of creativity and reflection.

## 4. Create Your Own Doodle Journal

If you enjoy drawing, why not make your journal a creative space for doodles? You don't have to be an artist—simple designs like flowers, stars, or abstract shapes can add personality and style to your pages. Doodling while writing helps clear your mind, sparks creativity, and makes your journal more enjoyable to revisit.

Journaling is a powerful tool for reflection, creativity, and staying present. Whether you're tracking your habits, reflecting on mindfulness quotes, creating video diaries, or adding doodles to your pages, these ideas will help you connect with your thoughts and memories in new, exciting ways. So, grab a notebook, get creative, and let journaling become a part of your daily routine to stay motivated and mindful!

## WINTER WARDROBE CLOTHING ESSENTIALS

By: Mishree Patel, Vice President of Community Service

As the temperatures drop, it's time to rethink your wardrobe. Staying warm is essential, but who says you must sacrifice style? With the right pieces, you can build a winter wardrobe that's both practical and chic. From cozy layers to stylish outerwear, here are the winter essentials you need to look and feel your best all season long!

### The Perfect Winter Coat

Your winter coat is more than just a necessity; it's the statement piece of your outfit. Whether you prefer a classic wool overcoat, a cozy puffer jacket, or a sleek down jacket, your coat should keep you warm while adding a polished touch to your look. Make sure to choose a style that works for your lifestyle and makes you feel confident stepping out into the cold.

### Chunky Sweaters & Knitwear

Winter is the perfect excuse to wear your coziest sweaters, and knitwear is a must-have for the season. Select a high-quality cashmere sweater for ultimate softness and warmth—it pairs perfectly with anything from jeans to skirts. Cable knit styles add texture and visual interest, while classic turtlenecks offer a stylish way to stay warm. Whether you're layering or wearing them on their own, these sweaters are sure to keep you snug without compromising on style.

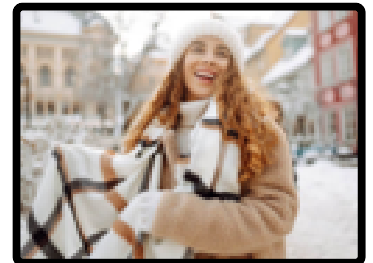
### Scarves, Hats, and Gloves

Accessories are the finishing touches that make all the difference in your winter wardrobe. A chunky wool or cashmere scarf adds texture and warmth, and oversized styles can easily be layered or styled in various ways. A cozy beanie is the ultimate winter accessory for keeping your ears warm, while a stylish pair of leather gloves lined with fleece or wool can elevate your look and keep your hands toasty.

### Winter Boots

When it comes to winter footwear, functionality and style go hand in hand. Waterproof, insulated boots are essential for navigating snowy or icy conditions. Consider boots lined with faux fur or shearling for extra warmth and choose sturdy soles with a good tread to prevent slipping. If you're looking for a more fashion-forward option, waterproof Chelsea boots offer protection from the elements while still looking sleek and stylish. Lug-sole boots are another great option, combining durability with a rugged style that pairs well with everything from jeans to dresses.

With the right winter essentials, you can embrace the season with style and confidence. From the perfect coat to cozy accessories and durable boots, these key pieces will ensure you stay warm, comfortable, and chic no matter how chilly it gets outside. Stay stylish and enjoy the winter months!



# SPREADING WARMTH IN WINTER THROUGH CRAFTS

By Mehak Patel: Vice President of Parliamentary Law



Winter is a magical time of year when the snow blankets the ground, and you wake up to frost-kissed mornings. It's also the perfect season to let your creativity shine through crafts that celebrate the beauty of the season. For NJ FCCLA members, winter crafts can be a fun and meaningful way to embrace teamwork, develop skills, and spread joy in your community. Here are some exciting ideas to inspire your next winter crafting session:



- **DIY Snow Globes:** Create your own miniature winter wonderland by making snow globes. Use mason jars, water, glitter, and small figurines or trees to craft a unique keepsake. Personalize them with FCCLA logos or colors for an extra special touch. These can also be gifted to local nursing homes or used as decorations for school events.



- **Knit or Crocheted Accessories:** If your chapter is feeling ambitious, try knitting or crocheting scarves, hats, or gloves. These items can be donated to local shelters to help those in need stay warm this winter. It's a wonderful way to combine crafting with community service!



- **Mason Jar Lanterns:** Add a cozy glow to the season with mason jar lanterns. Decorate jars with frosted paint, glitter, and seasonal motifs, then place LED candles inside. These lanterns can illuminate FCCLA meetings, community events, or winter fundraisers.



- **Hot Cocoa Kits:** Combine crafting and culinary skills by assembling hot cocoa kits. Package cocoa mix, marshmallows, and peppermint sticks in decorative bags or mugs. Add a handwritten note with a winter recipe or an FCCLA message. These kits make wonderful gifts for teachers, staff, or community helpers.



- **Recycled Craft Projects:** Promote sustainability by turning recycled materials into winter-themed decor. Old jars can become candle holders, and used paper can be transformed into intricate snowflakes. Use this project as an opportunity to highlight FCCLA's commitment to environmental awareness and create a winter wonderland in your school!

Whether you choose to create decorations, practical items, or a trinket to brighten someone's day, these projects embody the spirit of FCCLA by blending creativity with service. Gather your chapter, embrace the season, and let your imagination guide you to a winter filled with purpose and joy!



## New Year, New Goals: Setting Yourself Up for Success with FCCLA



By: Shridhar Garg, Vice President of Programs

The new year is a great time to reflect on the past and set new goals for the future. Whether you are looking to achieve personal milestones or make an impact through FCCLA, goal setting is the first step toward turning your dreams into reality. With the right approach, you can make this year your most successful yet.

### Tips for Setting & Achieving Goals

1. **Start with the Big Picture:** Think about what you want to accomplish this year. Is it improving your leadership skills? Taking on a new FCCLA project? Or, reaching a personal milestone like volunteering or developing a new skill? Start by writing down your big goals.
2. **Make Your Goals S.M.A.R.T.:**
  - Specific: Be clear and detailed about what you want to achieve.
  - Measurable: Set criteria so you can track your progress.
  - Achievable: Set realistic goals that challenge you without feeling overwhelming.
  - Relevant: Make sure your goals align with your long-term plans or FCCLA's mission.
  - Time-bound: Set deadlines to stay motivated and on track.
3. **Break Goals into Actionable Steps:** Large goals can feel intimidating, so break them down into smaller tasks. For example, if your goal is to complete a community service project, first research opportunities, then plan and schedule specific tasks. Small wins along the way will keep you motivated.
4. **Write It Down & Stay Accountable:** Writing your goals down makes them more concrete and achievable. Share your goals with an FCCLA adviser, mentor, or accountability partner to help stay on track and motivated.
5. **Stay Flexible and Celebrate Progress:** Life doesn't always go as planned, and that's okay. Be flexible with your approach and adjust your goals if needed. Remember to celebrate small victories along the way—whether it's completing a STAR Event step or sticking to a new habit.

## FCCLA: A Path to Achieving Your Goals

By: Pragya Bhatia, Vice  
President of Membership

FCCLA offers a wealth of opportunities to help you achieve your goals. Whether you're working on a STAR Event, volunteering in your community, or developing career skills, FCCLA's programs provide the tools and experiences to make this year memorable and impactful.

Let's all go out there and have a year filled with personal growth, leadership development, and many amazing achievements in the New Year with our New Goals!



# GETTING RID OF THE WINTER BLUES

By: Pragma Bhatia, Vice President of Membership

With Daylight Saving Time upon us, it is hard not to feel the gloominess of the air settling down in our daily lives. Combating winter blues can be tough, but taking time to reduce some of the effects can help significantly!

Here are some activities you can partake in to bring some metaphorical sunshine into your life:

## 1. Journal

Journaling is a great way to decompress after a long day. Take a moment to jot down how your day went, how you're feeling, and any other sentiments you might want to add.

## 2. Seek Sunlight

Exposure to sunlight is thought to increase the brain's release of a hormone called serotonin. Serotonin is associated with boosting mood and helping a person feel calm and focused. At night, darker lighting triggers the brain to make another hormone called melatonin. Without enough sun exposure, your serotonin levels can dip. Low levels of serotonin are associated with a higher risk of major depression with seasonal pattern (formerly known as seasonal affective disorder or SAD). This is a form of depression triggered by the changing seasons. So be sure to take a walk when the sun is out even if it is cold. The brisk air and the sun rays will give a boost to your mood.

## 3. Spend time with loved ones

Spend time with friends and family— take time to do activities, like baking a cake, or something small, like sitting down for a hot drink. Share some exciting news with your friends, or comment on the weather to a passing family member. Connecting with other people, even if it's for a few minutes, is sure to boost your mood!

## 4. Partake in a hobby

Not having anything to do can increase the mental load and stress of the winter seasons. Instead, find new hobbies! Here are some ideas to help you get started: crocheting, baking, embroidery, drawing, dancing, and origami.

## 5. Talk to a therapist

If the gloominess continues, be sure to reach out to a mental health professional. They will be able to guide you and help in ways that your family and friends might not be able to.

Winter blues are prevalent amongst teenagers and young adults; these are a few ways to combat the gloominess of the winter seasons.



# Eco-Friendly Habits: Simple Ways to Make a Big Difference

By: Shridhar Garg, Vice President of Programs

As we become more aware of the impact our daily choices have on the planet, adopting eco-friendly habits is a powerful way to make a positive change. Small adjustments to your routine can help reduce waste, conserve resources, and protect the environment for future generations. Here are some simple, practical tips to get started on your eco-friendly journey.

## Practical Eco-Friendly Tips

- 1. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle:** One of the easiest ways to minimize waste is to follow the “reduce, reuse, recycle” principle. Start by reducing single-use items like plastic bottles and bags. Go for reusable alternatives such as water bottles, shopping bags, and containers. When items can no longer be reused, make sure they are properly recycled according to your local recycling guidelines.
- 2. Composting:** Composting is a simple way to reduce food waste and create nutrient-rich soil for your garden. Instead of throwing away food scraps like fruit peels, coffee grounds, or vegetable trimmings, start a compost bin in your backyard or use a composting service in your area. It's a great way to keep waste out of landfills while helping your plants thrive.
- 3. Choose Sustainable Products:** When shopping, choose products made from sustainable materials, such as bamboo, glass, or recycled materials. Select eco-friendly cleaning supplies, biodegradable toiletries, and clothing made from natural or recycled fabrics. These choices help reduce the environmental impact of production and waste.
- 4. Save Energy and Water:** Simple changes in your home can lead to significant savings in both energy and water. Turn off lights and unplug electronics when not in use. Use energy-efficient LED bulbs and consider investing in energy-saving appliances. Be mindful of water usage by fixing leaky faucets, taking shorter showers, and running dishwashers or laundry machines only with full loads.

Incorporating these small but impactful habits into your daily routine can make a big difference over time. By reducing waste, conserving resources, and choosing sustainable options, you are helping to protect the planet and create a healthier future. Every step counts, and the more we embrace eco-friendly habits, the greater the positive impact we can make. Small changes lead to big results, and together, we can create a more sustainable world.

Stay Connected with NJ FCCLA! 📢

Get Weekly Updates from Your State Officers on Events, Tips, and More - Follow Us on Instagram & Facebook @njfccla!

# Chapter Spotlight!

## Southern Regional Middle School Care Kit Drive Success!



By: Brian Muirhead, Vice President of Leadership

The Southern Regional Middle School Care Kit Drive is an annual event that runs from mid-November to the end of December. This year, the Southern Regional Middle School Media Center collaborated with Southern Regional FCCLA. This initiative focuses on creating personal care kits for clients at the Atlantic City Rescue Mission, a local shelter in South Jersey that serves approximately 3,000 people monthly and provides meals for 500 individuals daily.

Each Care Kit includes various items such as high-protein foods like chicken salad and tuna packets, beef jerky, and granola bars. Additionally, simple food items like mac and cheese or ramen cups, warm drink mixes such as hot chocolate or apple cider, hygiene products, lip balm, dental care items, soap, and comfort items like hats, gloves, and WeHelpTwo socks are also included.

Southern Regional FCCLA played a major role in making this Care Kit Drive come to life. The middle school members helped facilitate and sort donations during their study halls, and multiple middle school and high school members helped build these Care Kits after school on select days. Southern Regional FCCLA members also used their connections within the community and helped receive multiple sponsorships.

Southern Regional FCCLA member and New Jersey FCCLA State Officer Brian Muirhead was one of the masterminds behind this initiative. Starting as a media center volunteer in the eighth grade, he has rapidly grown this initiative from bringing in different clubs and organizations within Southern Regional Middle to expanding the outreach and reaching out to community businesses and organizations.

Southern Regional Middle School experienced tremendous success in this year's drive, receiving over \$2,000 in sponsorships from local businesses and organizations. The community showed great support through donations from volunteers, students, and school staff.

Thanks to this overwhelming support, the 2024 Care Kit Drive assembled 505 personal care kits, distributed to the Atlantic City Rescue Mission just in time for the holiday season. This achievement marks a total donation of 12,625 items to the Atlantic City Rescue Mission, with 130 more Care Kits created this year than in previous years. Through these efforts, members continue to engage in and learn the value of community service to make a positive impact.



# Bylaw Revisions for NJ FCCLA

By: Mehak Patel,  
Vice President of Parliamentary Law



Bylaws – a set of rules and standards that guides the proceedings of an organization and are critical for any successful organization. For FCCLA, bylaws ensure fairness and consistency across the chapter, state, and national levels.

This past July, during the National Leadership Conference, voting delegates from across the country gathered to discuss and vote on proposed amendments to the National FCCLA bylaws. These amendments addressed areas such as the organization’s operations, officer roles, and state representation. Due to the approval of some of the proposed changes, state associations must review and adjust their own bylaws to maintain consistency. New Jersey FCCLA’s state executive council and state advisers are soon to embark on the journey of making these edits and updating our state association’s bylaws. To do so, we will be reviewing the changes made to the national bylaws, drafting the proposed changes, and finally voting on them. The updated bylaws will reflect the organization’s commitment to fostering leadership and personal growth. Updating the state bylaws is not just about adhering to national bylaws; it is a chance to strengthen the very core of New Jersey FCCLA’s foundation.

While state bylaws provide a framework for all chapters, individual FCCLA chapters also have the opportunity to create their own bylaws. These chapter-specific bylaws can address your specific goals and operations while remaining consistent with state and national regulations. The process of updating or implementing bylaws also provides an opportunity to reflect on the organization’s mission and values. It allows members to assess whether the existing proceedings correspond with the goals of FCCLA, as written in the bylaws.

By involving both officers and advisers in the revision process, New Jersey FCCLA ensures that the updated bylaws correlate with the needs of all members.

## A GRILLED CHEESE RECIPE TO DREAM ABOUT

*Learn how to make the best Grilled Cheese Sandwich with a crisp, buttery exterior and gooey cheese center that is sure to warm you up! Eat it for lunch or dinner.*

Yield: 4 Sandwiches

**Prep Time:** 2 minutes mins **Cook Time:** 28 minutes min **Total Time:** 30 minutes mins

### Ingredients:

- Butter
- 2 Slices bread per sandwich
- 1 Slice each per sandwich: Cheddar, Havarti, Gouda

1. Spread 1/2 Tbsp of butter on one side of each slice of bread.
2. Set a skillet over medium/low heat and place 2 slices of bread in the skillet with the butter side down.
3. Stack cheeses on one piece of toast: cheddar, havarti, then gouda. Once the breads are golden brown, close the sandwich with the crisp sides on the outside.
4. Continue cooking until the bread is a rich golden brown, flipping once and pressing down lightly to help the bread stick to the cheese. Total cooking time should be 5-6 minutes. Keep the heat on medium low for the bread to toast slowly, giving your cheese a chance to fully melt and adhere to the bread.
5. Once you see the cheese has melted and breads are browned, remove to a plate and cut in half diagonally to serve. Repeat with the next sandwich.

