STUDENT LEADER

Virginia Student Council Association ■ November/December 2018

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What's Ahead

December 15: Region 4 Workshop at South Lakes HS

January 11: Postmark deadline for early convention registration

January 11: Postmark deadline for award applications

February 8: Postmark deadline for regular convention registration

February 19: Convention hotel registration deadline

March 1: Postmark deadline for late convention registration

Leaders Develop Skills at Workshops

Student leaders from different schools and demographics are brought together to improve their schools, communities, and themselves each year at VSCA Regional Workshops. In November, regions 2, 3, and 5-8 held their workshops on November 10. The purpose of these regional works is to train leaders and provide them with skills so they can apply them in their schools.

Grassfield High School Student Council hosted 11 schools for the Region 2 Workshop on Saturday, November 10 with a theme of "Fall Into Leadership."

Region 2 Workshop

Current Region 2 Representative, Amanda Shepps, welcomed 11 different schools to Grassfield High School. To emphasize their theme: "Fall-into Leadership," this workshop included Captain Chris Lucas, who delivered a keynote on how to impact schools by being a good leader. In addition, the Region 2 workshop consisted of learning labs with presenters from schools Oscar Smith High School, Hickory High School, and Grassfield High School. In those learning labs, students were able to share ideas ranging from Homecoming to service projects. In addition, there was a "March of Schools." Each school marched with their own schools' logo or mascot to celebrate.

Region 3 Workshop

The Region 3 Workshop was hosted by Jeannette Barahona, current representative, in Massaponax High School. Learning labs emphasized Parliamentary Procedures and how Google forms can impact SCA activities, such as elections. Additionally, Massaponax High School led a service project session for student leaders to share ideas that could be implemented into other schools. During the workshop, students were energized by pep rally games. Moreover, Region 2 had its own service project: Project Linus. Students were able to make felt blankets, which will

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Earn Recognition with VSCA Awards Programs

VSCA member schools are invited to earn some recognition for all the great things you are doing around the Commonwealth. The annual awards packet, with instructions and forms for applying, is now available at *http://scaleader.org/* for the following award programs:

- **Achievement Award:** This award honors member schools who promote leadership and community service through their school's Student Council activities. To be recognized, schools must apply and submit documentation of completing a variety of activities throughout the school year. Applications must be postmarked by January 11, 2019. The required projects must be assembled in a portfolio and reviewed by the school's principal. All member schools that complete the criteria for this award will receive the award. One project related to the state theme is required, and the number of additional required activities is five (5) for elementary schools, six (6) for middle school, and seven (7)

Elf Bazaar: A Holiday Tradition at Essex High

Essex High School Student Council Association holds many special events each year and one very special event held during the winter is the Elf Bazaar. Everyone is welcome to attend the Elf Bizarre and do some of their holiday shopping while also supporting the local businesses of Tappahannock.

Different locally owned businesses, vendors, and student groups can rent booths to showcase and sell their goods. The vendors display a wide variety of gifts, from makeup and fragrances to novelty memorabilia, so there are many options to find something special for everyone. Not only can people get their shopping done, but they can also enjoy delicious pastries and festive treats made by ESH's special needs students. At Essex High, it is very important to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to participate in school-wide activities.

In addition to shopping, there are many activities to participate in, such as pictures with Santa and raffles to win gift packages. Shoppers can even bring in gifts and get them wrapped! The Elf Bizarre, sponsored by the Student Council Association, is a wonderful event held annually at Essex High School to celebrate and prepare for the holidays. It has been a great way to build community relationships and has grown each year since its inception.

VSCA Awards Excellence (continued from page 1)

for high schools selected from a list of 23 possible choices. Last year, 21 schools received the Achievement Award at the annual Convention.

■ **Outstanding Student Council Project:** Each member school in attendance at the annual Convention will be eligible to select and display one project that was completed during the 2018–2019 school year. Projects selected should relate to the VSCA theme "Lighting the Fire of Leadership" and be selected from among the top three "Required Projects" listed in the Achievement Award information. Projects will be on display throughout the weekend to further highlight and recognize the hard work completed by SCA students from all over the Commonwealth. Schools interested in displaying an outstanding project must register with the state office no later than March 9, 2018 to allow time for display assignments. For additional details consult the awards packet on the website.

■ **Advisor of the Year:** Three advisors (one at each level – elementary, middle, and high) who have done an exemplary job in promoting and fostering student councils with their continued support and participation are recognized at the annual convention as advisor of the year. The honorees are chosen by the VSCA Advisory Committee based on letters of recommendation from the school's principal and student council officer. Nominations must be made on the official nomination form and postmarked by January 11, 2019. The Advisor of the Year at the middle or high school level may also be chosen by the VSCA Advisory Committee as Virginia's nominee for the national Warren E. Shull Advisor of the Year Award, given annually and based on criteria established by the National Association of Student Councils.

■ **Administrator of the Year:** Each year, VSCA recognizes one principal or assistant principal at each level (elementary, middle, and high) in the state who has made an impact in their school's Student Council through continued support and participation. The honoree is chosen by the VSCA Advisory Committee and the VASSP Board of Directors based on letters of recommendation from the school's student council advisor, student council officer, and division superintendent. Nominations must be made on the official nomination form and postmarked by January 12, 2018.

Workshops (cont'd from p. 1)

be donated to those in need.

Regions 5–8 Workshop

Regions 5 through 8 joined together to host their workshop at Liberty High School. Students were welcomed with keynote speakers: Dr. Kathleen Dills and previous Region 8 Representative, Kayla Sage, who emphasized leadership and the role of leaders. The workshop consisted of volunteer, energizer, and Parliamentary Procedure sessions in which students benefited from networking and ideas. Schools were also energized through pep rally games while building everlasting relationships.

Thank you, Regions!

Student participation and engagement is key to preparing leaders for VSCA's annual leadership conference. All in all, thank you to our regional representative schools for hosting these events.

General sessions, pep rally games, learning labs, and teambuilding were all part of the Regional Workshops sponsored by Representative schools on November 10, 2018. These workshops are a highlight of the fall season for many VSCA member schools.

‘Tis the Season:
Holiday Activities Around the Commonwealth

Holiday Spirit Week

Colgan High School has an unexpected tradition in the making! The week before winter break the SCA puts on a holiday-themed spirit week. With spirit days like Naughty vs. Nice to Holiday Characters, there's a way for everyone to feel included. Because spirit weeks tend to keep kids energized and in good spirits, and help to prevent skipping and negative attitudes about school, this specific spirit week is a fantastic way to keep students present and involved in school the days leading up to the big winter break.

Giving Tree

Massaponax High School hosts a holiday clothes drive in December every year. SCA members set up a Christmas tree in the library where students are encouraged to place such new winter clothes items as hats, gloves, socks, scarves, and so forth. This clothes drive is called The Giving Tree. It stays up for two weeks and is advertised through flyers and the morning announcements. After the two weeks, all the clothes are donated to a local shelter for people in need.

Holiday Kids Fest

Oscar Smith SCA members get to put their holiday spirit to good use by hosting a holiday Kids' Fest. For the past eight years their SCA has invited kids aged 2 to 12 to come in for a holiday celebration featuring a wide variety of activities.

To publicize the event, SCA members pass out fliers to their family and friends and also reach out to feeder elementary schools and other parts of the community. Oscar Smith HS teachers also attend with their children.

When the kids and families arrive they are greeted by SCA members dressed up as Santa's helpers in holiday colors. These helpers assist the kids at each activity station.

Kids Fest serves as a fundraiser for the SCA as a whole. They charge five dollars for admission, and that gives the child an all-access pass to the activities—making winter sticker scenes, coloring holiday themed pages, creating sand art necklaces, and more. Santa Claus also makes an appearance and the families in attendance can take their holiday photo with Santa. The even brings the holiday cheer in SCA to a whole new level!

Socks for Seniors

During the month of December Hickory High School SCA members collect socks of all colors and materials to bring with them on a visit to greet the people at a local nursing home facility. SCA members sing holiday carols to the members of the nursing home and interact with them to help bring joy into their lives.

"Hearing their heartfelt stories made me and other members of our student council feel fortunate for who and what we have. Our SCA agreed that the best part of the visit was watching all the members of the nursing homes faces light up when we approached them with multiple sock bags," said SCA member Ashlyn Seymour.

"Many of the members sang with us and got up to dance with each other, and some even took the carol time as nap time. In the end going to the nursing home made each member of our SCA, and even our sponsor Ms. Sarver, feel like a million bucks. We knew we were putting smiles on people's faces that might not have anyone to come visit or even if they did, we were warming both their feet and hearts," said Seymour.