

From the Office of the State Director

Dear Staff/Board and Advisors:

Thursday Midge and I, and all the State Directors were on a conference call with Chelle Travis Executive Director at Nationals about what is happening at the National level. This is what we heard from Chelle.

The current health crisis we're facing has affected all walks of life, and, consequently, all aspects of SkillsUSA. That includes our 2020 National Leadership and Skills Conference scheduled for June in Louisville, Ky.

Over the last several weeks, SkillsUSA has conducted an exhaustive study of all potential options for holding our national event in light of the current pandemic, and we have finally reached consensus on a board-approved decision. Considering your invaluable roles as national education team members, we wanted to make sure you knew before we share this news with the general public: **SkillsUSA has made the difficult decision to cancel all in-person activities related to NLSC — including our SkillsUSA Championships — and focus on essential organizational leadership opportunities conducted in a virtual setting.**

Many things led to this decision, but I'd like to share the two most impactful. First, there is nothing more important to SkillsUSA than the health and wellbeing of our members and stakeholders. With so much yet unknown about this virus and how long it might affect us, we could not in good conscience move forward with an in-person event this June.

Second, our national event is dependent on state participation. As of this writing, 27 states have canceled their conferences and would not be participating in our national event even if it was held as planned. Others are basing their decisions on whether or not their school systems reconvene this year, which becomes less likely each day.

SkillsUSA completely supports the difficult decisions our dedicated state directors have made over the last several weeks, and we commend them for their tireless work. Nevertheless, without robust state participation, holding our national conference is simply not a viable option.

I know the disappointment this decision will cause our hundreds of SkillsUSA instructors who support our national competitions as members of our National Education Team. It's a disappointment shared by all of us. It's difficult to express our level of gratitude for how hard you work year-round to ensure our NLSC lives up to its world-class reputation, a reputation you are all greatly responsible for.

I assure you that SkillsUSA will survive this crisis and come through it stronger than ever. This setback is temporary, but the legacy, spirit and strength of this organization endures in each of us. In fact, we are already looking forward to a successful 2021 SkillsUSA Championships in Atlanta, Ga., and we know we can count on your continued support as we work toward that goal.

Chelle Travis

Nationals will be working to come up with a virtual training for state officers and national officer's elections.

They will, over the next week, be working on how to handle CEP, Advisor of the Year, Mega prizes as well as other recognitions that they have had at the conference.

They will also be working with vendors as to what we should do with prizes that we may have received for our State conference sent by National vendors. This also includes items like banners that we received from E-group for our State Event.

We will concentrate on getting our New York State officers elected and working with nationals as to the training that will be provided.

The Staff and I will continue to work with all to help provide services and information going forward.

We continue to work on our cancelled event to get back what we can and to secure items so that we can have another great year in 2020-2021.

From all the staff here in New York:

Please in this time of uncertainty stay safe and healthy