

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OUTSTANDING IN EVERY WAY: IOWA FBLA SHINES AT NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

(June 3, 2025) – Iowa Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) students made their mark at the 2025 FBLA Collegiate National Leadership Conference from May 31 - June 2. FBLA is the nation's largest Career and Technical Student Organization focused on business. Members showcased their exceptional skills and professionalism, earning top placements and recognition among talented students nationwide. The event, held in Dallas, Texas, attracted nearly 1,100 of the nation's top college students. 28 attendees from community colleges and universities represented Iowa at the conference and achieved outstanding results, securing several top placements and prestigious honors.

FBLA's National Leadership Conference brings together students to compete for scholarships in dozens of competitive events over three days. Students also had the opportunity to engage in learning workshops, network with alumni, meet with potential employers, and explore the city of Dallas.

The following students and groups earned top placements:

- Elijah Wyant, DMACC - Cybersecurity - 9th Place
- Gabe Ingram, DMACC - Sports Management and Marketing - 4th Place
- Joyanna Huang & Carter Sousa, DMACC - Finance Case Competition - 9th Place
- Matthew VanHyfte, Iowa State - State of Chapter Presentation - 3rd Place
- Faith MacLennan, Kirkwood - Hospitality Management Case Competition - 5th Place
- Emma LaFleur, Iowa State - Emerging Business Issues - 10th Place
- Danielle Forkner & Andrea Perez, DMACC - Community Service Project - 10th Place

Additionally, eight students from Iowa were awarded the FBLA Excellence award. This is the highest membership award for collegiate members, honoring the development of critical skills needed to succeed in the workforce through a variety of FBLA programs.

Earning the Gold Excellence Award were:

- Ella Anderson, DMACC
- Danielle Bayless, DMACC
- Danielle Forkner, DMACC
- Emma LaFleur, Iowa State
- Jonathan Nevenhoven, Iowa State
- Bee Riedy, DMACC
- Matthew VanHyfte, Iowa State



Earning the Silver Excellence Award was:

- Gwendolyn Guillen Kenigsberg, Iowa State

Moreover, Iowa FBLA congratulates Iowa State University and DMACC for their achievements in placing 1st and 2nd, respectively, in the Outstanding Chapter competition, awarding Iowa FBLA with the top two chapters in the nation for the second year in a row. This is also the third consecutive year that a school in Iowa has been named the Outstanding Chapter of the Year. Both Iowa State and DMACC were acknowledged as Gold Seal Chapters.

Furthermore, several students, advisers, and business professionals were recognized for their contributions to FBLA throughout the past year. Benjamin Pellizzari (Iowa State) was commended for his work on the Social Media Ambassadors team. Paige Mentzer (DMACC) was honored for her service on the Collegiate National Council and as the Who's Who recipient for Iowa FBLA. Ryan Mentzer, industry professional at Sammons Financial Group, was recognized as the Business Person of the Year for Iowa FBLA. Lastly, Joe Hanson, FBLA Adviser at DMACC, was acknowledged as the Outstanding Local Chapter Adviser for the state of Iowa.

Finally, we are pleased to congratulate Jonathan Nevenhoven on his election as the 2025-2026 FBLA National President. Jonathan's dedication to leadership and service within FBLA has been evident through his past roles and continued commitment to the organization's mission. His election is a testament to his vision, integrity, and the respect he has earned from peers across the state and country. We look forward to seeing the positive impact he will make on the national level and wish him every success in his new role. In addition to his election, Jonathan concluded his term as the 2024-2025 National Vice President of Operations.

"We are incredibly proud of all our students who competed at the National Leadership Conference," said Madison Kraemer, Iowa FBLA Executive Director and State Adviser. "Year after year, they continue to rise to the challenge, competing alongside the nation's best and demonstrating the excellence, professionalism, and drive that define Iowa FBLA. Their achievements not only speak to their individual dedication, but also to the strong legacy they are building - one that proves why Iowa continues to be recognized as a leader on the national stage."

About FBLA

Future Business Leaders of America, Inc. is a nonprofit 501[c][3] education association with active middle school, high school, and college chapters worldwide. FBLA inspires and prepares students to become community-minded business leaders in a global society through relevant career preparation and leadership experiences. The association is headquartered in Reston, Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C. For more information, visit fbla.org.

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