

FBLA...from Page 1A



2017 Georgia Adviser of the Year Mrs. Melissa McConnell (Center) with Georgia State President Royce Dickerson and National Who's Who in FBLA Nivedh Soundappan.

their core business skills, expand their networks, and participate in more than 60 business and business-related events.

Towns County FBLA proudly represented Georgia with nine competitors who advanced as state winners to earn their places there.

Competitors included: Nick McConnell, Nick Shook, Jackson Taylor, Will DeVries, Chase Williams, Kendall Floyd, Emily Williams, Makenzie Carroll and Taylor Cornett.

These young business leaders worked tirelessly the entire year to make it to this level of competition, advancing from region to state to national level. Their dedication and strong work ethic paid off as the results were calculated.

The opening session was memorable, especially for our FBLA adviser Melissa McConnell.

She has been an adviser for over 25 years, and this year she was honored by Georgia FBLA when she was named the 2017 Georgia Adviser of the Year.

Mrs. McConnell, along with the Advisers of the Year from all the states, were presented in a parade of honor during opening session.

Once again, Towns County can boast of having another student compete all four years at the national level in FBLA.

This year, Nick McConnell joined former member and competitor McKenzi Moss of the Class of 2013 in receiving this honor.

Nick once again earned his way to compete at NLC from the state level, this year in Economics. While there, Nick was recognized for earning the America Level Award in the FBLA Business Achievement Awards Program, an achievement that Nick has worked to achieve for the past four years.

"What a great way to end my time in FBLA," Nick said. "Attending NLC all four years was a great goal to achieve. It was an honor to receive the America Award while there in California as well."

"Being part of FBLA, especially serving as region officer and local chapter president, has been a very memorable part of high school for me, and I have enjoyed everything about my

membership in FBLA."

Junior Chase Williams competed at NLC for the second time, this year in Database Applications. Chase will serve as Towns County FBLA President next year, as well as Region 13 Officer.

"Being in FBLA has given me opportunities that many kids my age will never get," Chase said. "I am blessed to be part of such a great organization."

Sophomore and first-time competitor Kendall Floyd competed in Word Processing.

"I had a great time in Anaheim, and I am looking forward to competing again next year at the national level in Baltimore," Kendall said.

Senior Jackson Taylor returned to compete in Computer Applications after winning at the national level last year in Database Applications.

"I think competing in FBLA is something that every high school student should try at least once," Jackson said. "There are so many events, and making it to nationals is a lot of work, but worth it."

"I am blessed to have been able to compete nationally twice while in high school. I will never forget the people I have met and the experiences I have had as a competitor and FBLA member."

Nick Shook and Will DeVries competed as a team in Entrepreneurship. When asked about NLC, Nick Shook responded, "It was a lot of firsts for me, and I am so thankful for FBLA and the Towns County School System for the opportunity to compete nationally and experience California."

First-time competitors and sophomores Emily Williams and Taylor Cornett competed in the Business Presentation event.

"Going to Nationals with FBLA this year was a once in a lifetime opportunity," Emily said. "I never thought we would advance high enough to go."

"This experience has led me to have stronger relationships with my fellow FBLA members, my advisers and new people I would have never met otherwise. I had so much fun representing Georgia's FBLA."

Taylor added: "Going

of Towns County FBLA.

Corporate sponsors for Towns County FBLA include: Towns County PTO, Lake Chatuge Rotary Club, United Community

Bank, Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, Attorney Stephanie W McConnell, Susan DeVries of State Farm Insurance, CPA Robert Williams Jr., Attorney Pamela Kendall Floyd, the

Towns County Lions Club and several individual donors.

Congratulations to Towns County High School's FBLA chapter, its members, advisers and national winner!

to Nationals was an incredible experience! I was blessed to be able to go and represent my school and the great state of Georgia in this event. FBLA is a great organization that prepares students for the world of business, and I am proud to be part of it."

Makenzie Carroll competed in Word Processing at NLC and was called to the big stage to be recognized for placing in the Top 10 in her event.

Congratulations, Makenzie, on a job well done!

"My favorite part about having the opportunity to compete at NLC was being able to see my efforts, as well as my peers' efforts, and hard work pay off," Makenzie said. "It was an experience I will never forget, and being able to spend my last senior moment in California was simply amazing!"

The Awards of Excellence Program is part of a comprehensive national competitive events program sponsored by FBLA that recognizes and rewards excellence in a broad range of business and career-related areas.

For many students, the competitive events are the capstone activity of their academic careers.

In addition to the competitions, students immersed themselves in educational workshops, visited an information packed exhibit hall, and attended motivational keynotes on a broad range of business topics throughout the conference.

The 2017 National Competitive Events Team from Towns County would like to thank everyone for their tremendous support throughout their journey, including Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong, Principal Dr. Connie Hobbs, Assistant Principal Jim Melton and Counselor Lana Parker.

The team would also like to thank the Towns County Board of Education, parents and families, teachers, corporate sponsors, and the Hiwassee community.

Furthermore, the team offered a special thank you to FBLA advisers McConnell and Mrs. Taylor for their unwavering dedication and commitment to the members

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any misunderstanding associated with the 2017 Directors election is a result of questions about the proper qualifications required for a member to be eligible to serve as a director.

While the bylaws are quite clear in most requirements, they are void of any clear definition of "member in good standing," and the board is taking steps to clarify that requirement for the membership's consideration in 2018 at the Annual Meeting.

"The Board of Directors doesn't vote on who is on the ballot, that's a decision by the Credentials Committee," said the EMC Board Secretary Roy Perren.

The Credentials Committee received direction by internal and external legal counsel to judge the nomination process by payment history, thus the "member in good



The Blue Ridge Mountain EMC is headquartered in Young Harris.

standing" confusion regarding candidates.

According to Perren, the EMC board intends to offer amendments to the bylaws that more clearly define candidate qualifications in order to eliminate any confusion in future elections.

However, the earliest opportunity to do that would be the 2018 Annual Meeting, due to specific notification requirements for amending corporate bylaws.

"We wouldn't be able to get it ready for this year's Annual Meeting," Perren said.