

# THE PA-POST

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Fall Edition

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## President's Welcome

A wise person once said, "TSA is the best-kept secret in the educational community". The person who said this couldn't have been more accurate in their assessment of the greatness of our organization. Members of the Technology Student Association are empowered to solve, initiate, evaluate, and question — all qualities that are essential to a productive, resourceful, and globally competitive American workforce. TSA is the premier organization in American high school education when the matter concerns solving future problems, ranging from political volatility in the Middle East, to global environmental unsustainability. We are the future, and the state officer's agenda this year will embrace TSA and its true forward-thinking ideals.

The officer team will start by working to improve current policies and procedures within the PA-TSA organization. Sabrina Sayoc, your state Secretary, will be investigating and recommending changes to the PA-TSA alumni network, which will update its potential as a networking system that will allow PA-TSA to tap into its vast resource of experienced alumni. Kelsey Johnson, your state Parliamentarian, will work towards increasing personalized communication from the officer

team and transparency of the team's progress.

Dhruv Pillai, your state Vice President, will work on bolstering the state Membership Committee, creating a collective effort to increase PA-TSA's membership. Akhil Adla, your state Treasurer, will focus on fundraising through various initiatives, including environmentally accountable ideas. Liza Atillasoy, your state Historian, will work on strengthening electronic communications, such as email and Twitter, so that members receive direct and timely information from your state organization. Matt Basile, your state Sergeant-at-Arms, plans to increase fundraising for the American Cancer Society and create an open online forum for the PA-TSA membership and state officer team's inter-communication. Your state Reporter, Ben Hewitt, is working towards developing PA-TSA's mobile phone presence by researching and recommending various updates, including an Android PA-TSA Application. Ben is also focusing on giving PA-

TSA more exposure to media outlets at our state and regional conferences.

There will be an addition to this team, as the state officers have appointed Kristi Barr to the position of Chairperson of the Green Committee for the upcoming school year. Kristi was chosen on the merits of her continued dedication, passion, and hard work during her tenure with the Green Committee. As chairperson of this committee, she will lead a group of up to ten students in forming and facilitating various projects to make PA-TSA a more environmentally accountable organization. Kristi will be assisted by Mr. Chris Weaver, an advisor at Welsh Valley TSA, who will continue in his position as the adult advisor of the Green Committee.

I am privileged to work with this team, which is not only initiative-driven, but also very passionate in their efforts to propel PA-TSA to the forefront of national delegations. I truly believe that 2012 will be PA-TSA's best year yet, and that you, the PA-TSA member, has a lot to look forward to.

Best Wishes,

Phil Hayes,

PA-TSA State President

## Special Points of Interest

- New Membership and Green Committee policies
- Summaries of National and Bucknell conferences

## Membership Committee

For years, the Pennsylvania Membership Committee, chaired by the Vice President, has not been very active. The State Officer team has been busy establishing events like Got Game and Ironman, which has unfortunately left the Membership Committee neglected. Though the Got Game and Ironman programs were commendable and certainly no mean feat, the Membership Committee must be active. The Membership Committee began its rejuvenation last year.

The purpose of the Membership Committee is to assist in the recruitment of new chapters to Pennsylvania TSA, as well as to assist financially unstable chapters by helping with fundraisers and increase membership in established chapters through promotional materials. The committee was opened up to the general membership at the Bucknell Leadership Conference

this past July, where students were given an application to be part of the Membership Committee. The committee was selected towards the end of the summer, and is working hard towards recruiting new chapters in time for this coming TSA season.

One of the coolest practices that the Membership Committee is trying to implement this year is the maintenance of an online database of promotional materials that every chapter in Pennsylvania, and possibly even the nation, could have access to. TSA chapters from around the state could send in posters and flyers that their schools use to advertise TSA, and these promotional materials can then be downloaded by a student hundreds of miles away! The key component of this idea, however, is chapter participation: in order for the database to be a success, many chapters must volunteer to share

their promotional materials with our state. So if you have a particularly persuasive poster, send it in! Get permission from your advisor first, and then email me at [vice\\_president@patsa.org](mailto:vice_president@patsa.org). Help our state continue to grow and be one of the largest state delegations at the national conference!

This year looks promising for both the State Officer Team and the Membership Committee, and I wish you all a smooth start back to school. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, feel free to email either me (at [vice\\_president@patsa.org](mailto:vice_president@patsa.org)) or any of the other state officers.

-Dhruv Pillai  
State Vice President



State Officer  
Team

See our  
biographies  
and pictures  
on  
[www.patsa.org](http://www.patsa.org)

## Bucknell Leadership Conference

Hello PA-TSA! I hope you have all had a great summer and are looking forward to another great year of TSA.

This summer, on July 11-12, was our annual Bucknell Leadership Conference, held at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Bucknell is the State Officer Team's first official meeting, to begin planning for the next year's State Conference. However, while the State Officer Team is in a room planning and discussing all day, TSA members who want to learn new Leadership skills come to the conference for two exciting days of great Leadership activities. Even though I was not there for many of the activities, I talked to Lisa Gardner, who this year will be a freshman at Lower Merion High School, and she described many of the activities that she did at Bucknell.

The first thing that Bucknell participants did was learned the definition of Leadership. The five leadership attributes that they discussed were, Daring, Focusing, Believing, Creating, and Persuading. Participants

then played some name games and went to lunch. After Lunch, everyone was placed into four groups based on the World Cup, France, USA, Sweden, and Japan, and those four groups were then teamed together, USA with Sweden and Japan with France.

The next game they played was a tennis ball game. In this game, there was several tennis balls in the middle and players had to collect all of the tennis balls in their hoops to win. There were four hoops, one for each team. Since everyone could steal from each other, it became impossible to win, so all of the groups worked together and stacked all of their hoops in one pile, so that everybody won. The object of this game was to identify when it was important to work together, even if it means giving up winning.

Another game they played was called Golden Nugget in a Minefield, in which two people from each team were blindfolded, and each had a partner who guided them, simply by saying left, right, forward, back, etc., through an

area of tennis, wiffle, and spongy balls, that the blindfolded people had to avoid. The goal of the game was to help the blindfolded person get to a volleyball, or "golden nugget", placed somewhere in the field, and bring it to Chloe Alpert, a former PA-TSA President and volunteer planner of the Bucknell Conference.

In the evening all Bucknell participants, including the State Officer Team, had a dance with karaoke, where anyone who wanted to could get up and sing a song of their choice.

Once we all got back from getting ice cream, we played a large game of Man Hunt. Man Hunt is a tag-like game with two teams and a jail in the center, and whenever someone got caught they would have to wait in the jail for someone on their team to come and rescue them.

The next morning Bucknell participants did a scavenger hunt, having to find items such as: picture with a Bucknell student, Bucknell campus map, picture of road sign, picture of a bison, the

school mascot, and a picture of the Bucknell shirt.

Those are some of the activities that are done at the Bucknell Leadership Conference, and hopefully next year you can go to improve your leadership skills and enjoy some fun activities.

Also, if any of you would like to write an article for the Winter or Spring editions of the PA-Post, or if you have any other questions, please email me at [reporter@patsa.org](mailto:reporter@patsa.org). Have a great year PA-TSA and good luck in all of your events

-Ben Hewitt

State Reporter

*"The object of the game was to identify when it was important to work together, even if it means giving up winning."*

## 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual National TSA Conference

This past year's 33 annual National TSA conference was held in hot, dusty, and distant, Dallas, Texas, and was an exciting convention for everyone! From Tuesday June 21 to Friday, June 25, TSA members from across the nation competed in various events in everything from chapter team to computer graphics. As expected, PA-TSA had a huge representation and cemented Pennsylvania's place as the best state! We had the largest delegation, a fantastic delegation session, excellent success in our events and lots of bonding!

After the national candidates for National Office were announced PA-TSA gathered for the annual delegation session. During PA-TSA's first delegation meeting, State Officers ran an informal discussion including topics like delegation scheduling, getting to know the newly elected State Officers and important reminders about the upcoming election for new National Officers. General members were also given the opportunity to accompany Secretary Liza Atillasoy and Secretary-Elect Sabrina Sayoc the next morning to interview the National Candidates at their booths. Volunteers included Max and Jessi from Harriton High School, Joanna Odorisio from Lower Merion High School, and Mike, Chris and Mikaela from Strayer Middle School. The following night, after the booths were open and candidates interviewed, PA-TSA gathered again.

President of PA-TSA, Katherine Chen led an informational question and answer session about potential candidates for national office. The notes from the interviews were compiled and shared to the group. PA-TSA's Voting Delegates then raised their hands to give an idea about how PA would be voting. Pizza and drinks were passed out to all the members to enjoy, Two PA-TSA members' birthdays were celebrated, and after the discussion past and newly elected PA state officers held a raffle for many cool prizes. Prizes included gift cards, candy, and spa bags, but the most coveted prize of all was a pillow pet! The officers took turns reading winning tickets and the evening was entertaining for all.

After a week filled with intense competitions TSA members met to elect the 2011-2012 National TSA officers. As the largest delegation, PA-TSA had the most power in the officer lineup and successfully voted their favorite officers into position! Pratyusha Gupta was elected President, Austin Vest was elected Vice President, Ashlee Shryock was elected Secretary, Chip Bollendonk was elected Treasurer, Marie Sabillo was elected Reporter, and Jason Dreyzehner was elected Sergeant-At-Arms. The six of them received the most votes to become our next National TSA State Officer Team.

Our national Officers are an intellectual group who love to devote time to exciting activities as well as lead in TSA! With their elaborate plans for the upcoming year, who can't wait for nationals in Nashville, Tennessee next summer!

Liza Atillasoy

State Historian

# YOU KNOW YOU'RE A



# NERD IF...



By Sabrina Sayer, PA-TSA Secretary



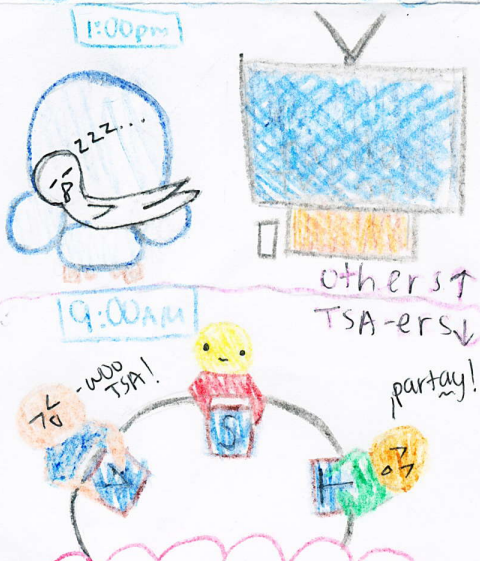
You spend more than a month on a single event.



Your dream is to win first place at Nationals.



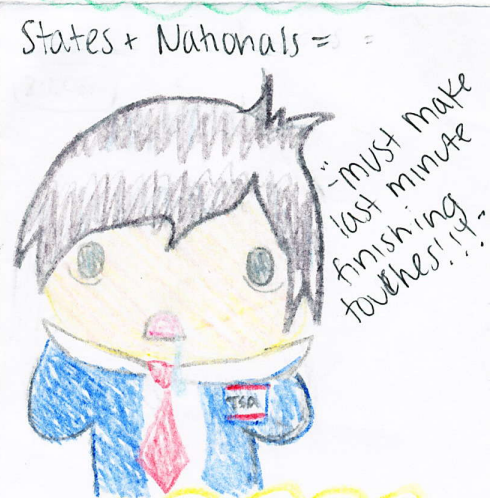
You wear your TSA shirts in public.



You have TSA meetings on the weekend.



Your TSA trophy is one of your most prized possessions.



You barely get any sleep at states or Nationals.

## Turning Failure into Success

“When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” We have all heard that phrase casually thrown around in conversation, and – quite honestly – it makes a lot of sense. However, sometimes life throws us more than lemons; sometimes we get massive watermelons and prickly pineapples chucked at us instead. As TSA members, we constantly face a good amount of obstacles that can prevent us from achieving what we want to achieve – whether it be facing tough competition or simply dealing with other team members. At first, it is just downright frustrating and we want those obstacles to disappear. We want life to be easy and filled with rainbows and butterflies. But if we take a moment to think about such a world, don’t you think that those rainbows and butterflies would get old pretty quickly? We need problems to challenge us and hurdles to jump over. Randy Pausch, a Carnegie Mellon professor, called these obstacles “brick walls.” He claimed that the brick walls standing in our way are there for a reason. They are *not* there to keep us out - they exist to show us how badly we want something and to thwart the people who do not want it badly enough. And that’s exactly what obstacles are. The issues we face are simply “brick walls.”

But what about when we actually fall down when faced with those obstacles? What happens when we fail to climb that wall or fail to jump over that hurdle? We just bombed our chance of placing or came last in our event. How do we deal with real-life, actual failure?

When talking about failure, it is natural to immediately proclaim that it is a bad thing. Most people just want to get that A on the final exam or to win the big, gold trophy. But when we think about it, we learn so much more when we do not get what we want. The worth of one’s life is based on his or her experiences - both the good *and* the bad. Those failures don’t define us, but the way we react to the defeat and loss does. I admit that it can be incredibly difficult to get back up again and continue to move forward, after falling so hard. But just remember: you did not fail - you just found one other way that

will not work in the future, just as Thomas Edison asserted. Yes, even Thomas Edison had to experience multiple failures before reaching the level of success of which he is known for today. Every time he “failed,” he took the time to revise each of his mistakes, which eventually helped him perfect the final version of his inventions. Also, it might have even helped him gain more knowledge and the awareness to not repeat a previous mistake that led him to make more and better inventions as he went on. Just like him, we, TSA members go through failure quite often too. But that one failure leads to a new beginning that you would lead more wisely. For example, a simple task like riding a bike shows how one can learn from his or her mistakes. During that first time on a bicycle, the rider usually falls down multiple times - which would likely frustrate the rider and possibly discourage him or her from continuing to learn the new skill, but with a little encouragement, they will get back on and learn from their previous mistakes and eventually master the art of riding a bike. From personal experiences, one can only learn that nobody is perfect and success takes time, determination, and the ability to learn from one’s past failures. After all, our greatest glory is not succeeding; it is rising every time we fall.

So how exactly do we rise? It’s quite understandable if you’re disappointed in your grades or you’re upset at the fact you didn’t win a competition. I have been in that position and it’s not fun. But, after sitting there thinking about my failure, I realized weeping about it gets you nowhere. If anything, it just brings you down. At that point, I wasn’t exactly up for motivational talks about turning failure into success, but with experience, that idea hit me. Experience was what I got when I didn’t get what I wanted.

And all I can do is be resilient, work harder, and learn from my mistakes. Michael Jordan didn’t make his high school basketball team and J.K.

Rowling was living on welfare when she wrote the first Harry Potter book. Both faced obstacles, but that only made them excel. They learned that the path to success is never clear. There will always be huge potholes to avoid and walls to climb over. But, along the way you become stronger and naturally surpass.

Now, this doesn’t mean you should go around failing all your tests and stop striving to achieve in your TSA events. It simply means that if you come across a disappointment in the future, don’t let it lower your self-esteem. From experience I learned that failures could take us in directions we would not have gone before. A bad grade can motivate you to do better. A bad decision can make you more cautious. And a lost job can often lead to a better one. Unfortunate changes can bring you new opportunities. And sometimes it is only failure that brings them to us.

-Sitara Soundararajan

Harrington High school

**Write for the Post!!**

If you want to write an article for the PA-Post, email me at

[reporter@patsa.org](mailto:reporter@patsa.org)

## TSA Survival Guide

As the school year begins, I'm sure we're all preparing for a brand new year of TSA! But prepping for such an adventure can seem like an arduous task, what with all of the events you'll have while dealing with school. So I've decided to throw together a little guide for your pre-TSA packing, as a guideline. It's not event-specific (not everyone needs a band saw!), but it will give you a rough start:

- **Poster Board**- Every display event needs it, and it's hard to go through TSA without doing at least one of those. Besides, even if you don't need it, your forgetful roommate probably will!
- **Assorted Writing Utensils**- Pencils are preferable, as you can't take Tech Bowl or Chapter Team with a pen or a paintbrush, but it's good to have a healthy mix. Highlighters work well for noting important bullets in rulebooks.
- **X-Acto Knife**- Useful for all sorts of events, from problem solving to structural. Great for displays also, as trying to rip a poster board never works at nicely.
- **Extra Black Socks**- Whether it was you or your chapter secretary who forgot the right colored socks, a 20% point deduction is never a good way to start out. So keeping an extra set of socks is a great way to prevent that, along with acting as excellent hand-warmers.
- **Safety Glasses**- Always good to have some around, as you never know when you might decide to join a last second problem-solving team (I know I have!). However, wearing them to anything but their required events isn't exactly a fashion statement.
- **A-Dress**- Although you may not enjoy wearing A-Dress everywhere as much as I do, it's important to make sure you have all the parts, from the patch and the tie. And don't forget the new shirt!
- **Folder/Binder**- Even though you may consider spreading everything out on your desk enough organization for you, having a single folder or binder to keep all your TSA stuff separate really makes the difference. Having dividers for different events, committees, and other duties (state officer, for example?) can help even more. This keeps all your TSA stuff in one place so you don't lose anything important.
- **Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised)**- Okay, maybe only the Parliamentarian needs one of these, but it's still good reading material for anyone interested in joining (or currently in) chapter team.
- **A Team**- Now, I love individual events as much as the next TSAer, but the experience you get in cooperation and coordination with team events is second to none. Plus, only in team events can you sail a boat, build TSA symbols, or design a computer game. So start getting your friends assembled ahead of time so you're ready to get started on those events right away!
- **Glue**- While more of it may end up sticking your fingers together than keeping your projects in one piece, a strong glue or epoxy is a necessity in many TSA events. For some events, such as structural, the guidelines for the sticky substance may be more strict than others, so be sure to check them out. Also, be sure to invest in some epoxy/glue remover when the inevitable happens!

Now your events will most likely require more specific tools and materials, such as sails for Marine Cup or a CAD for design events. But the above guide is a basic outline for what you're most likely going to need throughout the year. However, the most important thing to bring will be your enthusiasm for TSA that has made PA-TSA into the organization it is today! Good luck with all of your events, and have a great year, both in and out of TSA.

**Matt Basile**  
State Sergeant-at-Arms

## Basic Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary Procedure may seem like a thing of the past to many people, a dying art that was used by our founding fathers, in British Parliament for much before that, and even before then, by the ancient Greeks. In believing this, you might also believe that it has absolutely no modern uses and is completely irrelevant. However, parliamentary procedure is used in most organizations and businesses to keep organized and on task, whether they realize it or not. In fact, YOU have probably used it yourself in meetings and clubs you are a part of! When you are attending a meeting, for example, whoever is in charge might be called 'chairman' or 'president' or maybe, that person has an agenda they follow and a record of what happened at the previous meeting. All of these things are a part of parliamentary procedure. So since parliamentary procedure is so widely used, here are the basics:

- 'The Chair'- the person who is in charge of the meeting. Also referred to as 'chairman' or 'president'.
- Secretary- keeps 'minutes', or records, of what is going on during the meeting. Things that go in the minutes include what time the meeting started and ended, if any new business was discussed, if any old business was discussed and other major things that members would need to be informed of.
- The Assembly- all of the people attending the meeting
- New Business- a new topic of discussion or idea being presented to the assembly
- Old Business- a topic or idea that was discussed at a previous meeting that is being brought in front of the assembly again.
- Motion- brings business to the assembly. Motions must be properly stated before debate on the topic can begin. Example- "Mr. President, I move to have a fundraiser to raise money for our organization".
- Second- a motion must be seconded before it can be talked about. A second means that there is more than one person in the assembly who wishes to discuss or debate the idea presented in the motion. The person who seconds does not need to be in favor of the idea or topic.
- Vote- once the motion has been properly made and seconded, and after the assembly has debated, a vote is taken to see whether the assembly believes the idea should be put in motion or not. The president will take the vote by asking the assembly to either audibly or visually show their support of the motion, then asking for the people to show if they do not support. If the motion is generally supported, it is "accepted" and will be followed out. If it does not have general support, the motion "fails" and will be dropped.
- Adjourn- to end the meeting. If all business has been conducted or if there is no more time available, a motion must be made to end the meeting: 'Mr. President, I move to adjourn this meeting.'" Once it has been seconded and voted on, if it passes, the meeting will be officially over until the next regular meeting or until the president calls a special meeting.

These are just the very basics of Parliamentary Procedure. If you are interested in learning more, you could read Roberts Rules of Order Newly revised. However, knowing these basics will help you be able to function properly in a normal meeting.

Kelsey Johnson

State Parliamentarian

## New Policy on PA-TSA Green Committee Membership

By Josh Hoffman, Immediate Past PA-TSA Green Committee Chairperson (2010-2011)

### Get Involved!

If you are interested in joining the Green Committee, email Kristi Barr at [green@patsa.org](mailto:green@patsa.org)

or any State Officer.

There is a new policy on Green Committee membership this year. The most prominent part of this new policy is that there is no application process. This year, Green Committee membership is entirely merit-based, meaning that members are “on the committee” when they get working on and follow through with an idea/project to make TSA, PA-TSA, and chapters more environmentally friendly and aware. A project could be an environmental activity for a conference or chapter. It could be a service project. It could be an awareness or PR campaign. It could be a change in policy or the way things work—or any other kind of change. As long as it has to do with the environment and TSA, committee members work on their ideas as committee projects under the guidance of the Green Committee Chairperson. Committee members and prospective committee members may have the opportunity to pick up work on abandoned projects, look at the old list of ideas, and/or

collaborate on and contribute to other committee members' work as they desire. Project managers may be appointed to direct efforts toward certain projects.

Committee members should take initiative and the role of an officially recognized state leader, exhibiting an exceptional work ethic in their committee pursuits. Different committee projects have different timelines and require different kinds of work. Any skills that are cultivated in TSA events may be helpful in committee projects. The committee leadership and State Officers will be able to help committee members, but committee members should be self-sufficient, taking initiative, and asking questions where necessary. TSA experience is helpful so that committee members have a sense of how things work, where things are at conferences, whom to contact for certain things, where to look on [tsaweb.org](http://tsaweb.org) and [patsa.org](http://patsa.org) for relevant information, et cetera.

Committee members should take into consideration the leadership principles of *The Student Leadership Challenge* as well as the TSA Creed.

Kristi Barr of Cumberland Valley High School TSA has been chosen to succeed the spot of Green Committee Chairperson for this year. Her job beyond committee duties is to serve as an official liaison to the State Officer team and help committee members ground their ideas to reality and bring them to fruition.

Anyone looking to get involved in the Green Initiative should get in touch with Kristi Barr ([green@patsa.org](mailto:green@patsa.org)) or a State Officer.

### What did you think?

Feel free to email me at [reporter@patsa.org](mailto:reporter@patsa.org)

With any questions or comments about the PA-Post

