



# ULTIMATE E-NEWS

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## Back to School with FCCLA

As summer vacation ends, you're probably contemplating school and how to start back up with FCCLA. The aspects of a Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America chapter include: monthly meetings, fundraising, public relations, recruitment, community service, state and national events, member/officer training, and so much more. Where do you start? Organizing an FCCLA chapter and efficiently running one is no easy task. Each chapter may organize and start differently, but we all follow a similar roadmap.

The very first thing chapters should do is familiarize themselves with FCCLA knowledge. Grasp an understanding of our mission, message, purposes, image, and information, so you are prepared to explain the organization's benefits and opportunities to interested people. Exploring the official FCCLA website ([www.fcclainc.org](http://www.fcclainc.org)) is a quick way to learn about FCCLA.

Next, brainstorm ideas and discuss the upcoming school year for your chapter. What have we done in the past that has worked well? What are our goals for this year? What can we change this year? Keeping track of all that happens in one year can be difficult, so develop a program of work that guides you through the year. Feel free to refer to the chapter checklist on the national FCCLA website, which will provide ideas and resources for all aspects of running your chapter. After brainstorming and researching the FCCLA website, it is time to follow-up and choose which ideas you want to pursue. Keep in mind that other chapters that have already formed can be a great resource to you.

Another crucial step is delegating responsibilities equally among the officers of your chapter. Each officer can be responsible for specific activities throughout the year. The responsibilities may depend on the offices your chapter has chosen, but the main goal is to make sure every officer is

making a difference and experiencing leadership responsibility. You may also consider leadership training for members and officers. Dedicate a chapter meeting, after your recruitment campaign, to teach new members about FCCLA in a fun way. Members should get to know one another and learn more about how they can stay involved in FCCLA. Continue the year with informational meetings on state or national FCCLA events, the National Outreach project, STAR events, and other topics that keep members informed about FCCLA activities. Officer training prepares new members to represent FCCLA as well as learn teamwork, responsibility, and develop leadership skills. Officers can help plan membership training for the chapter, and members that want to become officers can spend time shadowing current officers.

These general ways to prepare your chapter for the upcoming school year are only a few ideas about how your chapter can start to prepare. Please refer to the FCCLA website for resources and information on anything you need to know to get started! - **Matt Palka**

## Time Management and Organization

Whether it's piles of homework, keeping a job, or being part of FCCLA, time has a way of escaping. Have you stayed up until 3 a.m. trying to finish a last minute essay? Have you walked slowly to class, trying to finish a chapter in a book while walking? You're not the only one.

Along with many others, I sometimes struggle with time management and organization. In the past months, I have found myself working two jobs, and it's no secret that anyone who has a job can be very restricted on time. Recently, I have also been going through a family crisis, and on top of that, I have to worry about college research, applying for colleges, my upcoming school year, and FCCLA. Sometimes the best thing to do is just

sit down at a calendar, and plan out your schedule day by day. With my newfound friendship with my calendar, things have been flowing very smoothly.

One tip that I found to be helpful, is to set personal goals. For example, tell yourself that you must finish at least two chapters of a book, or finish a certain percentage of assignments before you're allowed to go to a friend's house or get on the computer. If you feel like you need some extra support, you can ask a parent or sibling to help you enforce these rules.

Another thing that I've noticed to be helpful is the use of an organizing device. Some people use pocket planners, but I prefer to use my cellular phone, since I usually have it with me. If you have a phone that can download apps, there are many free apps out there to remind you of things right on your display screen. Even on a standard cell phone, you can set reminders and alerts. This can be especially helpful when workloads are overwhelming and it becomes all too easy to focus solely on one assignment, while losing sight of others.

If technology just isn't your thing, there are always more low-tech options. When all else fails, sticky notes can be a big help. You can stick them on the bathroom mirror, on your desk, or somewhere else you frequently look. Whether you're a freshman in high school, or a college professor, time has a way of escaping, and organization techniques can always be improved. So most importantly, find a method that works for you and stick to it! - **Henry Sookram**

## Recruit, Retain, and Recognize Members

With a new school year right around the corner, it is the perfect time to start working on membership within your chapter. There are three important words that deal with membership: recruitment, retention, and recognition. Each of these must happen efficiently for your chapter membership to increase steadily and stabilize at an optimum level.

Recruitment is the first "R" of membership. Members first witness FCCLA in chapters, so you must begin with exciting, enriching, and informative experiences to grasp their attention. A

membership recruitment campaign is an efficient way to accomplish this. Think about a theme and activities that will draw students for a fun experience. In addition to your membership campaign, brainstorm other recruitment ideas for the year. Setting goals to increase membership is always a great start. The earlier you discuss ideas, the more prepared your chapter will be for membership recruitment. A second crucial aspect of recruitment is efficiently communicating FCCLA's image, mission, and purposes to members. Why members join FCCLA is determined by what the organization does for them. Remember to review general FCCLA knowledge, so that you are prepared to tell students, teachers, and administrators what FCCLA can do for schools.

Retention is the second "R" of membership. One of the toughest challenges is keeping members committed to chapter involvement. Challenge members to explore FCCLA outside of school through the national website, where they can discover opportunities available for members. Additional meetings throughout the year can also discuss more aspects of FCCLA, including state and national conferences, Power of One, National Outreach, and STAR events. Chapter projects are also a great way to keep members involved. Chapter officers can plan and create projects, and then share the majority of the work with the members. Everyone should know about the latest events and have the opportunity to be involved, as well as offer feedback in order to enable chapters to identify the recruitment methods that work best.

Recognition is the third "R" of membership. Recognition expresses the thankfulness that chapters have for members that sacrifice time and energy to make a difference through FCCLA. Almost every chapter activity and event should have some form of recognition throughout the year. One idea for recognition is a yearly point system where members receive points for specific accomplishments and involvement, enabling chapters to keep track of chapter project success and member contributions. You can recognize members for recruiting students and accomplishing programs like Power of One and STAR events. Another idea is to hold FCCLA events solely dedicated to letting members meet one another and work together on projects. Forms of recognition such as these can be used to recapitulate member accomplishments. Most importantly, remember to make it enjoyable.

When members are thriving on FCCLA experiences and their voices are heard, you know the chapter is successful in recognition.

Recruitment, retention, and recognition: the three “Rs” of membership. Each one must receive as much attention as the others. Recruit members at the beginning of the year through a membership recruitment campaign, and introduce FCCLA in an exciting way. Retain members by explaining the importance of FCCLA, creating activities and leadership training, and opening members to opportunities at the local, district, state, and national levels. Recognize members by displaying results, granting awards, and summarizing the year of success with events that welcome administrators, parents, teachers, and families. Every meeting or event should leave members with information, learning opportunities, and an experience that made them feel better than when they first arrived.

Most importantly, don’t forget to affiliate your chapter. For your membership to count at the state and national levels, you must understand the affiliation process and dues payment. National dues are \$9 per member, and New York State dues are \$6 per member. New York State also requires a 12 member minimum, requiring chapters to pay national dues for at least twelve members. In addition to paying dues, you must undergo the affiliation process to establish an affiliated chapter. Online affiliation at the national website, [www.fcclainc.org](http://www.fcclainc.org) is fastest and the most preferred method. Early affiliation and dues payment is crucial because it opens chapters to national materials, programs, and nation-wide events. The sooner you affiliate, the quicker you can begin FCCLA related activities. To add members throughout the year to your chapter membership, submit an affiliation form marked “additional members” and send the dues payment before each deadline. You can also refer to the national website for information on affiliation. - **Matt Palka**

## Speak Out for FCCLA

Imagine another student in your school walks up to you and asks, what is FCCLA? What do you do in this club? The best way to answer the first question is to tell them what FCCLA stands for—Family, Career, and Community Leaders of

America. Then you can use your experience with FCCLA to explain what our organization is all about. You can also explain how your chapter has helped your school and community. Don’t forget to mention that FCCLA looks great on job and college applications.

In addition to speaking with potentially interested joiners, use posters and flyers posted around your school as well as school announcements to draw attention to FCCLA. Be sure to include important information such as when and where your chapter meetings will be held. If you want to get even more people interested in seeing what FCCLA is all about, you can hold an FCCLA greeting party complete with a slideshow explaining what FCCLA is, what your chapter does, and how members can benefit from the organization. Once you start publicizing FCCLA within your school, it will be easy to use your leadership skills to answer questions and interest new members. - **Tiffany Rolfe**

## Community Services

When people think of Community Service, they most likely think of a club or a group of people raising money for a charity. This is a great way to help your community, but there are also many other options. You can split the funds with another organization, which would not only raise awareness about the organization you choose to help, but about FCCLA as well. At Marlboro High School, we hold a Pancake breakfast each year for organizations such as Feed the Children. We get donations from local stores or companies and work with our school’s National Honor Society to serve the pancake breakfast. This helped us do a better job, while helping National Honor Society complete their community service hours. This is one of the many things my school does for community service.

Other Community Service projects can include visiting nursing homes or hospitals, creating care packages for those in the armed services, or cleaning up a local park. You can also incorporate our State and National project, Share our Strength into your chapter’s community Service. Not only is this a good way to start a Community Service project, but you can also participate in our State and National project! - **Mia Rende**

# Students Taking Action for Recognition

Students Taking Action for Recognition, or STAR Events, recognizes members for the accomplishments they have made within their chapters. Participation can help members improve leadership skills as well as gain career preparation. STAR events can be done as either an individual project or a group project. You can even try to get your whole chapter to participate in an event that you or your group could present. In a group, members must use teamwork in order to achieve team goals, while individuals work on their own to achieve project goals. Specific information and guidelines on all STAR Event categories can be found in the STAR Events handbook as well as online at [www.fcclainc.org/content/star-events](http://www.fcclainc.org/content/star-events).

A new type of competitive event is also being introduced. Skill Demonstration Events will provide opportunities for members to demonstrate college and career-ready skills in Family and Consumer Sciences and related occupations. Preliminaries will be held at Cluster meetings, and finals will be held at the 2012 National Meeting in Orlando, Florida. The three events are: Centerpiece Construction, Culinary Knife Skills, and Impromptu Speaking.

The earlier you start planning your project, the better. This will give you more time to plan, carryout, and prepare for presenting your project. Competing in a STAR event isn't just about competing; it is a lot of fun, and an overall great experience. I encourage everyone to participate in a STAR Event. Doing a STAR event takes a lot of hard work, but in the end it is all worth it! -**Mia Rende**

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